

SYDNEY FILM SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TRANSFER BETWEEN REGISTERED PROVIDERS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Background

The National Code¹ restricts approved providers of courses to International Students (“registered providers”) from enrolling transferring students prior to the student completing 6 months of their principal course of study².

This policy is designed to ensure that Sydney Film School (“the School”) does not enrol any transferring International Student prior to 6 months of their principal course being completed, unless that student has a valid Letter of Release agreeing to such a transfer, or if other specific conditions are met.

This policy also details the procedures for assessing applications to transfer from the School to another registered provider within the initial 6 months of a student’s principal course.

2. Students seeking to transfer to the School from another registered provider

Overview

The School will not recruit or knowingly enrol a student wishing to transfer from another registered provider prior to the student completing 6 months of their principal course of study except in the following circumstances:

- the original registered provider has provided a written Letter of Release;
- the original registered provider has ceased to be registered or the course in which the student is enrolled has ceased to be registered;
- the original registered provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the government that prevents the student from continuing their principal course of study;

¹ Refers to the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to International Students 2007 Standard 7

² A principal course of study is usually the final course of study undertaken by the student. For example, if an international student is studying an English language programme followed by a Bachelors programme, the Bachelor degree is considered the principal course.

- a government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student's best interest and has provided written support for that change.

International Students seeking to transfer to the School must comply with the School's enrolment procedures and meet the course entry requirements.

Procedure

Where an International Student seeks to transfer from another registered provider before they have completed 6 months of their principal course of study the following procedure will apply:

- 2.1 The School receives an application from a student who is on-shore and is currently undertaking study at another registered provider.
- 2.2 Utilising information from the student's passport, including their study visa and the date the student arrived in Australia, the Registrar will determine if the student has completed 6 months of their principal course of study with the other registered provider.
- 2.3 If the student has completed 6 months study in their principal course of study, the application process proceeds as for all other on-shore International Student applications.
- 2.4 If the student has not completed 6 months study in their principal course of study they are required to provide a Letter of Release from the registered provider they are currently studying with. The School will provide the student with a "conditional" letter of offer which clearly states that an offer of a place is contingent on their obtaining a letter of release from the registered provider that they are currently studying with.
- 2.5 If the student is a government sponsored student, they are required to provide written support from their sponsor agreeing to the change which will stand in lieu of a Letter of Release.
- 2.6 Once a Letter of Release is received the application proceeds as for all other on-shore International Student applications.
- 2.7 If the student does not provide a Letter of Release, the application process will be put on hold and the student informed that they are unable to transfer at this time. The student will be invited to re-activate their application when they have completed 6 months in their principal course of study.
- 2.8 In the circumstances where the original registered provider or course has ceased to be registered, or sanctions have been placed on the original registered provider by the Australian government which do not allow the student to continue with the course, no Letter of Release is required.

3. Students seeking to transfer from the School to another registered provider

Overview

The School will generally agree to a request from an International Student to transfer to another registered provider prior to completing 6 months of their principal course with the School; however in assessing such a request the following factors will be taken into account:

- the student requesting a transfer does not have a clear understanding of what the transfer represents to their study options;
- the student has not made an attempt to discuss the reasons for seeking a transfer with either the Head of Studies or the Operations Manager;
- the student has outstanding course fees owing to the School;
- it is suspected that the student is seeking to transfer to another registered provider only to avoid being reported to DEEWR³ for failure to meet academic progress requirements.

Where it is assessed that one of the above factors applies, the student's request for a Letter of Release may be refused.

In the circumstance that the School does not grant a Letter of Release, the student will be provided with a letter outlining the decision to refuse the request and informing the student of their right to appeal the decision through the School's grievance handling procedures (refer sample letter attached).

Where a Letter of Release is granted it will be issued to the student at no cost and will advise the student of the need to contact DIAC⁴ to seek advice on any implications to their student visa.

Students will be advised of the outcome of the assessment of their request within 5 working days of the request being submitted.

The School will maintain records of all requests from students for a Letter of Release and the assessment of and decision regarding the request on the student's file.

Procedure

The following procedure applies to International Students wishing to transfer from the School to another registered provider within 6 months of commencement of their principal course of study:

³ Refers to the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

⁴ Refers to the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship

- 3.1 The International Student will present, in person, to the Operations Manager and provide a written request that they wish to transfer from the School to another registered provider. The Operations Manager will arrange an exit interview where the student will provide an original copy of a valid Letter of Offer from the registered provider to which the student wishes to transfer.
- 3.2 The Operations Manager will check the financial status of the student to determine if there are fees owing or if the student is entitled to a refund under the School's refund policy. The Operations Manager will advise the student if there are any fees owing and discuss how payment will be settled or, if a refund is due, how much will be refunded and when. The Operations Manager will also check to see if there are any library books or other items on loan to the student and make arrangements for their return.
- 3.3 During the exit interview the Operations Manager will:
 - discuss the reasons for the student wishing to transfer to another registered provider;
 - sight the original Letter of Offer from the registered provider that the student wishes to transfer to;
 - make a copy of the Letter of Offer.
- 3.4 Following the exit interview the Operations Manager will make an assessment of the student's request for a transfer to another registered provider taking into account the factors mentioned above and come to a decision on whether to provide the student with a Letter of Release.
- 3.5 If the Operations Manager agrees to the student's request for a transfer to another registered provider they will provide the student with a Letter of Release within 5 working days (refer sample letter attached). The Letter of Release will be provided to the student at no charge and will advise the student of the need to contact DIAC to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required.
- 3.6 The student must, if applicable, pay any outstanding fees or return any library books or equipment before receiving the Letter of Release.
- 3.7 If the Operations Manager denies the student's request for a transfer to another registered provider, the student will be provided with a letter detailing the decision to refuse the request within 5 working days and will be informed of their right to appeal the decision through the School's complaints handling procedures (refer sample letter attached).
- 3.8 The request for transfer to another registered provider, a copy of the Letter of Offer from the other registered provider, a copy of the written advice to the student of the decision and, if granted, a copy of the Letter of Release will be placed on the student's file.
- 3.9 The PRISMS Reporting Officer will advise DEEWR/DIAC through PRISMS that the student has transferred to another registered provider.

- 3.10 The Operations Manager will ensure that the following tasks are undertaken:
- a Statement of Attainment is prepared for the transferring student, if applicable;
 - e-mail the relevant personnel advising them that the student has withdrawn from the course so that records can be updated and any necessary arrangements are made.
- 3.11 Letters of Release will always be provided when, or if:
- The School's registration or accreditation has been revoked;
 - Sanctions imposed on the School by the government prevent the student from continuing in the course;
 - A government sponsor deems that the transfer is in the best interest of the student.

4. Publication

International Students are advised of this policy prior to enrolment through publication on the School's website (www.sydneyfilmschool.com).

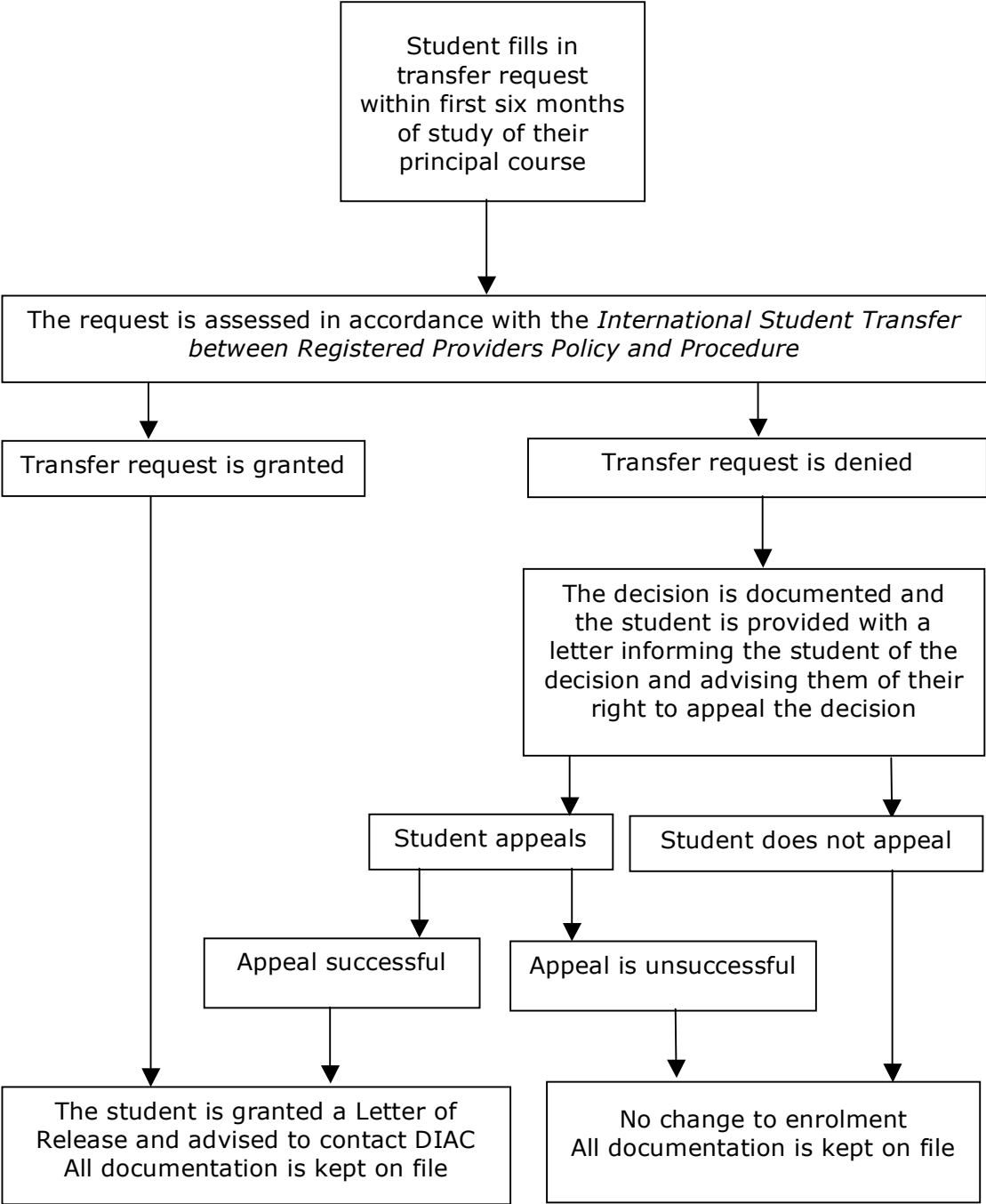
5. Version control

Document: International Student Transfer between Registered Providers Policy and Procedure		
Approved by: Management Committee	Version #: 2	Date: 9 July 2009

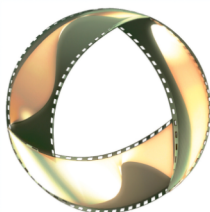
6. Related documentation

- Student transfer request assessment flowchart
- Letter of Release
- Refusal to Release letter

Student transfer request assessment flowchart



Sample letter of release to advise students who have been granted release prior to completing 6 months of their principal course of study.



SYDNEY FILM SCHOOL

[Date]

[Student name]

[Address]

Letter of Release

Dear [Student name]

I have received your application for a Letter of Release. As the reasons stated in your application fall within the School's *International Student Transfer between Registered Providers Policy and Procedure*, your request has been granted.

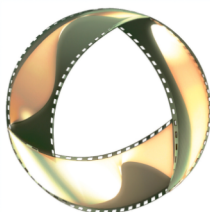
You should be aware that your decision to transfer to a different education provider may have visa implications and you should contact the nearest Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) office as soon as possible to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required.

If you wish to seek a refund of fees, please refer to the School's *International Student Refund Policy* and follow the appropriate procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Uracha Oliver
Operations Manager

Sample letter of release to advise students who have not been granted release prior to completing 6 months of their principal course of study.



SYDNEY FILM SCHOOL

[Date]

[Student name]

[Address]

Refusal to Release

Dear [Student name]

I have received your application for a Letter of Release. As the reasons stated in your application do not fall within the School's *International Student Transfer between Registered Providers Policy and Procedure*, your request has been refused.

Specifically the reasons for refusing to grant your request are [insert reasons].

You have the right to appeal this decision in accordance with the School's grievance handling process as outlined in the *Student Handbook*.

If you choose to appeal, until the process is complete, you must continue to maintain your enrolment and attendance at all classes as normal.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please make an appointment to see me. You can bring a support person with you to this meeting if you wish.

Yours sincerely,

Uracha Oliver
Operations Manager