Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology
Te Whare Wānanga o Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka a Maui

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPECIAL LEAVE

Section	Learning and Teaching		
Approval Date	24.11.2016	**Approved by**	Directorate
Next Review	24.11.2017	**Responsibility**	Information and Enrolments Manager
Last Reviewed	New policy	**Key Evaluation Question**	5

PURPOSE

To ensure international students are informed of the process to request special leave during their studies.

SCOPE

NMIT is committed to ensure students are able to successfully complete their programme of study within the enrolment period specified in their Offer Documents.

NMIT acknowledges that situations may arise where a student needs to request special leave which may result in a break in their studies.

Situations requiring special leave include (but are not limited to):

- Pregnancy - return to home country or remain in New Zealand to give birth
- Bereavement - return home to arrange/attend funeral
- Medical - recuperation from an accident/incident
- Marriage ceremony

DEFINITIONS

Course	A course may be known as a paper, module or unit standard. A course is related to an enrolment event. A defined course or collection of courses forms a Programme of Study, which, if completed successfully, results in the award of a Qualification. [TANZ definition]
Head of Department (HoD)	Person responsible for the academic delivery for a group of programmes. The HoD reports directly to the Director of Learning and Teaching.
International Enrolments Administrator	The administrator associated with the Information and Enrolments Centre Team who reports directly to the Information and Enrolments Centre Manager.
Information and Enrolments Centre (IEC)	The Information and Enrolments Centre provides centralised processing for applications, enrolment, re-enrolment, withdrawals, transfers and refunds for domestic and international students as well as providing accurate and timely student data management and reporting.
Information and Enrolments Centre Manager	Manages the Information and Enrolment Centre and reports to a Director.
Programme	One or more courses, usually leading to an award (certificate, diploma, degree, graduate diploma, postgraduate diploma) that has been approved by the Academic Board and, if required, by the relevant external approval/accreditation body. Also referred to as a 'Programme of Study'.
Programme Coordinator	Person responsible for the operational activities linked to a programme area within a department. For example, Hairdressing. The coordinator reports directly to the HoD.
Student	A person enrolled in one or more course(s) at an institute. [def. TANZ]

DEFERRING STUDIES

A special leave request may affect the student's studies. The student must discuss their study options in advance with the Head of Department or Programme Co-ordinator (in the Head of Department's absence) to ensure they understand what is required to successfully complete their qualification. Refer to Programme Regulations for specific course and programme completion requirements.

In the event of a student not completing a course/s due to having taken special leave, the student will be required to re-enrol on the course/s at their own cost.

Courses are run **subject to having sufficient enrolments**.

The next available intake of the course the student needs to repeat may be delivered beyond the expiry date of the Student Visa. In this instance, students will be required to apply for a further Student Visa at their own cost.

AMOUNT OF LEAVE ALLOWED

NMIT may allow students a maximum of one calendar month special leave at one time without affecting their current Student Visa. NMIT does not expect students to require more than one period of Special Leave in each 12-month period. If a student finds themselves in a situation where they need another period of Special Leave during the same time period, then they need to discuss their situation with the Head of Department. In exceptional circumstances a second period of Special Leave may be considered. NMIT will consult with Immigration New Zealand regarding this.

All students applying for special leave will sign a privacy waiver allowing NMIT to obtain travel movements from Immigration New Zealand relating to the period of special leave.

Students who require more than one month of leave from their studies are in a position where it is highly unlikely they will be successful in completing their programme/qualification. Furthermore, the student would not be meeting the requirements and conditions of their Student Visa. Therefore, NMIT will have no option but to terminate the student's enrolment and advise Immigration New Zealand. Students can choose to withdraw from their studies if they find themselves in a position where it is highly unlikely they will be successful in completing their programme/qualification.

If the enrolment is terminated and the student wants to resume their studies at a later date, they will have to apply for another Student Visa and pay to repeat courses at their own cost. There is no guarantee that the visa will be approved.

The link below provides information on Student Visa requirements E3.20 Conditions of student visa, limited visa and interim visa for study purposes of Immigration New Zealand's Operational Manual.

RESPONSIBILITY AND PROCEDURE

BEFORE TAKING LEAVE	
Student	• Completes the Request for Special Leave form and attaches tentative flight information (if available) and supporting documentation such as medical certificates at least two weeks before your proposed leave start date. Late submissions will be considered under exceptional circumstances for example: bereavement of a family member. • Ensures all outstanding fees have been paid in full. • Submits Request for Special Leave form and supporting documentation to the International Enrolments Administrator.
International Enrolment Administrator	• Checks Request for Special Leave documentation. • Submits to Head of Department for decision.
Head of Department	• Approves/declines request. • Returns documentation to the International Enrolments Administrator.
International Enrolments Administrator	• Advises the student that Special Leave has been granted/not granted. • Uploads documentation to the Student Management System. • Informs Information and Enrolments Centre Manager.
Information and Enrolments Centre Manager	• Advises Immigration New Zealand.
AFTER TAKING LEAVE	
Student	• Reports to the International Enrolments Administrator or emails international@nmit.ac.nz within 48 hours of the return date specified on the Request for Special Leave form and provides NMIT with current address and contact details. • Communicates with the International Enrolments Administrator any changes to their return date. Failure to notify NMIT may result in a visa termination. • Takes full responsibility to catch up on missed study.
Information and Enrolments Centre Manager	• Follows up with Immigration New Zealand for students who do not arrive on the date specified. • Terminates enrolment for students who have not returned to continue with their studies and advises Immigration New Zealand through the Immigration New Zealand online termination form.

REFERENCES

INTERNAL

Student Charter
International Student Fees, Refunds and Charges Policy
Student Academic Support and Progression Policy
Student Misconduct Procedure

EXTERNAL

Immigration New Zealand's Operational Manual
Immigration New Zealand Website

APPENDICES

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Application for Special Leave Form

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Under what circumstances would my special leave request be declined?
Unsatisfactory attendance and/or progress.

What happens if I take special leave without prior approval?
All Special Leave needs to be applied for before taking leave. If the student leaves without prior approval, this is likely to result in termination of enrolment. NMIT will then liaise with Immigration New Zealand and advise that the student visa is no longer valid.

My student visa will expire when I'm on leave. Can I renew before I go?
NMIT can assist with visa renewals if your visa is due to expire one month before you go on leave. You can renew your student visa yourself via Immigration Online when you return to your home country. The link is: https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa . Before you leave, please ensure you have all the copies of your Offer and Receipt Documents.

My student visa has been terminated because my leave is more than one calendar month, how do I reapply for another student visa?
You can apply for another student visa via Immigration Online. The link is: https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa . Before you leave, please ensure you have all the copies of your Offer and Receipt Documents.

Can my partner (and dependants) stay in New Zealand while I go home?
Generally, no. Not if the visa of your partner and dependents are dependent on your student visa. Immigration New Zealand requires your partner (and dependants) to leave with you as their visas are linked to you studying. There may be some exceptions to this; such as if you need a very short trip home for bereavement, but this is at the discretion of Immigration New Zealand.

Can I continue to study while I'm on leave?
No. You must be in New Zealand to study your programme.

Does NMIT's International Student Insurance Policy cover maternity services?
No. There is no upgrade available on the insurance policy that NMIT provides the students.

Is there another New Zealand insurance company whose policy will cover the maternity services for international students?
It is unlikely that any insurer in New Zealand will offer this to an international as private insurance is only available for New Zealand residents.

What will happen if I have to return later than expected and I don't notify NMIT?
If you do not return by the date you indicated, and you do not contact NMIT to discuss, then NMIT will terminate your enrolment and advise Immigration New Zealand.

If I decide not to return to my studies, can I apply for a partial refund?
No, once you have started your studies, you are not eligible for a refund. Refer to the 'International Student Refund Eligibility Table' from the *International Student Fees, Charges and Refund* policy.

Can I request more than one calendar month of leave and resume my studies at a later date?
Yes, provided you have been granted permission by the Head of Department to complete your programme at a later date and by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement for fees to be held for a maximum of one year. Please refer to your Programme Regulations as there will be a specified period when you are required to complete your qualification from your initial enrolment on the programme. In terms of your student visa, NMIT will notify Immigration New Zealand that you have ceased studying and intend to resume study at a later date. If you are in New Zealand, you will need to apply for another type of visa as your student visa will be no longer valid. You must apply for another student visa once you are ready to resume studying; however, there is no guarantee that a student visa will be approved.

Does Immigration New Zealand have information on pregnant students?
Yes, Immigration New Zealand provides information on maternity services for students who are pregnant or become pregnant while studying at NMIT. For further information, please refer to this link: https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/tools-and-information/general-information/pregnant-applicants.

I think I need someone to talk to about my personal situation. Who can I see?
NMIT provides counselling services to students who need support to help them through their personal situation. Please contact internationalsupport@nmit.ac.nz or SANITI for further information.

Application for Special Leave

Student Name		
Student ID		
Programme Name		
Programme Start and End Date		
Address		
Contact Phone Number		
Email Address		
Leave Request Please explain why you are requesting special leave If your leave is pregnancy related, please advise in which country you plan to give birth to your baby.	**Start Date:**	**Return Date:**
	Reason	
Flights (Plane tickets)	Although your leave has not been approved at the time of completing this form, we are aware that you may have pre-booked your flights to secure the best deal. Please attach evidence of flight bookings.	
Any other information Please attach any supporting documentation, i.e. medical certificates		

ENROLMENTS TEAM TO COMPLETE		**Verified by**	
Tuition fees paid in full	Yes/No _____	**Visa expiry date**	

Please read and tick to acknowledge the following conditions:

- ☐ I have read and understood the study plan that NMIT has provided me to ensure I can continue to complete my studies when I return from special leave.
- ☐ I give permission for NMIT to obtain my travel movements from Immigration New Zealand, relating to this period of special leave
- ☐ I understand that I will advise NMIT if there are any changes to my return flights or circumstances.
- ☐ I understand that I will not ask for a partial refund if I decide not to return to NMIT to resume my studies.
- ☐ I will report to the International Enrolments Office or confirm via email (international@nmit.ac.nz) that I have returned to New Zealand within 48 hours of the return date specified on this form.
- ☐ I understand that NMIT will terminate my enrolment if I do not arrive within 48 hours of the return date specified on this form or a date agreed in writing with the International Enrolments Office. Once enrolment is terminated NMIT will advise Immigration New Zealand and compliance processes will commence.

Signed (student)		**Date**	

Please return this form to International Enrolments Office.

Approved by Head of Department		**Date**	