

Enrolment Procedure - Variations

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Administrative – Vice-Chancellor
Accountable Executive – Policy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Manager – Policy	Director, Student Administration
Review Date	1 September 2026

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) This Procedure provides information about the processes for any variation of enrolment at La Trobe University and should be read in conjunction with the [Enrolment Policy](#).

Section 3 - Scope

(2) Refer to the [Enrolment Policy](#).

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key decision making power/responsibility	Role
Approval for or review of a decision to alter, suspend or cancel a student's enrolment under a Statute or Policy	Responsible officer or committee specified in the relevant instrument
Review of any other decision to alter, suspend or cancel enrolment	Director, Student Administration or nominee
Approval for any other University-initiated variation to a student's enrolment	Director, Student Administration or nominee

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(3) This Procedure forms part of the [Enrolment Policy](#) suite which governs its application.

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Adding or Withdrawing From Subjects

General Requirements

All Students

(4) Students may make changes to their initial enrolment, provided that these changes comply with:

- a. the course structure and any published requirements
- b. enrolment instructions issued to the student by the University
- c. legislative requirements for international students on a student visa
- d. any other requirements stated in this Policy and related Procedures.

(5) Applications for changes to enrolment are made through a [Variation Request Form](#) and are approved by the relevant officer.

Adding Subjects

(6) Students may add subjects to their enrolment until the end of Week One for term-based subjects or the end of Week Two for semester-based subjects.

(7) Requests to enrol in subjects after the specified deadline for the Teaching Period will only be permitted with approval from the Deputy Director, Student Administration (or nominee) via the relevant Variation Request Form.

Withdrawing from Subjects

Student-Initiated Withdrawals

(8) Students are responsible for seeking advice and understanding any consequences of a withdrawal on their future course progress and the availability of subjects.

(9) Students may withdraw from enrolled subjects through StudentOnline within published enrolment dates in line with the requirements of their course and study load.

(10) International students may forfeit tuition fee deposits when withdrawing from subjects.

(11) Withdrawal from subjects after the relevant Census Date:

- a. will incur financial penalties unless special circumstances exist and a remission is approved (where applicable), in accordance with the [Student Fees Procedure - Remission of Debt or Fee Liability](#)
- b. may incur academic penalties as outlined on the La Trobe website.

(12) Students who wish to withdraw from all subjects within a teaching period but who wish to return to study at the University should apply for a Leave of Absence prior to the applicable Census Date (see Part E).

(13) Students cannot withdraw from a subject once the teaching period in which it is being taught has ended.

(14) A student withdrawing from enrolment in Single Subjects is treated in the same way as a student withdrawing from subjects comprising part of a course.

University-Initiated Withdrawals

(15) The University may instruct a student to vary their enrolment, or vary it on their behalf, where:

- a. the subject is not (or is no longer) part of the approved course structure and does not contribute to the successful completion of the course
- b. credit has been granted
- c. the subject is not being delivered in the relevant teaching period
- d. the student does not meet the pre- or co-requisites
- e. the subject is not part of the agreed study plan as defined in a third-party agreement or enrolment pathway (e.g., through Open Universities Australia)
- f. the student is seeking to repeat a subject that they have previously successfully completed, without prior permission.

(16) Any university-initiated instructions to students to vary their enrolment must:

- a. be issued in writing via the student's La Trobe email account
- b. provide a prescribed deadline for action that allows the student an appropriate amount of time to vary their enrolment without jeopardising their ability to succeed.

(17) If a student does not comply with an instruction issued by the University in relation to their enrolment within the timeframe provided, the University is authorised to withdraw the student's enrolment and notify them of the change. In such circumstances withdrawal from subjects after the relevant Census Date will incur applicable financial and academic penalties as outlined elsewhere in this Procedure.

(18) The University may only vary a domestic student's enrolment after the relevant Census Date, where this variation results in a recalculation of the student's HELP scheme balance, in the following circumstances:

- a. under conditions as defined by the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) (Cth)
- b. as an outcome of a Remission of Debt process
- c. as an outcome of a review of a decision made by the University, or
- d. to correct an error made by the University.

Part B - Maximum and Expected Duration of Study

(19) All courses have a specified Maximum Period of Study which is the maximum time for students to complete a course, calculated by doubling the years required to complete the course on a normal full-time basis and adding one year. This applies except where a School determines otherwise for a particular course.

(20) International students are also subject to the Expected Duration of Study specified on their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

(21) Students who fail to complete their course within the Maximum Period of Study for the course will be subject to the processes outlined in the [Academic Progression Review Policy](#).

(22) Both the Maximum Period of Study and the Expected Duration of Study will only be extended where the student:

- a. can provide evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances (see Appendix One)
- b. is subject to an intervention plan (i.e., a requirement that the student reduce his or her subject load) as an outcome of academic progression management – see the [Academic Progression Review Policy](#)
- c. has lodged an appeal for a review of a decision to suspend or exclude them under any University statutes or policy and the outcome of the appeal is pending.

(23) Students must be aware that where they are granted an extension beyond the Maximum Period of Study for the

course, they may be prevented from seeking registration with the relevant accrediting or professional body.

Part C - Variations to Load

Impacts on Progression

(24) Students may vary their study load under the provisions outlined in this section but must note:

- a. under- or overloading may impact course progression where subjects are available in a specific order or have a quota on enrolments
- b. overloading during Compulsory Teaching Periods is not recommended. Students may choose to accelerate their course progression through enrolling in Non-Compulsory Teaching Periods.

Underloading

(25) A student is considered to be underloading when enrolling in less than 0.5 EFTSL in a half-year period.

(26) Domestic students may reduce their study load to less than 0.5 EFTSL in any half-year period (see Part C of the [Enrolment Procedure](#)) but must note that a reduction in study load may impact Government assistance such as Centrelink payments.

Overloading

(27) A student is considered to be overloading when they enrol in more than the maximum allowable credit points for their course in a defined teaching period or half-year period.

(28) Students who wish to study more than the normal load must submit the relevant Variation Request Form to be approved by the Course Coordinator or may enrol in a Non-Compulsory Teaching Period.

International Students

(29) All variations to enrolment for international students that result in a change to load must be submitted for approval to Academic Services. International students may only underload their enrolment where their circumstances are assessed as compassionate or compelling (see Appendix One), or as an outcome of actions taken under the [Academic Progression Review Policy](#).

(30) Inbound study abroad and exchange students require approval for any variation to their enrolment from La Trobe Educational Partnerships and their home institution.

Part D - Over-Enrolment and Repeating Passed Subjects

(31) Students who seek to enrol in more than the required total credit points for their course can only do so under the following circumstances:

- a. where a student must take an additional subject in order to meet course intended learning outcomes they must seek endorsement from their Course Coordinator and seek advice concerning any fee implications.
- b. all other students who wish to take an additional subject must enrol in a Single Subject on a non-award fee-paying basis.

(32) Students who seek to repeat passed subjects may only do so by enrolling in a Single Subject on a non-award fee-paying basis. Results for any and all attempts at a subject will be recorded on the official academic transcript.

Part E - Leave of Absence

General Conditions

(33) Domestic coursework students must apply for a Leave of Absence when not enrolling in a Compulsory Teaching Period outlined in their study plan, unless they are currently enrolled in the first Compulsory Teaching Period of their course. Students who are not able to commence a course as planned, or who wish to take a temporary break from study during this period should, where this is allowed for the relevant course, apply to defer, as outlined in the [Admissions Procedure](#).

(34) Where a student fails to enrol or re-enrol before the next applicable Compulsory Teaching Period Census Date, and has not applied for a Leave of Absence, the student's course status will be updated to 'AWOL' (Absent without Official Leave) (see Part F).

(35) Students who do not intend to enrol during a Non-Compulsory Teaching Period are not required to seek Leave of Absence for those teaching periods.

(36) Students applying for Leave of Absence should take into consideration that a course from which they take leave may be revised or discontinued or may cease to be accredited during their period of absence. In these circumstances, every attempt will be made to provide the original course, but where this is not possible, the University reserves the right to offer the student a place in an equivalent or near-equivalent course.

(37) Students may be required to take a Leave of Absence as part of an Agreed Progression Plan under the Academic Progress Review Policy.

International Students

(38) International students may only take a Leave of Absence where:

- a. there are compassionate or compelling circumstances (see Appendix One)
- b. a period of leave is required as an academic progress intervention.

(39) Where Leave of Absence is being contemplated as an academic progress intervention for an international student, the relevant School must seek advice to ensure compliance with the requirements of the [National Code 2018](#).

(40) The University must report any period of Leave of Absence for international students to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

Duration of Leave of Absence

(41) The cumulative maximum duration for Leave of Absence for eligible students is normally one year.

(42) All students may apply to extend a Leave of Absence or apply for additional leave after one year's leave has already been granted where compassionate or compelling circumstances (see Appendix One) continue to impede their ability to pursue their course. Domestic students may also apply for more than one year's leave where they:

- a. have primary carer responsibilities
- b. are an elite athlete or performer and have sporting or performance commitments during the relevant period
- c. are required for jury service.

(43) Honours students may apply for Leave of Absence but normally must complete their course within two years of their initial enrolment in the Honours program.

(44) The University will not normally approve a Leave of Absence that begins and ends during the same teaching period. Where a student has not complied with all requirements for enrolment, such as supplying a verified Unique Student Identifier (USI) or Tax File Number (TFN), the University can apply an administrative Leave of Absence to protect a student's ability to re-enrol at a later time. This will contribute to the cumulative maximum duration of Leave of Absence.

Applications and Approval

(45) All applications for Leave of Absence must be lodged via the form linked in StudentOnline. Domestic students are only required to submit supporting documentation for their application where they seek a Leave of Absence beyond the normal maximum duration.

(46) International students are required to provide documentary evidence of the reason for any Leave of Absence application and should seek advice from ASK La Trobe prior to submitting their application. The application and evidence will be assessed by the International Operations and Compliance Team for eligibility and impact on the student visa.

(47) Student Administration provides final approval of a Leave of Absence for all students following endorsement from the relevant School and International Operations and Compliance as applicable.

(48) Students will normally be notified of the outcome of their application within 10 business days from the date of the decision but should enrol and continue to attend classes while awaiting the decision on their application.

(49) Leave of Absence can only be granted retrospectively in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Director, Student Administration.

Results Associated with Leave of Absence

(50) If a student's application for Leave of Absence is submitted on or before the Census Date for the subject(s) being undertaken and is subsequently approved, the subject enrolment(s) will be discontinued without penalty.

(51) Where a student's application for Leave of Absence is received after the [Census Date](#) for their subjects, results will be given as follows:

- a. WD (discontinued studies with financial penalty, not to count as fail), for subjects discontinued up to and including two-thirds of the way through the Teaching Period, or
- b. KN (discontinued studies with financial penalty, to count as fail), for subjects discontinued after two-thirds of the subject has been taught.

Leave of Absence and Financial Liabilities

(52) Fee, HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP liability is dependent upon the date on which the student's application for Leave of Absence is received:

- a. students whose application for Leave of Absence is received prior to any relevant Census Date and subsequently approved will not be liable to pay for subjects
- b. students who retain an active enrolment for any length of time after the relevant Census Date will remain liable to pay for the subjects they have enrolled in, even if they are no longer attending classes.

(53) All outstanding monies owed to the University become due and payable from the date of approval of the application for Leave of Absence.

(54) Students may be eligible for a remission of HELP debt, reversal of fee liability, or refund of fees if all required

criteria are met. Refer to the [Student Fees Procedure - Remission of Debt or Fee Liability](#) and to the relevant Refund Application form on the Refunds and Remission of debt webpage.

Status and Entitlements While on Leave of Absence

(55) The University may limit access to some services for students on leave. Students do retain access to:

- a. StudentOnLine which they require to keep their contact details up to date and to re-enrol
- b. their student email account, through which the University will maintain contact with them.

(56) The President of a Recognised Student Organisation who is on Leave of Absence is designated as a student by University Council under paragraph (b) of the definition of student in Section 3 of the La Trobe University Act 2009 for such time as the student holds the office of President.

Re-Enrolment of Students on Leave of Absence

(57) The University will provide students on Leave of Absence with re-enrolment instructions when it is nearing the time for them to re-enrol in their course. In most cases, students will be able to re-enrol through StudentOnLine in the same manner as any other re-enrolling student.

Part F - Absent Without Official Leave (AWOL)

(58) Any student who fails to re-enrol before the relevant Compulsory Teaching Period Census Date, including students who have been on a Leave of Absence and who have reached their approved and advised end date, will have their course status updated to Absent Without Official Leave (AWOL) and be considered non-active.

(59) Non active students must normally apply for a new course admission but may, where suitable grounds exist, apply for a review of the change to their enrolment status (see Part I).

Part G - Course Withdrawal (Discontinuation) by Students

All Students

(60) Students who are considering withdrawal from their course may seek advice from student support services.

(61) Students who have decided to withdraw submit a request via a Discontinuation of Enrolment Form. The student will then be withdrawn from all enrolled subjects in current and future Teaching Periods in that course.

(62) A course withdrawal is an enrolment action and is subject to the same enrolment deadlines as enrolment, variation to enrolment or Leave of Absence. Where an enrolled student requests a course withdrawal after the relevant teaching period deadline, they will be subject to all relevant academic and financial penalties.

(63) The date that such a request is received is the date the withdrawal becomes effective except where a final result is outstanding for any subject(s).

International Onshore Students

(64) International onshore students who wish to withdraw from their course should understand the potential impact on their student visa.

(65) On receipt of a Discontinuation Form from an international student the University:

- a. provides advice to the student concerning the cancellation of their CoE and any fee refund that may be

available

- b. informs the Secretary of the Department of Education via PRISMS of cancellation of enrolment, as prescribed by Section 19 of the ESOS Act 2000 and Standard 9 of the [National Code 2018](#).

(66) Where an international onshore student is withdrawing from their course in order to return to and remain in their home country, they may do so at any time without need for a letter of release (see [International Students Release Policy](#)).

Alternative Exit

(67) Students who are admitted to a course that includes nested sub-qualifications may choose to exit and take out the award for one of the sub-qualifications, following confirmation that they have satisfied all of the requirements of that sub-qualification (see [Admissions Standard - Credit](#)).

(68) Students who have discontinued their course or have a non-active course status (AWOL) are no longer eligible to apply for an Alternative Exit. Students in such circumstances may apply for credit as part of a new course admission.

Part H - Alteration, Suspension or Cancellation of a Student's Enrolment by the University

General Conditions

(69) The University may alter, suspend, or cancel a student's enrolment where:

- a. a penalty of suspension or exclusion is to be applied as a result of a finding under the [General Misconduct Statute 2009](#) or the [Academic Integrity Statute 2015](#)
- b. the student has failed to make satisfactory academic progress as defined by the [Academic Progress Statute 2010](#)
- c. a recommendation has been made under the [Complex Conduct Assessment and Management Policy](#)
- d. under the terms of the [Fees Statute 2009](#), where the student has outstanding debt to the University and has not made arrangements to defer or pay this debt
- e. a student has not yet supplied all information required for enrolment such as a verified USI or TFN
- f. the student has failed to maintain an active enrolment.

(70) The University may also initiate an alteration of a student's course enrolment in any current and future teaching periods when required by the terms of any relevant funding contract, third-party agreement, or legislative requirement.

(71) The Director, Student Administration or nominee will activate an alteration, suspension, or cancellation of the enrolment of a student when authorised by the relevant committee or responsible officer under policies and/or statutes of the University.

Non-Participating Enrolments

(72) Where either domestic or international students are identified at risk of low or non-participation the University will employ interventions to support the student's re-engagement as outlined in the [Student Support Policy](#) and the [Academic Progression Review Policy](#).

International Students

(73) Where an international student fails to return after an arranged holiday break, suspension or deferment or fails to enrol in any subject for a Compulsory Teaching Period the University may take steps to cancel a student's CoE.

Communication with Students

(74) Where the University decides to alter, suspend, or cancel a student's enrolment the student is informed in writing of:

- a. the decision and the reasons for it
- b. their right to seek a review or appeal as appropriate and the conditions for such review or appeal (see Part I)

(75) International students in these circumstances are also advised that:

- a. Student Administration must inform the Secretary of the Department of Education via PRISMS of any suspension or cancellation, as prescribed by Standard 9 of the [National Code 2018](#)
- b. altering, suspending, or cancelling their enrolment may affect their student visa and that they should seek advice about this from the relevant Australian Government department.

Part I - Reviews of University Decisions

Failure to Maintain an Active Enrolment

(76) A student whose enrolment has been cancelled for failing to maintain an active enrolment in their course may request a review of the decision where they:

- a. are of the view that any of the provisions in the [Enrolment Policy](#) and/or Procedure(s) have not been correctly applied
- b. can supply appropriate evidence where required.

(77) A request to review a decision must be lodged in writing by way of reply to the original notification, to the Director, Student Administration, within 20 business days of the relevant process or decision.

(78) The Director, Student Administration will arrange for a review of the decision by a senior officer who was not involved in the original decision. A written outcome will be provided within 10 business days of the date the request was received.

(79) Where the outcome is in favour of the student the enrolment action will be reversed or amended as appropriate.

(80) A request to review the decision may be dismissed where the applicant cannot substantiate their request in line with the allowable grounds.

Decisions on Other Grounds

(81) A student whose enrolment has been altered, suspended or cancelled as a result of general and/or academic misconduct, unsatisfactory academic progress, or for health and safety reasons should follow the relevant review and appeal processes as outlined in the following:

- a. the [General Misconduct Statute 2009](#) and associated policies
- b. the [Academic Progress Statute 2010](#) and associated policies
- c. the [Academic Integrity Statute 2015](#) and associated policies
- d. the [Student Fees Policy](#) and associated Procedures.

(82) Students who remain dissatisfied with the outcomes of any review or appeal processes outlined in the above statutes and policies may not pursue any further review within the University but may choose to seek review from external authorities where appropriate.

Effects of Suspensions or Exclusions from an Award Course

(83) When a decision has been made to suspend or exclude a student, other than where the student has failed to maintain active enrolment resulting in an AWOL status, they remain enrolled until all relevant internal review and appeal avenues are exhausted, within the relevant timeframes.

(84) The University must not notify the Department of Education of a change to an international student's enrolment status until the internal complaints and appeals process is completed.

(85) At the conclusion of a specified period of suspension, a student has the right of re-admission to the same course they were studying when suspended, subject to the availability of the course (or its equivalent at the time of re-enrolment).

Section 7 - Definitions

(86) For the purposes of this Policy:

- a. cancellation of enrolment: the administrative process by which a student's enrolment is terminated.
- b. Census Date: the day on which a student becomes liable for fees for a subject, corresponding to the date no earlier than 20 per cent and no later than one third through the period during which the subject is undertaken, which is the time between the unit commencement and completion dates
- c. Compulsory Teaching Period: a period during which students must be enrolled or on a formal Leave of Absence. Compulsory Teaching Periods are determined by the structure of individual courses:
 - i. for semester-based courses Compulsory Teaching Periods are Semesters One and Two
 - ii. for all other courses the Compulsory Teaching Periods are those in which a student is required to undertake a core subject that is part of their course structure as published in the University Handbook.
- d. DHA: Department of Home Affairs
- e. EFTSL: Equivalent Full-Time Study Load
- f. enrolment: the process by which a person becomes a student of a subject or subjects within a course at La Trobe University
- g. enrolment action: an action taken by a student or the University that impacts a student's enrolment
- h. exclusion: means the temporary or permanent prohibition of an individual from accessing any or all University facilities and services or participating in University activities. A temporary prohibition may be for a specific period or until a condition or conditions have been met. Where a student or participant is excluded from a course, short course or subject, their enrolment in the course, short course or subject is cancelled and they must reapply for admission.
- i. Expected Duration of Study: the duration of a course for international students, as registered on CRICOS for the purposes of Standard 8 of the National Code
- j. international student: a student who is not a domestic student at the time of the relevant study and who holds an Australian student visa
- k. Leave of Absence: a formal agreement between the University and an individual student for leave from a specific course for a defined period
- l. Maximum Period of Study: the maximum time for a domestic student to complete a course, calculated by doubling the years required to complete the course on a normal full-time basis and adding one year. This applies except where a School determines otherwise for a particular course.
- m. National Code: National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- n. Non-Compulsory Teaching Period: any teaching period other than:

- i. Semester One and Semester Two in a semester-based course, or
 - ii. in all other courses any teaching period designated as compulsory as determined by the core subjects that make up the structure of those courses as published in the University Handbook.
- o. Non-Participating Enrolment (NPE): a student who:
 - i. is admitted to a course but fails to enrol in any subjects
 - ii. enrolls in a subject or subjects in a course but fails to engage in the content or assessment.
- p. non-resident: all applicants/students who are not classified as domestic or international as defined in this Policy in relation to their visa/citizenship and location status. Non-Residents include:
 - i. any student enrolled in a non-domestic course (including Australian domestic students studying overseas in a course delivered by an offshore partner institution)
 - ii. non-domestic students studying on campus within Australia while on any temporary visa other than the student visa
 - iii. non-domestic students who are studying in a domestic course that is delivered entirely online, where they do not need a student visa for their enrolment.
- q. over-enrolment: where a student seeks to enrol in more than the total number of credit points required for their course
- r. overloading: where a student enrolls in more than the maximum allowable credit points for their course in a defined teaching period or half-year period
- s. underloading: where a student enrolls in less than 0.5 EFTSL per half-year
- t. Single Subject: a subject from an award course of the University in which a student enrolls independently of a direct enrolment in the course. This includes subjects enrolled in as part of a designated entry scheme such as subjects that are taken as part of the Victorian Certificate of Education.
- u. suspension: means the temporary prohibition of a student from participating in University activities and accessing University facilities and services. A temporary prohibition may be for a specific period or until a condition or conditions have been met. A student's rights will be restored, including the ability to re-enrol in the original or equivalent course or subject, at the conclusion of the suspension.
- v. teaching period: the time between the commencement of teaching and the conclusion of teaching in any given subject.

Section 8 - Appendix One

Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances

(87) Compassionate or compelling circumstances are those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's academic progress or wellbeing. These circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- a. serious illness or injury as evidenced by a detailed statement and supported by the University's Medical Impact Statement as completed by an independent and registered medical professional, substantiating all details of the student's circumstances
- b. bereavement of a close family members such as parents, grandparents, or siblings
- c. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country that has impacted on the student's studies
- d. a traumatic experience which could include:
 - i. involvement in, or witnessing of, a serious accident, when this has impacted on the student (such cases should be supported by police or a psychologist's report substantiating details of the student's claim)
 - ii. witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, when this has impacted on the student (such cases should be supported by police or a psychologist's report substantiating details of the student's claim)

- e. the University being unable to offer a pre-requisite course or subject
- f. the student being unable to begin studying on the program commencement date due to a delay in receiving a student visa.

Section 9 - Authority and Associated Information

(88) This Policy is made under the [La Trobe University Act 2009](#).

(89) Associated information includes:

- a. [Enrolment website](#)
- b. [Single subject entry](#)
- c. [Census dates](#)
- d. [Calculating study load \(EFTSL\)](#)

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	1st September 2023
Review Date	1st September 2026
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	1st September 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Rachel Cumberland Director, Student Administration
Enquiries Contact	Student Administration