

Thinking of Withdrawing?

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IS WITHDRAWING YOUR BEST OPTION?

Students withdraw from their studies for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, when things get too tough, withdrawing seems to be the only option but it is a serious step that can have major implications for your academic record, personal life and future career. Before you take this final step, read on and find out more.

ALTERNATIVES TO WITHDRAWAL

Manage your stress

University studies are hard work and can be very stressful. You might need to learn relaxation techniques or integrate quiet times in your daily routine. Take some time out to do something enjoyable; go for a walk or spend time with your family or friends.

Get back on track

If you are behind with your studies, borrow notes from friends, join a study group or talk to your lecturer to help you catch up on the work you have missed. Be aware though that it is not easy to catch up on old material while also keeping up to date with new work.

Improve your study skills

If you are thinking of withdrawing because the subject is too difficult or because your notes are in a mess, you cannot organise your time and you keep procrastinating, then you are not alone! Assistance can be obtained from the Learning Skills Lecturers in the Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT).

Some students choose to enrol in the University Preparation Program (UPP) instead of their chosen course. This bridging program is designed to teach the skills required for successful

transition to university study. It is a recognised and accredited course and a useful alternative if you are struggling to come to terms with the uni environment.

Seek an extension

If you are going through a crisis and are finding it hard to cope with your academic workload, you could ask your lecturer for an extension to finish your assignment. Most lecturers are sympathetic, provided such requests are infrequent, genuine and are made prior to the due date.

Go part-time or change your course

If you are not coping with your workload or if you have too many work or family commitments, consider withdrawing from a few subjects and continuing part-time or changing your course. You can always go back to full-time studies later when things are easier for you. A Course Adviser is available at the Student Centre to assist you with these decisions if desired.

Be aware that:

- You may lose/reduce your Youth Allowance, Austudy, Abstudy or Pensioner Education Supplement entitlements. Contact Centrelink for more information.
- HECS and academic penalty apply after census dates and you will consume Student Learning Entitlement.
- Withdrawing from a core or prerequisite subject may impede your enrolment in further subjects – check with Faculty staff.
- You will need to withdraw formally at the Student Centre from the subjects you decide to drop.
- International students' visa obligations do not normally allow part-time studies.

Enrol in a flexible learning course

This is a valuable option for students who have difficulties attending classes on campus. It does not however reduce the amount of work and time required to complete your studies. Note that not all courses are available in flexible learning

mode. For further information contact your lecturer, Faculty Officer or Course Adviser.

IMPLICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL

HECS and Student Learning Entitlement liability

To avoid unnecessary financial expenses, make sure you withdraw before the relevant HECS census date. (Go to: www.studentcentre.utas.edu.au/enrolments to check the relevant census dates). If you withdraw from a subject after the census dates, you will still be liable to pay HECS for the subject. This means that if you have already paid up front, you may not be able to get a refund, and if you have deferred your HECS, you will continue to have a debt with the Australian Taxation Office. Student Learning Entitlement (SLE) gives students access to a Commonwealth supported place (HECS place) for a period of seven years only of equivalent full-time study. Withdrawing after the census dates will also use some of your Student Learning Entitlement.

If, after the census dates, you withdraw from one or more subject(s) because of serious illness or other special circumstances, you may be able to have your HECS debt reduced and your SLE reinstated. Forms are available on the 'Current Students' website or contact the Student Centre for more information.

Centrelink Payments

If you are currently receiving Youth Allowance, Austudy, Abstudy or Pensioner Education Supplement, you may reduce/lose your entitlements as soon as your academic load reduces. You should notify Centrelink as soon as you have withdrawn to avoid being overpaid and having to repay this amount.

Your academic record

The University uses census dates as a deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty. If you withdraw from a subject after the deadline or if you forget to withdraw, you will receive a 'Fail' for the subject, will be charged HECS and will consume SLE for the subject. On the other hand, if you withdraw prior to the census

dates, your enrolment in the subject will simply be cancelled.

If you have to withdraw from your subject/s after the census dates because of serious illness or other special circumstances, you may apply to your Faculty Officer to be withdrawn without academic penalty. Forms and details of the procedure are available on the 'Current Students' website or contact the Student Centre for more information.

Why does a 'Fail' matter?

A 'Fail' result or a 'Withdrawn deemed Fail' stays permanently on your academic record and may restrict your future enrolment options. It may prevent you from enrolling in further university courses or may require you to show cause why you should be allowed to re-enrol. If you seek a job, it may not be considered favourably by prospective employers.

Scholarships and overseas sponsorships

If you are in receipt of a scholarship and withdraw from your course, the scholarship may be cancelled and you may not receive another one if you decide to resume your studies at a later date. There may also be serious financial consequences to withdrawing from study – check with the Scholarship Officer before proceeding.

Your career

If you have decided to discontinue your studies, you will need to examine what you want to do with your future. If you are confused about your options, on-line information and brief consultations are available through Student Services.

International students

If you withdraw from your course, your visa will be cancelled automatically and you will be required to leave Australia within 28 days. You should contact the International Student Office before withdrawing.

SO, YOU'VE DECIDED TO WITHDRAW

Withdrawing may provide you with the space you need to sort things out or perhaps allow you a fresh start later on. However, withdrawing can sometimes lead

to feelings of failure, may isolate you from your friends or may make it difficult to start again later. If you have considered all of the options and are sure it is the right decision for you, read on and find out how to do it right. This section applies whether you decide to withdraw from one, several or all of your subjects.

Do it right!

You must provide written notice that you are withdrawing. You cannot cancel your enrolment by phone. You will need to provide a list of the subjects from which you wish to withdraw, including their codes. Ensure that you specify your full name and student number on your withdrawal request. Alternatively, you can notify that you are withdrawing on your current Enrolment Notice. To print another copy go to: www.studentcentre.utas.edu.au/enrolments and click on Enrolment Notices under Useful Links.

Some changes of enrolment must be verified by lecturers before they can be actioned. Confirmation of your change of enrolment will be emailed to you shortly afterwards. If you do not receive this confirmation, check your enrolment on the 'Current Students' website or contact the Student Centre to ensure that your change of enrolment has been actioned. Make sure the University has your current postal address and contact details.

What should I do next?

- If you receive Centrelink payments, advise Centrelink immediately.
- Pay any debts to the University (e.g. library fines, loan repayment, etc).
- Hand in your student ID card.
- You can obtain either an official transcript of your academic record from the Student Centre or an unofficial printout from the 'Current Students' website.
- Keep copies of your subject outlines as well as any assignments you have completed. This will be useful if you wish to apply for credit later or for employment purposes.

- If you are leaving your accommodation as well, give the appropriate notice and apply for a bond refund. If you are living in one of the University residential colleges, you may be liable for a penalty for breaking your contract.
- International students need to contact the International Student Office.

What if I change my mind?

If you cancelled your enrolment in haste and realise this was a mistake shortly afterwards, you should contact the Student Centre as soon as possible to re-enrol. It is not sufficient to simply tell your lecturer or recommence attending classes – if you are no longer formally enrolled, you will receive no result for the work you do.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I DECIDE TO RESUME MY STUDIES LATER?

You may not intend now to resume your studies, but you may want to do so later on. What you will need to do will depend on your circumstances:

- If you are withdrawing from all your subjects you can apply for 'Leave of Absence'. This can be granted for a maximum of one academic year in which no HECS debt is incurred and your place is held open for you to resume your study in the next academic year.
- If you withdrew from your studies having completed a subject and gained a result in that year, you will automatically receive a re-enrolment package for the following year.
- If you withdrew from your studies without having completed any subjects in that year, you will need to re-apply for enrolment through the Student Centre, unless you have an official deferral or leave of absence.
- International students should contact the International Student Office.

HELP! WHERE CAN I FIND IT?

- Self-help information is available on the Student Services website – follow the links to the Counselling Service.
- Peruse/borrow books from the Student Services counselling resource library.
- Seek counselling through the Counselling Service to discuss difficulties managing at University.
- Contact Student Services for assistance with career issues.
- For further information about the University Preparation Program go to:

www.firstyear.utas.edu.au/messages/UPP.htm

or call 6430 4949.

- Contact CALT for assistance with learning and study skills – follow the links from the Student Services website.
- Student Centre – 1300 361 928.

Student Services would like to thank the Student Equity Office at James Cook University for providing the basis of this information.