Transfer of Students between Providers

Policy / Procedure Number: 019

1. Policy

This policy/procedure supports ‘Standard 7 – Transfer between registered providers’ of the ‘National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities & Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2007’.

From July 2007, providers are restricted from enrolling transferring students prior to the student completing 6 months of their principal course. This policy details the procedures for assessing applications to transfer within this period. Students who have studied longer than this period can apply as normal and no letters of release need to be sighted or produced.

The policy of the AITT is to ensure that it does not enrol any transferring international student prior to the 6 months of their principal course being completed unless that student has a valid letter of release agreeing to such a transfer and the below procedures will be implemented.

The AITT will not knowingly enrol the student wishing to transfer from another registered provider’s course prior to the student completing six months of his or her principal course of study except where:

- 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 provided a written letter of release;
- The original registered provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the Australian Government or state or territory government that prevents the student from continuing his or her principal course; or
- Any government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student’s best interest and has provided written support for that change.

The following procedures have been separated into ‘Incoming students’ and ‘Outgoing students’

2. Procedure

The National Code 2007 restricts the capacity of students to transfer to other providers prior to completing six months of their principal course. AITT will not allow students to transfer to another provider within six months of the commencement of their principal course of study in circumstances where the transfer would be detrimental to the study plan as detailed in their application.

Circumstances that are considered detrimental to a student’s study plan could be but are not limited to:

- Change in Study Plan
- Transfer to a lower level of studies
- Increased tuition costs, particularly in cases where deposits paid in advance to AITT are non-refundable
- Increased duration of studies in Australia
• Insufficient preparation for further studies
• Qualifications not recognised by Higher Education Providers as satisfying their entry requirements
• Level of support services at new provider not equivalent
• Impact to welfare support services established for students under the age of 18.
• Transfer would jeopardise student’s progression through a package of courses
• Within 6 months’ of a course beginning students may experience home-sickness and transfer to another registered provider is not likely to overcome this problem
• AITT is of the view that the student is avoiding being reported to DIAC for failure to meet attendance or academic progress requirements

Any requests that are received in relation to a student wishing to transfer education providers shall be the responsibility of the Administration Manager. The Administration Manager shall assess the applications to transfer education providers and conclude an outcome based on the following procedure.

**Incoming students**

The following procedure is relevant to any student who applies for a course within the AITT and is currently studying on-shore with another registered provider.

For this procedure to be completed the applicant must provide a copy of their Student Visa and appropriate student number (to look up PRISMS). Once this information is obtained the following steps are taken:

i. Administration Manager accesses the student information via PRISMS. They are to ascertain if the length of studies completed in their current Principle course of study is greater than 6 months. They also use the copy of the student visa in the passport to ascertain what the principal course is and when they arrived in Australia.

ii. In completing this process they would print a copy of the PRISMS record and attach to the student application.

iii. If they have completed more than 6 months of their principle course of study, the application process proceeds as for all off-shore students.

iv. Where a student has NOT completed 6 months of their principle course of study, they are asked to provide an appropriate letter of release in support of their application.

v. To support the application they can be provided with a ‘Conditional’ Letter of Offer (Appendix A) which clearly states that an offer of a place is contingent on their obtaining a letter of release. It also states that if they are under 18 and not in the custody of their parents, legal guardian, or ‘suitable relative, that THE AITT will require evidence of their guardianship agreement and will have to approve these arrangements.

*Note, if they are in receipt of a Government scholarship, they should provide written support from this government agreeing to the change which will stand in lieu of any letter of release.*
vi. If such a letter of release is received and the student has no outstanding fees to be paid to the prior institution or other outstanding matters of concern, the application proceeds as for all off-shore applicants.

vii. If no satisfactory letter of release is obtained from such students, the application process is halted and the student informed that they are unable to transfer at this time. They are welcome to re-activate their application when the 6 month period has passed.

viii. Note that in the very rare circumstances where the original institution or course has ceased to be registered, or sanctions have been placed on the original institution by the Australian government which do not allow the student to continue with the course, no letter of release is required. Evidence of this occurrence would need to be placed in the student file.

**Outgoing students**

The following procedure is relevant to those students wishing to transfer to another education provider prior to completing six (6) months of their principle course of study.

i. Students make a written request (e-mail is satisfactory) to Administration Manager to transfer to another provider. The only reason a ‘release letter’ shall be issued if:
   - The AITT has cancelled/ceased to offer your program (letter from AITT supplied)
   - Government sponsor considers the change to be in your best interest, if you are a sponsored student (written confirmation from sponsor required)
   - Exceptional circumstances (documentation required to support circumstances and a letter of offer from another provider is required.)

ii. The student is asked to provide a valid ‘offer of enrolment’ from the new provider authenticating the transfer and the student is able to provide a letter indicating the benefits of transferring from their current course of study.

iii. If the student is under 18, their parent or guardian must support this request in writing. If they are under 18 and the AITT currently provides accommodation and welfare, they must also provide written evidence that the new provider will accept responsibility for their accommodation and welfare arrangements.

iv. In assessing the application to transfer, the Administration Manager will check the following points:
   - Ensure any outstanding fees are paid
   - Ensure the student is fully aware of all issues relating the transferring of providers.
   - Check student records to ensure the student is not trying to avoid being reported to DEST due to lack of course progress or poor attendance records.

v. Once the above points have been addressed by the Administration Manager, a ‘Letter of Release’ (Appendix B) will be granted at no charge to the student. The student will also be advised of the need to contact DIAC and obtain a new visa if the course they transfer to is not a Higher Education / VET course. Any issues will be reported to the CEO.

vi. The Administration Manager must report the student’s termination of studies via PRISMS
• The above process should not take more than 48 hours once the student has provided the necessary documentation.

• All requests, considerations, decisions and copies of letters of release should be placed on student’s file

• The approval of transfer of a student to another institution does not indicate the agreement to provide any refund. Refunds are governed by the refund policy independent of this policy.

• The letter of release will be issued at no extra cost to the student

• Student will be advised that “Student need to contact the DIAC offices to seek advice on whether a new Student visa is required.

• In the event of Refusal to release the student, AITT will provide written reasons for refusal.

• Refusal of the release will be consistent with the institution’s student transfer request assessment policy and procedure (as required by 7.2) and the other requirements of the standards, especially Standard 7.5

• The AITT will make the assessment, consistent with its release policy

• AITT will inform the student of his or her right to appeal the AITT’s decision in accordance with the AITT’s complaints and appeals process.
APPENDIX A

‘Conditional’ Letter of Offer to Transfer

To (Insert Student name),

I am writing to acknowledge your application to enrol in course (insert Course name & Code).

As you have not completed the first six (6) months of your principle course of study at your current education provider, we are only able to offer you a ‘conditional’ offer of enrolment at this stage.

This condition of enrolment is based on you attaining a ‘Letter of Release’ from your current education provider in your principle course of study.

This ‘conditional’ offer is valid for a period of 10 working days from the date of this letter and your ‘Letter of release’ must be presented before any further action will be taken in respect to this application.

Please do not hesitate to contact Student Administration if you have any questions.

Regards

Student Administration
APPENDIX B

Letter of Release of student within first six (6) months of study

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to confirm that Australian Institute of Technical Training is releasing the following student although they have not completed the first six (6) months of study in their principle course of study:

Student Name: (Insert Details)
Student Visa number: (Insert Details)
Student Address: (Insert Details)

The above mentioned student has been enrolled in the qualification (insert qualification title and code) and has requested a transfer to another education provider. The education provider that the release is being granted for has been evidenced with a ‘conditional’ letter of offer from the following provider:

Provider name: (Insert Details)
Provider CRICIS number: (Insert Details)
Qualification code: (Insert Details)

The AITT acknowledges that it has informed the student that from the date of this ‘Release letter’ AITT is no longer the provider of the principle course of study for the student as identified within the Student Visa.

The AITT will be notifying the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) / the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) of this change by terminating the student’s CoE via PRISMS.

The student needs to contact DIAC to seek advice on whether a new visa is required.

Regards,

Student Administration
APPENDIX C

Letter of Refusal of Release of student within first six (6) months of study

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to confirm that Australian Institute of Technical Training is refusing to release the following student within the first six (6) months of study in their principle course of study:

Student Name:  (Insert Details)
Student Visa number:  (Insert Details)
Student Address:  (Insert Details)

The above mentioned student has been enrolled in the qualification (insert qualification title and code) and has requested a transfer to another education provider.

After careful considerations, your application to grant a Release within the first Six months of the study period has been refused on the following grounds:

(INSERT DETAILS)

AITT undertakes to revisit Students (Insert Details) situation within 4 weeks to ascertain if he still wanted to transfer after accessing the support services of the provider.

The AITT has made the assessment, consistent with its release policy that it was not in Student’s (Insert Details) best interest to grant a release.

If you do not agree with the decision you have the right to appeal in accordance with the AITT’s processes.

Regards,

Student Administration