

International Student Transfer Request Assessment Policy

Policy Statement

Insearch will assess all requests from students applying to transfer to/from Insearch from/to other education providers by a transparent process that ensures a transfer will only be granted if Insearch's academic criteria are met, all related legislation is complied with, and all relevant parties are informed of changes to the student's visa conditions.

SCOPE

This policy applies to staff required to deal with international student requests to transfer to or from other providers, specifically staff in the Insearch Student Centre and Students Admissions.

DEFINITIONS

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| CAAW | Confirmation of Accommodation and Welfare (issued through the PRISMS system) |
| ELICOS | English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students |
| i-records | Insearch's electronic student filing system |
| Onshore Student | An international student already holding an Australian student visa who is currently in Australia. |
| Package course | Where two or more courses are offered as a package covered by one visa duration |
| Principal course | The final course within a package of courses e.g. for an English/ Diploma package the principal course is the Diploma, for a Diploma/ degree package the principal course is the degree, for an English/ degree package the principal course is the degree |
| PRISMS | Provider Registration and International Student Management System |
| Provider | Educational institution |
| Release | A provider's permission for an international student to move to another provider |
| Special Arrangement | Arrangement other than Insearch homestay or Insearch approved accommodation |
| SSCR | Student Sponsorship, Compliance and Reporting |
| SSVF | Simplified Student Visa Framework |

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| Student's best interests | Factors that affect the student's progression in reaching their ultimate study goal. Factors include academic and English qualifications held by the student, level of study to which the student would like to move, entry requirements of proposed course to which the student would like to transfer, reasons given for the transfer. |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |

POLICY PRINCIPLES

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| Principle |
| TRANSFER FROM ANOTHER PROVIDER TO INSEARCH |
| Circumstances in which a transfer <u>will be granted</u> |
| <p>1. Insearch will grant an onshore student's request to transfer from another institution to Insearch if the student meets Insearch's entry criteria, has complied with visa conditions (is compliant with the Department of Home Affairs visa conditions and therefore has not been reported to the Department of Home Affairs by their previous provider) and has completed at least six months of their principal course, as evidenced by their student visa principal course start date or (where necessary) the student's data in the PRISMS system.</p> |
| <p>2. If the student has not completed six months of their principal course, transfer will be granted subject to the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student's previous provider approves the student's release. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence that the student is prevented from continuing their principal course of study due to sanctions on or deregistration of the original provider or original course of study. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student's sponsor or the body such as a Cultural Mission managing the sponsorship (Australian or other) considers the transfer to be in the student's best interest and provides written support for the transfer. |
| <p>3. Students transferring from another provider, must comply also with the Student Application, Admission and Enrolment Policy</p> |

Principle

4. If the student is under 18, transfer will be granted subject to the above conditions plus the following conditions:

- A letter from the student's parent or legal guardian agreeing to the transfer accompanies the application (or is received prior to admission to the Insearch course).

AND

- A staff member from Student Admissions or the Student Centre confirms that the appropriate accommodation and welfare arrangements are in place and submits a CAAW (where the student moves into Insearch approved accommodation).

5. If an onshore student under the age of 18 transferring from another institution is to remain with a Department of Home Affairs approved carer they will need to provide documentation to confirm that the carer with whom they are living is a Department of Home Affairs approved carer. No Insearch CAAW is required in such cases. Where a student at time of application wishes to stay with their current carer where that carer was approved by the previous provider, Insearch is required to carry out an inspection as a special arrangement homestay and provide a CAAW if approved. As this special arrangement approval can take some time to complete, the student cannot be admitted to Insearch until the special arrangement is approved or if admitted, must move to an Insearch homestay until the special arrangement is approved. All international students under the age of 18 must be provided with an Insearch CAAW when staying in Insearch approved accommodation including special arrangement.

Circumstances in which a transfer to Insearch will not be granted:

6. Insearch will not grant a transfer to students who have not completed a minimum of six months of their principal course and whose previous provider has not approved the transfer to Insearch.
7. Insearch will not grant a transfer to students under the age of 18 who fail to provide written approval from their parents or legal guardian.

TRANSFER FROM INSEARCH TO OTHER PROVIDERS

8. Students that have not completed six months of their principal course must have Insearch release approval (and also UTS approval where applicable), in order to be accepted by another provider. (Students that have completed six months or more of their principal course do not require an approved release).
9. Students will not be given permission to transfer to another ELICOS provider's course unless the move is considered to be in the student's best interests by the Scholarship provider or the scholarship managing body e.g. Cultural Missions such as SACM.
10. Where a student is doing a package course of a program offered by Insearch and a UTS program (at undergraduate or postgraduate level), the university course is considered the principal course of study, therefore all requests for transfers, if approved by Insearch, must also be approved by UTSI. If Insearch recommends release, Insearch will advise UTS of this and if also approved by UTS, Insearch will advise the student of this approval to transfer elsewhere.
11. Under the SSVF program students must not transfer to a course of a lower AQF than the course for which they were originally granted a student visa. Where students wish to transfer to a lower AQF program they will need to apply for a new visa to undertake studies at the lower level.

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12. If the request to transfer is approved, the student's CoE on PRISMS will be cancelled within 15 days of the student ceasing study at Insearch.
13. Steps involved in requesting a release
 - a. Complete an Application to Transfer to Another Provider (International Student) form
 - b. Attach a valid enrolment offer from the new provider
 - c. submit these to the Insearch Student Centre.

Student Under the age of 18

14. If the student is under the age of 18, transfer will be approved subject to the above conditions plus the following:
 - a. Parent/Carer's signature on the Request to terminate or transfer form AND
 - b. If the student is not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative, evidence that the valid enrolment offer from the new registered provider, also confirms that they will accept responsibility for the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements from the day the student is released from Insearch, as per Standard 5 of the National Code.

15. **Circumstances in which a release will be granted:**

- Insearch's registration, or that of the Insearch program in which the student is enrolled, has been revoked.
- Sanctions imposed on Insearch by the Australian Government or state or territory government prevent the student from continuing the course.
- A government sponsor (Australian or other) deems that the transfer is in the best interest of the student and has provided written support for that change.
- In exceptional circumstances relating to the welfare of the student, at Insearch's discretion.
- There is evidence of compelling or compassionate circumstances
- Insearch fails to deliver the course as outlined in the written agreement
- There is evidence that the student's reasonable expectations about their current course are not being met.
- There is evidence that the student was misled by Insearch or one its education agents regarding Insearch. It's course and therefore the course is unsuitable to their study needs and / or study objectives
- Where a student is unable to achieve satisfactory course progress at the level they are studying even after engaging with Insearch's intervention strategy in accordance with Standard 8 (Overseas Student Visa Requirements)
- An appeal (internal or external) on another matter results in a decision or recommendation to release the student.

16. In all cases the student requesting the transfer must provide an offer letter from another registered provider confirming that a valid enrolment offer has been made.

17. Where a release is granted, Insearch will provide this at no cost to the student and will advise the student (in writing) that they must contact the Department of Home Affairs to find out whether they require a new student visa. Students on packaged courses must seek release from any subsequent courses covered by their visas.

Principle

18. Circumstances in which a release will not be granted:

- A release request has no valid enrolment offer from the receiving institution.
- A release request lodged by a student under the age of 18 where there is no written evidence that the student's parent or legal guardian supports the transfer AND, if appropriate, there is no written confirmation that the new provider will accept responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements.
- Any circumstances in which a transfer may be considered to be not in the student's best interests.
- Within the first five weeks of an ELICOS program, or the first eight weeks of the UTS Foundation Studies program or Insearch diploma course.
- If Insearch forms the view that the student is trying to avoid being reported to the Department of Home Affairs for failure to meet attendance or academic progress requirements. This includes but is not limited to students who have been warned for non-attendance or students on academic caution.
- Where a student is unable to achieve satisfactory course progress at the level they are studying but has failed to engage with Insearch's intervention strategy to assist students.
- If the student intends to study at a lower Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level.

19. In all cases SSCR staff reserve the right to determine whether a release (and therefore a student request to transfer) will be granted

20. Where a release is not granted, Insearch will provide the student with written reasons for refusal and will inform the student of their right to appeal, directing them to Insearch's Student Complaints and Appeals Policy

21. The staff member processing the request must ensure a copy of all records related to the transfer request (i.e. the original request, Insearch's written response, etc) are stored on the student's file in i-records

22. Timeframe for Response: All requests to transfer to other providers must be assessed and a written response given to the student requesting the transfer within ten (10) working days of receiving the transfer request at the Insearch Student Centre.

23. Circumstances not considered sufficient reasons for granting a transfer:

- If the student expresses difficulty with the program of study but has not sought assistance from Academic Advisers
- If the student is experiencing homestay or other accommodation problems
- If the student is experiencing program schedule conflict with personal, work, or other non-study commitments
- If the student is experiencing adjustment difficulties moving to Australia

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Student Application, Admission and Enrolment Policy
- Under 18 Policy
- Request to Withdraw/Transfer FTE form
- Application to Transfer to Another Provider (International Student) form
- Student Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- The National Code 2018
- International Student Transfer Request from Insearch to another Provider Procedure

ADMIN USE ONLY

| APPROVAL | |
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| Signature: | |
| Name: Alex Murphy | Managing Director Date: 21 Dec 2017 |
| Policy Title | International Student Transfer Request Assessment Policy |
| Policy Owner: | COO |
| Policy ID | PO/OPS/04/17 |
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