Purpose

All student visas are granted with the 'No Change of Provider' condition. This means that international students must stay with Acumen education for the first 6 months of their principal course. In addition, Acumen education will not knowingly enrol a transferring student from another education provider prior to 6 months of their principal course being completed. This policy does not apply to students who have already completed 6 months of their principal course.

Scope

This policy applies to all staffs of Acumen education who are involved in processing of students. Application form wishing to transfer from another RTO to Acumen education and Application form for Transfer between Registered Providers students wishing to transfer to another RTO from Acumen education.

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

| Application for Transfer Between Registered Providers | An application by a Student for Transfer Between Registered Providers (release). |
| DIBP | Department of Immigration and Border Protection. |
| ESOS Act: | The Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 of the Commonwealth of Australia, as amended from time to time. |
| National Code: | The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students, established pursuant to Part 4 of the ESOS Act, as amended from time to time. |
| Principal Course: | Principal Course is the first course that the student is enrolled at Acumen education. |
| Student Counsellor or equivalent: | Includes a student counsellor/student support officer/advise or welfare officer appointed by the Institute and working at the Institute or, in the case of Students |

Actions

Statement

1. Under Standard 7 of the National Code 2007, Registered Providers must not knowingly enroll a Student wishing to transfer from another Registered Provider’s course prior to the Student completing six calendar months of his/her Principal Course of study, except in limited circumstances as outlined in this policy.

2. Institute is entitled to determine the circumstances in which it will provide or refuse to provide a Release Letter. Where a Student requests a transfer within the period of six months of commencement of their Principal Course, Institute or its nominated officer will assess the request for transfer against this policy.

3. Students must co-operate with the Institute’s Staff or its nominated officers and attend any interviews or other appointments scheduled for them including in respect of support services provided by the Acumen.

4. No Release Letter is required where:
   a. the Student has completed at least 6 calendar months' study in his or her Principal Course; or
   b. the Student is government sponsored and that government sponsor provides written support for the change as it considers the change to be in the Student's best interests; or
   c. Acumen has ceased to be registered or the course in which the Student is enrolled has ceased to be registered; or
   d. Acumen has a sanction imposed on it that prevents the Student from continuing his or her Principal Course.
   e. To apply to transfer to another provider within the first 6 months of the Student's Principal Course, the Student must demonstrate 'exceptional circumstances' justifying the transfer.
Exceptional Circumstances include:

- Medical reasons eg. Recent hospital admission; serious injury; debilitating illness; severe anxiety or depression.
- Loss or bereavement eg. Death of a close family member, or close friend; family or relationship breakdown.
- Hardship/trauma eg. Recent victim of crime; sudden loss of income or employment; severe disruption to domestic arrangements.
- Educational progression problems that cannot be addressed by the provider’s resources.

5. Subject to Item 5 above, an Application for Transfer on the grounds of Exceptional Circumstances may be demonstrated by providing sufficient specific detailed information with relevant supporting documentation to support the Application, such as: a medical certification stating in reasonable detail:

- The dates of any relevant consultations or attendances;
- If relevant, the nature of the complaint and the treatment; and
- A specific statement that in the health care professional’s opinion (not the student’s opinion) that, as a result of the complaint or treatment, the student should be transferred.
- Police report or statutory declaration.
- Other relevant supporting documentation.

All documentation will be held in confidence and will be stored to ensure privacy.

6. No transfer will be granted where:

A. The Student has not completed the first four weeks of the principal course in which he or she is enrolled; or
B. Acumen or its nominated officer forms the view that the Student is trying to avoid being reported to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) for failure to meet the Acumen’s attendance or academic progress requirements; or
C. The transfer may jeopardize the Student's progression through a package of courses; or
D. The transfer would be detrimental to the Student's future study and/or career objectives; or
E. The Student has not accessed the acumen's student support or welfare services after having been requested to do so; or
F. The documents provided by the Student do not, in the acumen's or its nominated officer’s view, provide adequate grounds to justify the transfer; or
G. The Student has outstanding debts to Acumen Education.

**Procedure**

Any requests that are received in relation to a student wishing to transfer education providers shall be the responsibility of the Student Support Officer. The Student Support Officer 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 Acumen 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 details (to look up PRISMS). Once this information is obtained the following steps are taken:

i. Student Support officer accesses the student information via PRISMS. They are to ascertain if the length of studies completed in their current Principal 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. If they have completed more than 6 months of their principle course of study, the application process proceeds as for all off-shore students.

iii. 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.

iv. To support the application they can be provided with a (7.3 Conditional Letter of Offer) which clearly states that an offer of a place is contingent on their obtaining a letter of release. *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.*

v. 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.

vi. If the student is not able to obtain a release letter from the previous provider as he is not enrolled with any provider, the student is required to provide a proof of cancelation from his previous provider that include a copy of the cancelled Coe from a previous provider or a printout from PRISMS from the previous provider that indicates that the student is not enrolled at any other provider. The student is also required to sign a declaration at acumen to indicate that he is not currently enrolled at any other provider. The declaration is placed in the student file.

vii. If no satisfactory letter of release or the proof of cancellation 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 on (7.1 Application Form for Transfer between Registered Providers) to Student Support Officer to transfer to another provider. The only reason a ‘release letter’ shall be issued if:
   - Acumen has cancelled/ceased to offer your Course (letter from Acumen 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. In assessing the application to transfer, the Student Support Officer 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.

iv. Once the above points have been addressed by the Student Support Officer, a ‘7.2 Letter of Release within first 6 months’ 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.

v. The Student Support Officer 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 of student will be provided at no cost to student.

Responsibility
Operations Manager
Admin Manager
Student Support Officers

Forms
• 7.1 Application Form for Transfer Between Registered Providers
• 7.2 Letter of Release within first 6 months
• 7.3 Letter of Refusal to transfer within 6 months
## Forms / Record Keeping

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<td>Operations Manager Admin Manager</td>
<td>2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copy of Approved or Not Approved letter</td>
<td>Student File</td>
<td>Operations Manager Admin Manager</td>
<td>2 years</td>
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