

## LEARNING - POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Policy Title	<b>Withdrawal, Extension and Deferral Policy &amp; Procedure</b>
Date	June 2024
Review Date	June 2026
Authority	Head of Learning
Responsibility	Compliance Manager
Standards (SRTOs)	Clauses 1.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 7.5

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline The Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia (ASFA) Limited's approach to managing withdrawal, extension and deferral requests from students. This policy and procedure contributes to ensuring compliance with Clauses 1.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 7.5 of the Standards of Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) 2015.

### SCOPE:

This policy and procedure applies to current ASFA students enrolled in courses (including qualifications and workshops) or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) products with ASFA.

### POLICY:

- ASFA is committed to:
  - Respecting student's decisions around discontinuing their studies.
  - Ensuring students that request to withdraw from a course are not victimised or discriminated against.
  - Considering course withdrawal, extension and deferral requests in a consistent, transparent, objective and unbiased manner.
  - Accurately recording withdrawal, extension and deferral requests and maintaining whilst maintaining privacy and confidentiality.
  - Increasing the participation and completion of all learners by offering an extension and deferral mechanism.
  - Allowing students to appeal decisions about withdrawal, extension and deferral decisions.

### Withdrawals

- Students who wish to withdraw from their course are required to make their request in writing by emailing it to [learning@superannuation.asn.au](mailto:learning@superannuation.asn.au).
- If the student's employer has paid for their course and the student resigns or is terminated from employment, the employer can request withdrawal on behalf of the student. It is recommended that the student discuss continuation of their studies with the employer and/or ASFA Learning before withdrawal if they wish to continue.
- In the case of bulk withdrawals, an employer can email a list of withdrawals to [learning@superannuation.asn.au](mailto:learning@superannuation.asn.au) with the withdrawal date listed against each student.

- Where special circumstances apply, a student or their employer may wish to apply for a refund following our *Fees and Refunds Policy & Procedure*.
- If a student has not completed their course by their allocated completion date and there has been no communication with ASFA, Student Advisors, or their Trainer or Assessor despite three (3) attempts by any of these parties (or any engagement with the Learning Hub); the student will be considered withdrawn from the course.
- To continue their studies the student will need to re-enrol and standard re-enrolment charges will apply unless the student has made an appeal following the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.
- Students who withdraw from a VET course will receive a Statement of Attainment for any units of competency completed up to the date of withdrawal, provided all fees due up until this date were paid in full.

### **Deferrals:**

- Students may defer (suspend) their enrolment prior to starting their course or at any point during their studies for a period of up to 12 months from the date of request.
- Requests for deferral will be approved on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances such as but not limited to:
  - medical circumstances: where a student's medical condition renders them unable to complete their studies within the time allowed
  - major family/personal circumstances such as a death in the family, significant health issues affecting a family member, financial hardship or escaping domestic violence
  - major political upheaval, natural disaster or major unforeseen circumstances.
- Requests for deferral must be made in writing to [learning@superannuation.asn.au](mailto:learning@superannuation.asn.au) and the reason(s) for the deferral must be stated, together with supporting evidence e.g. medical certificate.
- An employer can make a request for deferral to ASFA on behalf of the student if they are the person funding the course for the student.
- If a deferral is granted, the student will be notified of their new course commencement date and completion date via email.
- It is the responsibility of the **student** to notify ASFA if they wish to return to study on or before the end of the deferral date.
- It is important to note that the duration between the new course commencement date and completion date will be based on the amount of time that the student had left at the time of the request being made e.g. if the student has 6 months to complete their course and makes the request 3 months in, they will only be granted 3 months upon their return.
- If a student feels that they may need longer upon return to study, they are encouraged to discuss their options with a student adviser prior to the request being finalised.

### **Extensions:**

- Extension requests can be made in writing to [learning@superannuation.asn.au](mailto:learning@superannuation.asn.au) or by phone to Student Services prior to the due date.
- While an employer may make the request for an extension on the student's behalf if they are the ones funding the course, the request must still be on the same grounds as mentioned above.
- ASFA will grant extensions of no longer than 12 weeks per enrolment. This total is cumulative and can be taken in 4-week blocks or as one 12-week block per enrolment.
- At the discretion of the compliance manager and student advisors, students may be granted up to an *additional* four weeks extension (which does not count against

the 12-week maximum) if the student is experiencing difficulty in hardship or completing their studies due to:

- medical or compassionate grounds.
- extreme emergencies/circumstances.
- unforeseen circumstances that will have a major impact on the student's ability to complete their course
- ASFA is unable to fulfill its service obligations to a point that will cause a severe impact to students ability to complete the course on time.
- Extension requests will not be granted for the following circumstances:
  - Work commitments (aside from a major event e.g. company merger or corporate restructure)
  - Personal commitments
  - Holiday/Business trips
  - Issues with the computer or internet.
- All extensions granted will be applied to the students overall course due date.
- There is an administrative fee for extensions as outline in the *Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedure*. This fee may be subject to change from time to time without notice.
- ASFA reserves the right to waive the extension fee in special circumstances subject to the approval of the Compliance Manager.
- If a student does request an extension and does not use the full time allotted, they will not be provided with a refund for the remaining time. They will likewise not be refunded if they do not complete the course despite the extra time being allocated.

## PROCEDURE:

### Extensions

- On receipt of a request for extension, check that the request was made prior to the student's original completion date expiring and that the student has stated the reason(s) for the extension.
- Review the supporting documentation provided with the extension request to ensure it clearly outlines and provides a sufficient basis for the need for extension.
- The Compliance Manager should be consulted in order to approve and discuss the reasons for the extension.
- Extensions should NOT be granted for any of the following reasons without a sufficient explanation:
  - Work commitments (please encourage the student to discuss with their L&D team the need to be released for training).
  - Personal commitments.
  - Holiday or business trips.
  - Computer or internet problems. (Outside of unforeseen major outages)
- Invoice student extension fee.
- When extension fee is paid, update the following within the student's record in the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system:
  - Update the overall qualification end date to reflect the extension / change to course duration.
  - Update the L&D enrolment deadline date to reflect the extension / change to course duration. This will automatically update the end date of any non-completed units of competency.
- Save a copy of the extension request email and supporting evidence within the student's record in the CRM system.
- If an extension was granted notify the student of extension approval and their new completion date via email.
- If an extension was not granted notify the student and outline the reasons for not granting the extension and refer them to the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* if they wish to appeal the decision.

## Withdrawal

- Student is to contact ASFA directly and discuss their options.
- The student's employer can also advocate on behalf of the student for a withdrawal if required.
- In accordance with National RTO standards, a student will not be withdrawn from a course solely on the grounds of their resignation or termination of employment, even if the course has been funded by their employer.
- Ensure the CRM system has all completed units of competency recorded.
- Withdraw the student from the course on the CRM system. This includes:
  - changing enrolment status to Withdrawn. This will automatically disable access for the student to the ASFA Learning Hub
  - adding an end date to the enrolment
  - changing any non-completed units to 'withdrawn' with an outcome code of 40 and changing unit end date to date of withdrawal. If the student withdrew prior to commencement of the unit the Actual Hours field must be '0' or blank. If the student withdrew after commencement the actual hours completed must be entered into the Actual Hours field.
  - Removing the student from any workshops they were booked into.
  - Advising trainer/assessor (if applicable).
  - Ensure all fees have been charged. Follow up outstanding amounts if required.
  - Identify eligibility for a Statement of Attainment for nationally recognised training. If a unit of competency has successfully been completed and marked competent, fees are up to date and the student has a USI, a Statement of Attainment must be issued in accordance with the *Certification Documentation Issuance Policy and Procedure*.

## Deferral

- On receipt of a request for deferral, check that the student has stated the reason(s) for the deferral and provided supporting evidence.
- Discuss the deferral with the Compliance Manager who will approve or deny the deferral request based on whether they believe the student is experiencing difficulty or hardship in completing their studies and has provided sufficient evidence of this due to:
  - medical circumstances: where a student's medical condition has changed significantly since enrolling in the qualification or course
  - family/personal circumstances: death or severe medical problems within a family, or unforeseen family financial difficulties
  - major political upheaval or natural disaster.
- If a deferral is granted update the following within the student's record in the CRM system:
  - Update the overall qualification start date and end date to reflect the deferral (if applicable).
  - Update the L&D enrolment start date and deadline date to reflect the deferral which will automatically update the start date and end date of all units of competency to reflect the deferral.
- Save a copy of the deferral request email and supporting evidence within the student's L&D record in the CRM system.
- If a deferral was granted notify the student of deferral approval and their new commencement date and completion date via email.
- If a deferral was not granted notify the student and outline the reasons for not granting the deferral and refer them to the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* if they wish to appeal the decision.