

National Code Standard 11

Attendance policy

ISSUE	PAGE
Overview	1
Definitions	1
Failure to commence studies	2
Attendance requirements	2
Reporting requirements	2
Monitoring attendance	2
Identifying at risk students	3
Initial contact with students	3
Further action	3
Notification to DEEWR	3
Record keeping	4
Dissemination of attendance policy	4
Related forms	4
Related policies	4

Overview

1. The College is committed to ensuring that students are monitored in their attendance activity and will report any failures to meet attendance requirements to the Australian Government. This policy reflects the standards set out in the National Code and the requirements of the ESOS Act.
2. In addition, the College will also report students who fail to commence their studies on the start date nominated on their Confirmation of Enrolment.

Definitions

Scheduled course contact hours means the number of contact hours scheduled for an entire course.

DEEWR means the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Compassionate or compelling reasons means circumstances which satisfy the College's compassionate or compelling circumstances policy.

Satisfactory course progress means progress which satisfies the College's course progress policy.

Study period means a semester unless otherwise specified. A semester usually consists of 18 weeks unless otherwise advised.

PRISMS refers to the Provider Registration and International Students Management System

Failure to commence studies

1. Where a student has failed to commence studies with the College on the start date set out in their Confirmation of Enrolment, the student will be reported on PRISMS for non-commencement of studies unless, before the student's expected starting date:
 - 1.1. the student asks the College for a later starting day; and

- 1.2. the request is made on health or compassionate grounds (such as a result of a delay in the grant of the student's visa or satisfying the College's compassionate or compelling circumstances policy); and
 - 1.3. the College agrees to a later starting day for the student.
2. Any applications made to the College for a later starting day will be considered by the National Manager. If such application is approved, the National Manager will issue a replacement CoE with a later start date.

Attendance requirements

3. A student enrolled in any course at the College must attend 80% or more of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which they are enrolled. This means students must not be absent for 20% or more of their scheduled course contact hours.

Absences

4. If a student is unable to attend class because of illness, a Doctor's certificate must be produced upon the student's return. An absence due to medical illness is still counted as a student absence even if supported by a Doctor's certificate. However, the College may consider the student's illness when determining whether compassionate and compelling circumstances exist before reporting a student for unsatisfactory attendance.

Monitoring attendance

5. Students' attendance is recorded each class. The trainer is responsible for noting the time that a student arrives and leaves. The hours that a student has attended are maintained electronically on a spreadsheet. The National Manager supervises the entry of data onto the spreadsheet.
6. Attendance records are reviewed and monitored regularly by the National Manager. In addition, where an individual trainer becomes aware that a student has failed to attend the College for more than 5 consecutive days, they must advise the Course Co-ordinator who will contact the student.
7. Students attendance is monitored on a spreadsheet which contains at least the following data for each student:
 - 7.1. contact hours per week;
 - 7.2. scheduled course contact hours for the student's course;
 - 7.3. the point at which a student will be contacted for being at risk of unsatisfactory attendance (calculated by multiplying the scheduled course contact hours by 15%);
 - 7.4. the point at which a student will be contacted for having failed to meet attendance requirements and advised of the College's intention to report them on PRISMS (calculated by multiplying the scheduled course contact hours by 20%);
 - 7.5. the point at which a student must be reported on PRISMS for failing to meet attendance requirements and at which the College has no discretion not to report (calculated by multiplying the scheduled course contact hours by 30%);
 - 7.6. hours absent (if any) by the student each week;
 - 7.7. cumulative hours absent (if any) by the student from the commencement of their studies;
 - 7.8. cumulative absence as a percentage of scheduled contact hours for the course;
 - 7.9. an 'action' notation. This field identifies whether any action needs to be taken in relation to the student, such as whether the student must be issued with a warning letter about their attendance or whether the student must be notified of the College's intention to report them on PRISMS for failing attendance requirements.

Identifying 'At Risk' students

8. A student is first identified as being at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements where their attendance rate is 85% or less of their scheduled course contact hours. This means students will be At Risk where they are absent for 15% or more of their scheduled course contact hours.
9. The point at which a student will first be at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements is found by multiplying the scheduled course contact hours by 15%. Where a student's absences are equal to or greater than this number, the student will be at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements.

Initial contact with students

10. A student will be initially contacted where:
 - 10.1. he or she has failed to attend the College for more than 5 consecutive days without approval; or
 - 10.2. he or she is identified as being At Risk.
11. At either of the above points, the National Manager will make contact with the student either personally by meeting the student or by sending a letter (Notice of being at risk of failing attendance requirements). At this point, the student is:
 - 11.1. advised of the consequences of failing the College's attendance policy (such as breaching their student visa requirements and being reported to DEEWR/DIAC). Where a student has questions or concerns about their student visa conditions, the College will refer the student to DIAC; and
 - 11.2. invited to make an appointment to meet with the National Manager to discuss what support services are available to assist the student meet the attendance requirements. The College will implement its intervention strategy policy where a student is identified as being At Risk.
12. At this point, it is noted that the College can temporarily suspend a student's enrolment for compassionate or compelling reasons (refer policy on National Code Standard 13). If the student wishes to apply for temporary suspension of their enrolment, they will be referred to the relevant policy.

Identifying students who have failed to meet attendance requirements

13. Once a student is identified as being At Risk, the student's attendance will again be monitored at the next monitoring point.
14. A student is identified as having failed to meet attendance requirements where they are absent for 20% or more of their scheduled course contact hours. This equates to attendance of less than 80% of scheduled course contact hours.
15. The point at which the student fails to meet attendance requirements is found by multiplying the scheduled course contact hours by 20%. Where a student's absences are equal to or greater than this number, the student will have failed to meet attendance requirements.

Further contact with students

16. If the student has failed to meet the College's 80% attendance requirements and there is no possibility of the student meeting the requirements by the end of the course, the National Manager will notify the student of the College's intention to report the student to DEEWR/DIAC via PRISMS for not meeting the College's attendance requirements and breaching a condition of their student visa (Intention to Notify for Failure to meet Attendance Requirements letter).
17. The letter will advise the students of their right to access the College's complaints and appeals procedures (refer the College's complaints and appeals policy) and that the student must access this procedure within 20 working days (plus additional time to allow for receipt of the letter in accordance, at a minimum, with Australia Post guidelines).

Notification to DEEWR/DIAC

18. Where the student has:
- 18.1. failed to meet the College's attendance requirements and been issued with an Intention to Notify for Failure to meet Attendance Requirements letter;
 - 18.2. chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the appeal period; or
 - 18.3. has withdrawn from an appeals process; or
 - 18.4. has lodged an appeal but a decision is reached which supports the College's intention to notify DEEWR/DIAC of the student's failure to meet attendance requirements;

then the College will notify DEEWR/DIAC through PRISMS that the student is not achieving satisfactory attendance as soon as practicable.

19. Where an appeal process has been initiated, both the internal and any external appeals process must be completed prior to reporting the student.

Discretion not to report student in limited circumstances

20. The National Manager may decide not to report a student where they are satisfied that:
- 20.1. the student is attending at least 70% of scheduled course contact hours;
 - 20.2. is maintaining satisfactory course progress in accordance with the College's course progress policy; and
 - 20.3. the student has demonstrated compassionate or compelling reasons to explain their absences (in accordance with the grounds set out in the College's compassionate and compelling circumstances policy).
21. The point at which the College no longer retains this discretion is where a student fails to attend at least 70% of their scheduled course contact hours. This equates to absences of 30% or more of scheduled course contact hours. The point at which the student first falls into this category is found by multiplying the scheduled course contact hours by 30%.

Contact points – summary

22. A summary of when a student must be contacted in relation to attendance is set out below. Any references to days relate to courses which have a duration of more than a semester.

	Attendance pattern	Action required
Initial Contact	Attendance of 85% or below (conversely, student has missed 15% or more of their scheduled course contact hours) Or: Student failed to attend the College for more than 5 consecutive days without approval	Notice of being at risk of failing attendance requirements letter Continued monitoring of attendance and intervention strategy
Further Action and Reporting to PRISMS	Attendance of 80% or below (conversely, student has missed 20% or more of scheduled course contact hours)	Intention to Notify for Failure to meet Attendance Requirements letter 20 working day complaints period before reporting on PRISMS

Discretion in relation to reporting to attend	70% to <80% attendance (conversely, student has missed more than 20% and less than 30% of scheduled course contact hours)	Student may not be reported if satisfactory course progress and compassionate and compelling circumstances exist and attendance of at least 70%.
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Record keeping

23. All correspondence issued to students in relation to their attendance is kept on the student's file. In addition, where counselling services are offered or provided to the student is recorded on the student's file. If an appeal is lodged by the student, the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for the decision reached in the appeal are also recorded on the student's file.
24. All correspondence or notifications to DEEWR/DIAC are also recorded.

Dissemination of attendance policy

25. Students are advised of the College's attendance requirements and policy in a number of ways including in their student handbook and their student induction days as well as on the College website.
26. Staff are advised of the College's attendance policy by internal notification (for example, emails, notices, inclusion in staff training days etc).

Related documents

- Attendance reporting flowchart
- Checklist for reporting students for failing attendance requirements
- Notice of being at risk of failing attendance requirements letter
- Intention to Notify for Failure to meet Attendance Requirements letter

Related Policies

- Compassionate and compelling circumstances policy
- Intervention strategy policy
- Student Complaints and Appeals policy
- Study duration policy
- Satisfactory course progress policy