Attendance Monitoring Policy and Procedure

POLICY
a) Standard 11 of the National Code requires the College to systematically monitor students’ compliance with student visa conditions relating to attendance.
b) The College is required to be proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to achieve satisfactory course attendance and to report students, under section 19 of the ESOS Act, who have breached the attendance requirements.
c) In compliance with the College’s obligations under the National Code, student attendance shall be:
   i) checked and recorded daily by use of a class roll
   ii) assessed regularly
   iii) recorded and calculated over each study period
d) The College expects students to maintain 100% attendance. Student visa holders are required under the conditions of their visa to attend at least 80% of the scheduled contact hours.

PROCEDURE
Monitoring attendance
a) Student attendance will be monitored by the class teacher daily using the following procedure:
   i. Rolls will be printed from the student database for each class by a Student Care Officer.
   ii. Teachers will record student attendance on their class rolls using the following scheme:
      / = Present for 1 hour
      X = Present for 2 hours
      A= Zero attendance
   iii. Teachers will record daily hour(s) of absence of each student on their class rolls.
   iv. Rolls are filed in class folders kept in the staff room at the end of each day.
b) Student attendance will be monitored by the class teacher and Academic Manager every week to assess student attendance using the following procedure:
   i) Attendance Rolls are marked and initialled each session by class teachers.
   ii) Academic Manager checks rolls weekly for procedural compliance.
   iii) Attendance Rolls are given to a Student Care Officer for absence entry into the college’s student management software system, initialled, scanned then electronically filed.
iv) Attendance Rolls are then manually filed in the attendance folder in the staff room.

c) All absences due to illness should be accompanied by a medical certificate.

Calculating Attendance

d) The College’s student management software system will calculate attendance and every week Student Care will download a copy of attendance calculations.

Absences greater than 5 consecutive days

e) Any absences longer than 5 consecutive days without the approval of the College will be investigated as a matter of urgency after the 5 days have passed (i.e. on the 6th day) as follows:

i) The Student Care staff will attempt to contact the student by phone or email.

ii) If contact with the student cannot be made the Student Care staff to contact student’s education agent, if any.

iii) If contact with the student is made, College staff will provide counselling as necessary in relation to attendance requirements and any welfare issues that may have been the cause of the prolonged absence.

iv) If contact with the student cannot be made the Administration Manager is to be notified of the absence and shall take appropriate steps including making a report to the relevant authorities (Police, DIAC, DEEWR and DET) or making further enquiries.

The steps above should be completed within 2 work days.

90% Attendance

f) Students whose attendance falls to 90% will be contacted by email or SMS to remind them that their attendance is falling and to see Student Care should they require support.

85% Attendance

g) Students whose attendance fall to 85% will be contacted by email or SMS warning them that they are in danger of being reported to DEEWR and to see Student Care immediately for advice on how to improve their attendance.

Intention to Report

h) If the College’s student management software systems indicates that that a student has passed below the attendance threshold for the study period (i.e. is not able to make up 80% attendance), the student will be sent an Intention to Report letter which shall inform the student that he/she has 20 working days in which to access the College’s complaints and appeals process (see: Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure). The student will be given a copy of the complaints and appeals process and this will be discussed in a meeting with the Administration Manager.
Complaints and Appeals Process

i) Students who access the College’s complaints and appeals process will have their appeal accepted by the College and will not be reported for failing to meet satisfactory course attendance where:
   i) the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances e.g., medical illness supported by a medical certificate, and
   ii) the student’s attendance has not fallen below 70%

Reporting to DEEWR

j) The College will notify DEEWR via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance as soon as practicable where:
   i) the student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 days
   ii) withdraws from the complaints and appeals process
   iii) the complaints and appeals process results in a decision for the College (i.e. where the student’s appeal is rejected)

Suspension of Studies

k) Where a student whose attendance is 75% or less is able to demonstrated compassionate and compelling circumstances, the Academic Manager will assess whether a suspension of studies is in the interests of the student as per the College’s Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and may suspend the student’s study.

l) Where a student’s attendance falls below 70%, the process for reporting the student for unsatisfactory attendance will occur as set out in paragraph h) above.

m) Periods of exclusion from class will not be included in attendance calculations.

Definitions

a) ‘Compassionate or compelling circumstances’ - circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student that are having an impact on the student’s progress through a course. These could include:

   a. serious illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
   b. bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents
   c. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel that has impacted on their studies
   d. a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (these cases should be where possible supported by police or psychologists’ reports)
   e. where EU was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
   f. inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa

For other circumstances to be considered as compassionate or compelling, evidence would need to be provided to show that these were having an impact on the student’s progress through a course.
b) ‘Expected duration’ means the length of time it takes to complete the course studying full-time. This is the same as the registered course duration on CRICOS.
c) ‘Medical certificate’ means a certificate issued by a registered medical provider such as hospitals, doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, chiropractors, optometrists, ophthalmologists, psychiatrists and psychologists. The college does not accept certificates from alternative medical practitioners such as herbal practitioners, acupuncturists, Chinese therapists, massage therapists, iridologists, psychics etc.
e) ‘Satisfactory course attendance’ means attendance of at least 80% of scheduled course contact hours for the study period.
f) ‘Study period’ means:
   a. for a course with a course length of 12 weeks, a period of 6 weeks from the date a student commences studies; and
   b. for a course with a course length of greater than 12 weeks, a period of 12 weeks from the date a student commences studies.

Review
This policy will be reviewed as part of the College’s three year policy review cycle or as required by regulatory changes.