

Regulations Governing Admission, Enrolment, Withdrawals and Non-Engagement Cancellations

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Major changes/additions since the last version was approved are indicated by a vertical line in the left-hand margin.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy provides a framework and set of principles relating to admission, enrolment, withdrawals and non-engagement cancellations. The policy and associated procedures are designed so that all regulatory requirements are met, including those related to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

1.2 Scope and Application

This policy applies to all admissions, enrolment, withdrawals and non-engagement cancellations related to courses/programmes/other educational activities delivered by or through Ara Institute of Canterbury¹.

1.3 Formal Delegations

- a The Ara Council delegates the Academic Board to:
 - i Approve new and existing programmes and courses which are in accordance with the Ara Strategic Plan and Investment Plan.
 - ii Admit students to approved programmes and courses.
 - iii Grant awards.
 - iv Develop, monitor, review and maintain policies on academic matters, including research.
- b Sub-delegations from the Academic Board to other bodies (e.g. Department Board of Studies) are recorded in the minutes of the Academic Board and summarised in an attachment to the Board's Terms of Reference. Refer Section 3 of this policy for delegations relevant to this policy, as well as responsibilities for specific tasks and authority to vary policy.
- c Academic Board to Heads of Department:
 - i Special Admissions - Approve all Special Admissions in Department. Reported and monitored through Department Board of Studies.

¹ From herein referred to as Ara

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- ii Aegrotat – Decisions regarding eligibility for an aegrotat. Decisions on assessment of students’ performance for an aegrotat pass (in conjunction with the Department Board of Studies).

Definitions

Please note this policy must be read in conjunction with the Glossary of Definitions listed on the Ara website under Academic Policies and Procedures, 1.0 Introduction.

<p>Related Ara Procedures and Forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APP504a Consideration of Fees and Charges Refund Procedures (including Compassionate Consideration) • APP504b Refund Procedures for Full Fee Paying (FFP) International Students • APP504c Special Admission Application • APP504d Terms and Conditions of Enrolment • APP504e Guidelines for Pro Rata Enrolment • APP504f Application for Compassionate Consideration for Withdrawal or Transfer • APP504g Application to Register as Non-assessed Student 	<p>Related Ara Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APP301 Student Rights and Responsibilities • APP503 Naming and Awarding Qualifications and Recognising Achievement • APP506 Probation • APP507 Credit Recognition • APP509 Additional Assessment Arrangements • APP603 Design, Development and Approval of Programmes • CPP109 Disclosing Information about Students and Staff
<p>Related Legislation or Other Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems for Managing EFTS Places (Tertiary Education Commission) annual publication • Tertiary Funding Information (Tertiary Education Commission) annual publication • Education Act 1989 • Human Rights Act 1993 • Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (MoE) 	<p>Good Practice Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kia orite: NZ Centre of Practice for an Inclusive Tertiary Education Environment (Sections 3.3, 3.5)
<p>References</p>	
<p>Notes</p> <p>The original version of this policy combined a number of previous policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Policy - Criteria for Admission to Degrees (22/01/99) • Interim Policy - Admission to Degree Papers/Courses under STAR (10/12/98) • Policy Under Development - Enrolling Students under 16 Years of Age (21/08/97) • Policy Under Development - Recording all Students on SRS (07/07/97) • Academic Results: Student Withdrawals (07/12/95) • Pre-Enrolment Information (28/11/94) • Late Enrolments (20/06/93) <p>Version dated 10 December 2009 incorporates relevant sections of the policy related to English Language Requirements for Students from a Non English Speaking Background (NESB) (09/09/04)</p> <p>2012: Changes made to reflect the changes to the structures within Ara.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-engagement cancellation added into this policy • Definitions around eligible person has been altered to reflect the CTC and targeted initiatives • Modified admission for students with a declared disability • Special Admission process re-written to reflect new structure <p>2013: Minor changes made to reflect the accuracy relating to Withdrawals and Refunds. Council delegation to CEO reviewed and delegated powers to Academic Board endorsed.</p> <p>2014: English Language requirement section updated to align with NZQA rules published Oct 2013</p> <p>2016: New branding</p>	

2 Principles

- 2.1 Admission, enrolment, withdrawal and non-engagement cancellation practices are governed by fair, transparent and academically sound principles.

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- 2.2 Flexible procedures meet a variety of situations and needs.
- 2.3 Every person is entitled to representation, advice, advocacy and support at all stages of any of the processes under this policy.

3 Associated procedures for Ara Academic Policy on: Regulations Governing Admission, Enrolment, Withdrawal and Non-Engagement Cancellations

Contents:	3.1	Legislative Compliance
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3.1 Legislative Compliance

- a All admission procedures operate within the framework of the Human Rights Act 1993 which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, religious belief, ethical belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, political opinion, employment status, family status and sexual orientation. Ss57-60 of the Human Rights Act 1993 contain specific exceptions to this basic principle for educational institutions.
- b Regulations and requirements set out by other relevant bodies, particularly the Tertiary Education Commission and NZQA, are also reflected in this policy and associated procedures.

3.2 Restrictions on Admission

- a All programmes state the minimum entry criteria, which will include academic requirements, prior experience, age and/or current employment in a relevant field.

English language entry levels are available to all prospective students in all pre-enrolment information.

Applicants denied admission are advised of the reason and of any alternative course of study, including bridging courses, which may be of interest to them (refer also to section below on Special Admission). Applicants who meet the stated entry requirements, but who may have difficulty achieving specific registration or other mandatory employment requirements, are informed of this as part of the admissions process.

In general, applicants may not be refused admission on any of the grounds listed in the Human Rights Act 1993 including disability (physical disability or impairment, physical illness, psychiatric illness, intellectual or psychological disability or impairment, any other loss or abnormality, reliance on a guide dog, wheelchair, or other remedial means, presence in the body of organisms capable of causing illness) [Human Rights Act 1993 ss21 and 57].

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However, admission may be refused:

- If the person's disability requires special services or facilities which cannot reasonably be provided; *or*
- If the person's disability is such that there would be a risk of harm to the person or to others if the person was admitted [Human Rights Act 1993 s60].

The Chief Executive's endorsement must be obtained if a person is to be refused admission under the Human Rights Act.

- b Ara may restrict admission or enrolment to particular courses/programmes if:
- i Student demand exceeds the availability of resources such as staff, facilities or equipment (refer also Section 3.10 Cancellation of Courses/Programmes).
 - ii An applicant owes any debt to Ara.
 - iii One or more of the grounds set out in s224 (13) of the Education Act 1989 apply (refer policy *APP506 Regulations Governing Probation, Suspension, and Cancellation/Refusal of Enrolments*).
 - iv Ara has exceeded its funding cap.
- c Specific conditions apply to the admission of international students (e.g. visa, insurance and English Language requirements).

There must be evidence that an international student's level of English proficiency is appropriate for their study before they are enrolled.

English language requirements are set in accordance with NZQA rules. At the time of application an international student must either provide evidence of their English proficiency either via IELTS or another approved test, or undertake an equivalent Ara test. (Refer <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/approval-accreditation-and-registration/programme-approval-and-provider-accreditation/english-international-students>)

3.3 Entry and Selection

- a Setting the entry criteria and any additional selection procedures are part of the programme approval process overseen by the Academic Board (refer policy *APP603 Design, Development and Approval of Programmes*).
- b The purpose of setting entry criteria/selection procedures is to ensure applicants are treated fairly and, once enrolled, have a high probability of success. In addition, Ara provides potential applicants with sufficient information to help them decide if the course or programme is suitable for them. It is important to ensure that English as an Additional Language (EAL) students have a level of English language appropriate to the content and purpose of their chosen course or programme, so that they are treated fairly and have a greater chance of success. It is also important to ensure that students who declare a disability or impairment are advised of the nature and level of support which Ara can provide.
- c The principles and procedures for setting and approving entry/selection criteria are described in the Qualification and Programme of Study Design, Development and Approval Guidelines. In most cases, this includes:
 - i Consulting with Learning Services on a programme-by-programme basis to ensure the minimum level of literacy/numeracy, aptitude and/or experience are identified; regarding the appropriate English language level for applicants from a non-English speaking background.

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- ii Describing more than one entry 'pathway' (e.g. entry criteria for school leavers is likely to differ from those with relevant work experience).
 - iii Deciding whether an additional selection process is needed, especially if there are more applicants who meet the minimum entry criteria than there are available places, and if so determining the appropriate criteria and selection process.
- d Departments are responsible for developing and using valid procedures for verifying the information supplied by applicants, especially when evidence of having achieved 'equivalent' or 'alternative' criteria are being considered.
 - e If an applicant is unable to provide verifiable evidence, Ara may undertake its own assessment, involving person(s) with the relevant knowledge (e.g. programme staff with content expertise for assessing aptitude, Learning Services for assessing general academic ability, designated staff for assessing knowledge/aptitude in a generic subject area such as mathematics or communication).
 - f To be admitted (and subsequently enrolled), applicants must meet the definition of an 'eligible person' and provide acceptable evidence of meeting the stated entry/selection criteria. This includes any pre-requisites and co-requisites for specified courses. Documentary evidence, including past academic records, must be either an original or a certified copy.
 - g Only those applicants who meet all selection criteria will be admitted, unless Special Admission is approved by the Head of Department (refer Section 3.6).
 - h Where a student does not fully meet the English Language requirements or cannot supply acceptable evidence of English Language ability (either EAL – (non-native speaker of English), or (native speaker of English)) the Department may request that the student be assessed for English language ability. A report and recommendation re the student's ability to meet the English language requirements for the particular programme is then sent to the Department. The Learning Advisor (EAL) does not determine entry – their role is to make a recommendation. Where a prospective student is deemed to have met the English Entry requirements this is not a Special Admission. However, if the Department chooses to accept a student when the recommendation is otherwise, this would need to go through the usual Special Admission process.

3.4 Admission as a Non-Assessed Student

- a With permission from the Head of Department or his/her delegate from the relevant Department, an applicant may be enrolled in an assessed course(s) as a 'non-assessed student' (referred to as 'Certificate of Personal Interest' by the Tertiary Education Commission).
- b Students admitted under this provision must meet the stated entry requirements or be admitted under Special Admission (refer Section 3.6). The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) may approve a reduced fee, depending on the course(s).
- c If the student maintains attendance at the level specified by the Department, a Statement of Attendance may be issued in lieu of the usual results notification (refer policy *APP503 Naming and Awarding Qualifications and Recognising Achievement*).
- d If a student is enrolled as an assessed student and later wishes to change to non-assessed status, or vice versa, this can be done with the Head of Department's permission prior to the due date of the first summative assessment. If a non-assessed student initially paid a reduced fee, the full fee must be paid before any assessment is completed.

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3.5 Admission to Secondary Tertiary Pathway Offerings (including STAR, Trades Academies or Other Secondary Tertiary Pathway initiatives)

- a The following criteria and conditions relate to admission of students to Secondary Tertiary Pathway (STP) programmes funded through targeted STP funding or other arrangements with identified secondary schools:
 - i To be eligible to enroll, students must be enrolled in a secondary school.
 - ii The Trade Academy is responsible for selecting and enrolling students ensuring entry requirements of approved programmes are met.
 - iii Attendance requirements will be set.
 - iv Students are eligible for free fees however, they do not qualify for student loans, allowances or course related costs.
 - v Programmes offered under STP initiative require a Memorandum of Understanding with participating schools and organisations.
- b Students wishing to pathway to a higher level programme must meet the published entry and other requirements for entry.
- c The processes outlined in this policy for withdrawing students apply.

3.6 Special Admission

- a The Special Admission process is handled by each Department under delegation from the Academic Board. Special Admissions applications are submitted to the Head of Department by a designated staff member on behalf of a student who does not meet all of the stated entry criteria, but can provide acceptable alternative evidence of ability to succeed.
- b The person making the decision whether or not to admit a student under the Special Admission provision also decides whether admission is provisional or if any other special conditions apply (e.g. limitation on number or level of course(s); pre or co-requisite requirements such as English language classes or study skills tutorials; specified level of achievement required to progress to the next stage). If there are any special conditions, the Department is responsible for ensuring the student is given this in writing at the time admission is granted and for monitoring that the conditions are met.
- c A copy of the signed Special Admission Application (*refer to APP504c*) for each applicant is forwarded to the Department Support, which maintains a central record and provides a summary of admissions granted or declined to the Department Board of Studies. From time to time, the success rate of students admitted under Special Admission is reported, compared with other students in the same programme.

3.7 Information Provided

a Information Provided to Applicants

Every programme leading to a qualification is supported by written regulations approved by the Academic Board that set out the formal requirements for completion of the programme. These regulations are also available to applicants on request and are provided to all enrolled students by the Department.

As a minimum, Ara makes available the following information about each programme:

- i Full course/programme title, credit value and level/equivalent level.
- ii Qualification(s), if any, gained on successful completion.
- iii Overall aim and graduate profile.

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- iv Education and Employment and pathway options available on completion of the qualification.
- v Recognition given to the qualification by relevant registration and/or accreditation bodies.
- vi Admission requirements and selection criteria (if relevant).
- vii Standard of literacy, English language proficiency, numeracy and other generic skills required for likely success.
- viii Fees, charges and any additional costs.
- ix Estimation of workload, including requirements outside of class time.
- x Requirements for completion/progression, including any attendance requirements.
- xi Special requirements pertaining to the programme or individual courses (e.g. professional registration requirements).
- xii Start and finish dates, including breaks.
- xiii Availability of student loans and allowances.

Refer Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students for additional information supplied to international students prior to enrolment.

b Information Provided by Applicants

Applications for admission are made on the Ara application form, according to prescribed procedures and within the set timeframe. Applicants must provide all requested information and documentation to be considered for admission. Ara reserves the right to seek verification of any information supplied. All personal information is protected by the Information Privacy Principles (refer policy *CPP109 Disclosing Personal Information about Students and Staff*). When enrolling, EAL students must present either the original or a certified copy of the evidence that establishes their English language proficiency. Without this certification, enrolment cannot proceed.

3.8 Enrolment Requirements

- a Enrolment in a course or programme cannot be accepted until all relevant internal and external programme approval requirements overseen by the Academic Board (including funding approval from the Tertiary Education Commission) are met. All relevant administrative requirements overseen by the Corporate Services Division also must be completed. Expressions of Interest may be taken from prospective applicants, with the proviso that enrolment is subject to the above requirements being met.
- b Enrolment includes the completion of an Admission/Enrolment Form or Enrolment Amendment Form on which the applicant provides certain information (some compulsory and some voluntary) required by Ara, the Tertiary Education Commission or other external agencies. Enrolment is not complete until the compulsory information has been provided and verified, the fees and charges have been paid or guaranteed and the student declaration has been signed (either personally or via acceptable electronic signature). This must be done by the start date of the course. Placement cannot be guaranteed until such time as the enrolment fees are paid or guaranteed.
- c Applicants who have not paid or guaranteed all fees and charges and/or provided verified personal ID by the course or programme start date will not be admitted to classes or entitled to participate in any activities or assessments. They will not be eligible for the awarding of credits or qualifications until all fees, including any additional administrative charges because of late payment, are paid in full and applicants have provided verified personal ID.

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- d Enrolment after the commencement date is permitted only with the approval of the Head of Department or his/her delegate, and on payment of the specified fee (which for some courses may be a reduced fee). The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) has the authority to set the fee for students transferring from another Polytechnic/Institute of Technology, those with refugee status or other students in urgent need of survival skills courses.
- e The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) also has authority to use some discretion to reduce or waive tuition fees for refugees with Permanent Residence status enrolling in English for Speakers of Other Language courses within two years from the date Permanent Residence was granted. Any other reduction in fees, made on compassionate grounds in exceptional circumstances, also must be authorised by the CFO.
- f Enrolment indicates student acceptance that she/he is bound by the terms and conditions of enrolment, the policies and procedures of Ara, the stated academic and professional requirements and the code of behaviour set out in policy *APP301 Student Rights and Responsibilities*.
- g The formal Ara Identification Card is issued to eligible students upon full payment of tuition fees and other charges. Eligibility for an Ara ID or a Library Access Only (LAO) card is based on the category of programme and course enrolled in and/or the payment of the Student Service Levy. The non-transferable card, which includes the student's name, ID number and photograph, is valid for the length of the programme. It can be used for the following: access to Library and Learning Services facilities, use of photocopiers, student discounts, entry to examinations, and access to 24 hour computer suites and eligibility for parking permits.
- h Ara may levy an appropriate fee for persons not enrolled as Ara students, but who require access to Ara facilities and services (e.g. students enrolled in another institution whose classes are held on an Ara campus). The Registry Manager is responsible for determining the levy in consultation with the relevant Department and Division(s).

3.9 Credit Recognition (Cross Credits, Credit Transfer, Prior Learning and Advanced Standing)

- a Students admitted to a programme have the right to apply for cross credits or credit transfer for study completed at Ara or another recognised educational institution. Students may also submit evidence of having met stated learning outcomes through work, personal experience, or study, usually outside a formal educational setting (referred to as Recognition of Prior Learning or Assessment of Prior Learning).
- b There is no set maximum number of credits that can be earned via these processes, although credit is only granted when there is an equivalence between the learning achieved and the stated learning outcomes. If more than half of a qualification is likely to be awarded via RPL then the application is handled by the Centre for Assessment of Prior Learning (CAPL).
- c With the exception of fees set by the CAPL office, any adjustment to fees as a result of cross credits or recognition of prior learning will be determined by the Guidelines for Pro Rata Enrolment. (*Refer to APP504e*).
- d Refer to the policy *APP507 Credit Recognition* for further details.

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3.10 Cancellation of Courses/Programmes

If the number of students enrolled in a particular course or programme is insufficient to justify delivery, the Head of Department or his/her delegate may cancel or postpone that occurrence, regardless of whether enrolments have been accepted. In such cases, all fees and charges paid will be refunded in full (refer 'Declaration' on the Enrolment Form and 'Terms and Conditions of Enrolment' on the Confirmation of Enrolment/Tax Invoice).

3.11 Withdrawal and Refund of Fees and Charges

- a A student may terminate her or his current enrolment(s) at any time, but is encouraged to discuss this with their Programme Manager first in order to check the implications on future enrolments, academic record, fees, refunds, loans and allowances. Formal withdrawal is made in writing to the Head of Department. If withdrawal is formalised before the published Last Withdrawal Date (LWD) for the particular course, there is no academic result generated on the student record. An academic result of WD (Withdrawal) is entered for students withdrawing at any time between the LWD and 80% of the course duration. After that time, the actual grade obtained, taking into account assessments not completed during the last 20% of the course, is entered as the result. In most cases, this would be a 'Fail' or 'No Credit' (refer also to Section 3.12 Compassionate Withdrawals, Refunds and Transfers).
- b A partial refund of fees and charges may be made if the withdrawal is completed before the published last withdrawal date (LWD). Except in extraordinary circumstances (refer Section 3.12), no refund will be made after the LWD. The effective date of withdrawal is the date when Ara receives the written advice of withdrawal, not the last date the student attended class.
- c The entitlement to a refund of any fees and charges for a student who formally withdraws from a course/programme is based on the start and end dates and whether the student is a domestic or international student. (International Students refer to *APP504b Refund Procedures for Full Fee Paying (FFP) International Students*). Ara deducts an administration charge from any amount refunded (refer *APP504d Terms and Conditions of Enrolment* for current administration charges and procedures). Ara will not deduct the administration fee where this deduction would place the student in debt to the Institution.
- d Refer to Section 3.12 for details related to compassionate withdrawals, refunds, and transfers.
- e Note that Ara is unable to claim TEC funding for any student who has never attended (or in the case of online learning, never logged on), even if they have paid their fees. If the student does not formally withdraw (see above), his/her record is set to 'Withdrawn Status', does not generate a refund and removes them from the Single Data Return (EFTS claim).
- f Students who intentionally withdraw (i.e. after LWD) receive no refund but remain valid for SAC Funding purposes.
- g Refer also to the policy *APP506 Regulations Governing Probation, Suspension and Refusal/Cancellation of Enrolments*, which includes related information not covered by this policy.

3.12 Compassionate Withdrawals, Refunds and Transfers

- a **Compassionate Withdrawal**
 - i The Ara standard terms and conditions apply to the majority of refunds and transfers actioned by the Institution. There are, however, situations in which Ara will refund fees and charges on compassionate grounds after the published last

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withdrawal date, but within specified timeframes (e.g. serious injury, illness, relocation to another centre, death). Refer *APP504a Consideration of Fees and Charges Refund Procedures (including Compassionate Consideration)*.

- ii In some cases, a student may be advised to transfer from one course to another within a programme concurrent to their existing enrolment (e.g. if as a result of his/her initial performance the Department recommends transferring to another course at a higher or lower level). The Department may recommend for a waiver of the associated charges to the Registry Manager or his/her delegate if the transfer request is outside the withdrawal period of the original enrolment. Students are required to pay any additional course fees, but are also eligible for a refund if the initial fee paid was higher than that for the new course. Note that transfers that are not concurrent may impact on the student's loan/allowance entitlements.
- iii Applications for compassionate withdrawals are by the student to the Head of Department.
- iv Application for compassionate consideration must be made within the calendar year of the course for which the application is being made.
- v Withdrawals or transfers requested/advised before the start date of the enrolment incur no financial penalty. Transfers made on or after the starting date will generally only be between concurrent enrolments.

b Compassionate Academic Result

- i The Head of Department approves an academic result of WD ('withdrawal') instead of a 'Fail' on compassionate grounds for a student who must withdraw during the last 20% of a course or courses because of exceptional circumstances unforeseen by this policy. This discretion is used sparingly and only when
 - The Department cannot provide an extension or alternative assessment for the student because of the nature of the assessment(s) *and*
 - The usual aegrotat process is not applicable *and*
 - There is evidence that the student would have in all likelihood passed the course(s) if completed.
- ii The Head of Department is responsible for forwarding the academic result arising from a compassionate withdrawal to the Central Academic Records Office (Corporate Services Division) to action.
- iii Partial refund made after the LWD result in a reduced funding claim for that enrolment.
- iv A student has the right to appeal any refund and/or compassionate withdrawal decision. The appeal must be made in writing within ten working days from notification of the decision, to the Chief Financial Officer and/or the Director, Education and Applied Research.

3.13 Deferred Enrolment

Where an applicant, having been accepted on to a programme, subsequently decides to delay starting their studies before courses start.

The applicant may have preferred placement for enrolment at a later date provided any changes to entry criteria are met.

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3.14 Non-engagement Cancellation

Non-engagement cancellation is the process, actioned by the Institute, to cancel an individual's enrolment or other educational activity because the student, though enrolled, has not attended or engaged (participated, submitted assignments, sat assessments, etc) or has only attended briefly or sporadically and has not engaged significantly. Failure to engage on the student's part is deemed to be "insufficient progress" in terms of s224 (12) of the Education Act 1989.

Departments must have in place mechanisms by which students who have not engaged or who are no longer engaging are identified. Such students must be advised by letter to their last known address that their enrolment is to be cancelled and must be given ten working days to respond to that advice.

The measure of whether or not a student has attended and/or engaged sufficiently to avoid non-engagement cancellation is set by each Department Board of Studies and recorded in the programme document.

In most cases, attendance is not an assessed course requirement at Ara. Assessment is based on the achievement of stated learning outcomes, not on whether a student attends a specific number of class sessions. The exceptions to this are when experiential learning or participation in specific activities is essential to meet outcomes or meet the requirements set by an external body.

If the student does not respond to the Department or their response is not considered sufficient reason to allow them to continue, the Department must advise Admissions and Enrolments.

The student must be advised by Admission and Enrolments that their enrolment is cancelled and that they may appeal this decision to the Chief Executive within ten working days of the date of the letter advising them of that fact. A form letter to their last known address is sufficient advice.

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