



CHRISTIAN HERITAGE COLLEGE

POLICY: Leave of Absence for Domestic Students

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|---------------------------|---|---------------------|----------------|
| Policy Group(s): | Group B: Academic – 1: Students (Ref: B1/0608.1-0911) | | |
| Related Policy: | Deferral for Domestic Students Grievance Policy and Procedures for Domestic Students – Academic Grievances Grievance Policy and Procedures for Domestic Students – Non Academic Grievances Time Limits for Course Completion Withdrawal for Domestic Students | | |
| Commencement Date: | July 2008 | Review Date: | September 2016 |

POLICY STATEMENT

Intent:

Christian Heritage College (CHC) recognises that the needs of students alter throughout the period of their course of study and from time to time it may be beneficial for students to take a leave of absence from their studies for a short period of time. The importance of communication between students and staff is paramount and the requirement to make formal application for leave of absence is one way to assist students when making decisions about the best pathway to achieve their academic goals and expected outcomes.

Formal application for leave of absence assists staff in tracking students' movement and to assist students to maintain successful progression through a course of study.

Scope:

Restrictions: All overseas students who are undertaking a course of study at CHC. Restrictions apply as per the *National Code 2007*.

Exclusions: Students who have not completed six (6) months of successful study.

Objectives:

1. To provide clear guidelines concerning leave of absence for students and staff.
2. To facilitate a smooth pathway for leave of absence for students.
3. To provide clear guidelines for processing applications.

Policy Provisions:

1. General

- 1.1 Leave of absence from a course of study at CHC is only available to students who have engaged in six months of study within their chosen course.
- 1.2 Leave of absence for a course of study is available prior to census date of the semester for

which the leave of absence is sought.

- 1.3 Leave of absence is not an option for students at the time of the offer of a place. Please refer to the *Deferral for Domestic Students* policy.
- 1.4 It is possible to apply for a leave of absence at any time after successfully completing six months of study without placing future enrolment in jeopardy. Students should be aware there may be consequences in terms of sequencing and availability of units.
- 1.5 Applications for leave of absence do not attract a fee. Students cannot apply for a leave of absence beyond the census date of a semester and therefore no financial or academic penalties apply.
- 1.6 A single leave of absence is for a period of six months. Students may apply for no more than two consecutive periods (Semester 3 not included) unless special circumstances exist which are unusual, uncommon or abnormal. After this time a student must re-engage in or withdraw from their studies.
- 1.7 Approved periods of leave of absence contribute to time limits for course completion.¹
- 1.8 Students are eligible to apply for an unlimited number of leave of absences providing they can complete the course requirements within the stated course time limits and the periods of absence do not exceed two consecutive periods.
- 1.9 All Library borrowing rights and access to CHC services are suspended for the leave of absence.
- 1.10 Applications for leave of absence may be rejected for academic reasons at the discretion of the Dean. This may be particularly relevant to time limits for course completion. In such an instance students are able to access the *Grievance Policy and Procedures for Domestic Students – Non-Academic Grievances*. If a student accesses the *Grievance Policy and Procedures for Domestic Students – Non-Academic Grievances* the student's enrolment status remains active and the student is advised to attend classes until the completion of the review process.

2. Suspension Arrangements for Commonwealth Scholarships

- 2.1 Under the *Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines* (Cth) scholarships may be suspended in accordance with CHC's policies.
- 2.2 The maximum suspension for which students are eligible is one year.
- 2.3 Students in receipt of Commonwealth scholarships will be granted a suspension for that scholarship where:
 - 2.3.1 students are granted a Leave of Absence under the provisions of this policy; or
 - 2.3.2 exceptional circumstances exist.
- 2.4 The Academic Registrar will make the final decision regarding the suspension of a Commonwealth scholarship.
- 2.5 In assessing exceptional circumstances the Academic Registrar should consider the range of disadvantages which may affect the immediate financial status of students accessing higher education. Such factors may include geographical isolation, stability of financial

¹ This provision replaces provision 1.7 from version B1/0605.1 and grandfathering arrangements are in place for those students who were granted a Leave of Absence under that version. See Supporting Procedures and Guidelines below.

status, as well as family circumstances, such as illness or bereavement, which may affect the level of family financial support. In making this assessment, the Academic Registrar should obtain as much relevant information as possible from the student and/or the Course Coordinator.

3. Formal Approval

- 3.1 Formal approval for a leave of absence is required for students to preserve their active enrolment status and/or their entitlement to Commonwealth support or assistance.
- 3.2 Students must contact their Course Coordinator before enrolling to resume their studies after a leave of absence.

4. Communication

- 4.1 Students must complete and submit an online *Application for a Leave of Absence* form available on the CHC website.
- 4.2 After the Dean has assessed the application, the Registrar's Office is notified and the student is informed in writing within four weeks regarding the success or non-success of the application.
- 4.3 Students will be reminded to complete an online Unit Selection form as the time for re-engagement in study approaches.

Supporting Procedures and Guidelines:

1. Student Procedure

- 1.1 Complete an *Application for Leave of Absence* form available either from College Reception or the College Website.
- 1.2 You will be notified in writing within four weeks regarding the outcome of the application.

Please note the form must be completed and signed before it will be processed.

2. Staff Procedure

- 2.1 Upon receipt of an application the Course Coordinator or Dean will assess the application taking into account any previous periods of leave of absence, any specific issues which may impinge on time limits for course completion such as significant transfer of credit granted, and any other relevant factors. Forward the application to the Academic Registrar's Office.
- 2.2 The Academic Registrar will consider the application in the light of changes to *HESA (2003)* and the Guidelines. The only consideration by the Academic Registrar will be administrative.
- 2.3 The Academic Registrar will communicate the outcome of the application to the student and copy the email to the Course Coordinator/Dean and School Administration Officer. A further copy of the email will be recorded in CHC Manager.
- 2.4 Student Administration will notify the Library.
- 2.5 The Library will make the adjustments on the Library Management System and borrowing rights will be suspended for the period of the leave of absence.

- 2.6 The Business Office will make changes to accounts as required.
- 2.7 As the time for re-engagement in study approaches the student will be contacted, by way of reminder, to complete a Unit Selection form for the following semester.

3. Guidelines

No financial or academic penalties apply as leave of absence is not available to students after the census date. Please note the date of leave of absence is the date on which the application is received by CHC.

4. Grandfathering Arrangements

- 4.1 Students who applied for and were granted an approved leave of absence prior to 1 January 2012 will be eligible to not have up to twelve months not contribute to the time limits for the completion of their course.
- 4.2 Students who applied for and were granted an approved leave of absence prior to 1 January 2012 will become eligible for further periods of approved leave of absences however any such absences will contribute to the time limits for the completion of their course.

Supporting Procedures and Guidelines:

POLICY FURTHER INFORMATION

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| Relevant Commonwealth/State Legislation | HESA (2003) Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines |
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ACCOUNTABILITIES

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|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Implementation: | Academic Registrar; Schools |
| Compliance: | Academic Registrar |
| Monitoring and Evaluation: | Academic Registrar and Deans |
| Development/Review: | Academic Board |
| Approval Authority: | Academic Board |
| Interpretation & Advice: | Academic Registrar’s Office |

WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY?

Students
Deans
Academic Staff
Academic Administration Staff
Business Office Staff – Financial Management/Fees

EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS POLICY

- Performance Indicators:**
- The ratio of successful: unsuccessful leaves of absence;
 - The number of students who return to study after a leave of absence.

Other:

Definitions and Acronyms:

CHC - Christian Heritage College

Commonwealth Supported Student – a student who is studying as a Commonwealth supported student pays a student contribution amount. (If you are Commonwealth supported it is stated on your Letter of Offer)

Commonwealth Scholarship - The objectives of the Commonwealth Scholarship (CS) Program are to facilitate choice in higher education and to increase higher education participation by students from low socio-economic backgrounds, particularly *Indigenous* students and students from regional and remote areas.(Cth)

HESA (2003) – Higher Education Support Act (2003)

APPROVAL – section maintained by the Director of Quality and Standards

| Reference No. | Approved | Date | Committee/Board | Resolution No. / Minute Ref. |
|---------------|----------|------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| B1/0608.1 | Yes | 17/07/2008 | Academic Board | 4.4 |

REVISION HISTORY – section maintained by the Director of Quality and Standards

| Revision Reference No. | Approved/Rescinded | Date | Committee/Board | Resolution No. / Minute Ref. |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| 0909 | Approved | 17/09/2009 | Academic Board | 4.2 |
| 0911 | Approved | 15/09/2011 | Academic Board | 4.1 |