



Educating for Excellence

## Attendance and Academic Progress Policy and Procedures

Australian Ideal College (AIC) abides by the Department of Education and DHA attendance and academic progress requirement for international students. As such, AIC has introduced the internal policy and procedures to monitor the attendance and academic progress of each student in order to meet DHA's requirement for student visa holders.

- Responsibility: Chief Executive Officer
- Implementation: Director of Studies/Trainers/Student Services Officers/Student Administration Manager

### 1. Attendance Policy

- 1.1 The attendance of international students enrolled in AIC is monitored closely to meet the requirements of the ESOS Act 2000, and National Code 2018. Students are informed of their requirement to attend a minimum of 80% of the scheduled course contact hours at all times but are encouraged to attend 100% of classes to ensure successful academic outcomes in their studies. Any class which is missed due to any reasons reduces chance for learning and can adversely affect students' results in their enrolled course(s).
- 1.2 AIC systematically monitors students' compliance with student visa conditions relating to attendance. AIC is proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements. AIC is required under the ESOS ACT 2000 and National Code 2018 to report to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) any students who are unable to meet 80% attendance for unsatisfactory attendance.
- 1.3 Students are required to maintain full time enrolment in their chosen course with a minimum 15 hours of face to face and 5 hours of distance/online learning per week. Students who want to study additional subjects may attend classes for more than 20 hours per week. However for attendance monitoring purposes only 20 hours per week will be recorded in any given weeks of the session. The students should maintain overall minimum 80% attendance at any time.
- 1.4 Students may apply for deferral from studies under exceptional circumstances. For example, medical reasons or compassionate and compelling reasons (grief). The application for deferral must be accompanied by document evidenced (for example, medical certificates from medical center)
- 1.5 Students will be reported to DHA if their attendance falls below 80% and cannot be made up to 80% by the end of the course.
  - 1.5.1. When a student has been assessed as not achieving satisfactory attendance, AIC notifies the student of its intention to report the student. The written notice/warning letter informs the student that he or she is able to access the AIC's complaints and appeals process and that the student has 20 working days for internal appeal and 5 working days to lodge an external appeal.
  - 1.5.2. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the student will be reported to DHA through PRISMS for not achieving satisfactory attendance. AIC does not report student until the appeal process is completed.
    - AIC contacts and counsels any students who have been absent for one week or more without approval; or are at risk of not attending for at least 80% of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled.
    - AIC keeps records of all contact and counselling made with the students who have been absent for one week or more or where the student is at risk of not attending at least 80% of the course

contact hours. The intention of contacting these students is to find out why the students have been absent and to see what support AIC may be able to offer the student.

#### 1.6 Students won't be reported for breaching the 80% attendance requirement when:

- 1.6.1 Students produce justifying documentary evidence clearly demonstrating that compassionate or compelling circumstances apply. For example, illness where a doctor certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes for a certain period; and
- 1.6.2 Student is attending at least 70% of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled and has satisfactory course progress. Satisfactory course progress at AIC is defined as student has successfully completed at least 50% of the total subjects studied in each term.

However, if the student's attendance has fallen below 70%, AIC has to issue a notice of intention to report the student for unsatisfactory attendance, informing the student of his/her right to appeal.

#### Compelling and Compassionate circumstances:

- Health issues (Serious illness or injury)
- Mental health issues
- Death in family
- Bereavement of close family members such as parent or grandparents;
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies.

Or,

#### A traumatic experience which could include:

- Involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; and,
- Witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime.

Any of these cases which has impacted on the student should be supported by death certificate, doctor certificate and police or psychologists reports.

Please note that the abovementioned are some examples of what AIC may consider compassionate or compelling circumstances. AIC will use professional judgement and to assess each case on its individual merit. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, AIC only considers documentary evidence provided to support the claim by individual student, and keeps copies of these documents in the student's file.

1.7 To inform the students about their attendance, warning letters will be sent to the contact details given by the students or in some rare cases, given to the students by hand in the college if student is not responding to the warning letters sent before. The warning letters will outline the student's unsatisfactory attendance and give instructions on when and where to meet with the Director of Studies and Student Counsellor to discuss their concern.

1.8 Reporting is the last option after the student has been counselled and has been given 20 working days for internal appeal to AIC and 5 working days to lodge an external appeal (For more details, please refer to Student Complaints and Appeals and Grievance policy).

#### 1.9 AIC maintains the following documents in student files:

- warning letters
- notes from counselling sessions
- medical certificates
- appeal documents
- any other relevant documents
- PRISMS breach letters

## **2. Procedures for Monitoring Attendance**

### **Persons Involved and Responsibility**

Trainers to mark attendance in attendance roll call sheet and enter attendance as per the roll sheet into the RTO Manager System.

Student Services Officer is responsible for contacting students.

Student Services Officer is responsible for generating, sending and filing warning letters under the instruction and direction of the Director of Studies.

Director of Studies/Student Counsellor/CEO is to administer approved leave, counselling, appeal process

Student Administration Manager is to report students to DHA via PRISMS.

### **Important Steps Involved:**

- Marking attendance sheet by trainer
- Recording/filing Medical certificates
- Reviewing attendance by Director of Studies
- Sending warning letters
- Reporting via PRISMS

2.1 Trainers use the attendance roll to record student attendance at each scheduled class and note early departures and late arrivals. Mark “X” for full attendance for every hour and an “A” for students are absent from class for each hour.

2.2 If student presents a medical certificate for the missed class, record it as an absence with medical certificate and ask the student to keep his/her original medical certificate and provide a copy to the Student Services Officer at reception.

2.3 Trainers are to mark and maintain the attendance roll of each of their classes every lesson. The attendance rolls are the college property and at no time, they are to be removed from campus or given to a student. All attendance rolls are to be kept in the Attendance Record Folder for each trainer at VET DOS office at the end of the day.

2.4 Trainers must sign, add comment (if any) on the hard copies of the attendance roll, then enter the attendance into RTO Manager System and return the original class rolls at the end of the week to the Director of Studies.

2.5 Trainers will in the first instance deal with any student who arrives late. Student who continuously arrives late to the college will be taken care of by the trainer, noted and then would be brought onto the Director of Studies’ attention.

2.6 Students will not have approved leave granted during the academic term unless they produce evidence of compassionate and compelling reasons or medical grounds. Failure to do so may result being marked as absent

2.7 Student Services check the attendance rolls such as:

- Checking Number of hours present/absent marked correctly in RTOmanager;
- Filing Medical Certificates/Approved Leave documents etc. and entering data/notes in the RTO Manager system.

2.8 Contacting Students with Unsatisfactory Attendance

- First approach to contacting students will be by email
- If email is not successful, then contact by phone
- Class room trainer
- Surface mail
- Their education agents

2.9. Counselling

- The college’s activities to interfere with the student to improve attendance by counselling students when their attendance begins to drop.
- Warning letters will offer counselling to determine reasons for low attendance and advise ways for improving attendance
- The college keeps record of counselling in RTO communication database of the student.

## 2.10. Three warning letters

- Student is at risk of falling below 80% attendance to the end of the study period, the first warning letter will be sent immediately and a counselling session arranged with the Director of Studies.
- If the student's attendance falls below 80% to the end of the study period, the second warning letter will be sent.
- If the student does not respond to the second warning letter within the scheduled time or the explanation is not satisfactory, the final warning letter with intention to report will be sent to the student.

## **3. Procedure Manual guidance**

### **a) Case 1: Absent in class for 5 consecutive days without notice**

- 3.1 No matter it is in the beginning of the course or in the middle of the course, as long as students are absent from class for the whole week, Student Services Officer will contact the student regarding the issues via email or phone and advise the student to come and meet with the Director of Studies for explanation as soon as possible. The template of the weekly absent warning notice is saved in the RTOManager system and is emailed to the student the following week right after the previous week attendance is entered.
- 3.2 If there is no response from the student within 5 working days, and the student keeps being absent for the following weeks which has affected his/her overall attendance at the risk of falling below 80%, the Student Services Officer, under the instruction of the Director of Studies, will send out the "1st Student Attendance Warning Letter" to the student and allow the student 10 working days for interview. If the whole week absence in the middle of the course affects the students overall attendance already falling below 80%, student will receive the 2<sup>nd</sup> warning letter or final warning letter with intention to report.

### **b) Case 2: Unsatisfactory attendance**

- 3.3 When students' attendance is at the risk of falling below 80% in a compulsory study period, the Student Services Officer, under the instruction of the Director of Studies, will send the "1st Student Attendance Warning Letter" out and asks the student to come and meet with the Director of Studies for an interview within 10 working days.
- 3.4 If the student turns up within the 10 working days and the interview is successful, the student will be given a chance to continue to maintain 80% of attendance. Student will be monitored through the next study period to ensure student has maintained satisfactory attendance and academic progress.
- 3.5 If the student does not respond to the "1st Student Attendance Warning Letter" or does not come for an interview within the 10 working days, and the attendance keeps fallin below 80%, the Director of Studies will send out the "2<sup>nd</sup> Student Attendance Warning Letter" and allow the student 10 working days for interview.
- 3.6 If the student turns up within the 10 working days and the interview is successful, the student will be given a chance to maintain 80% attendance. Student will be monitored through the next study period to ensure student has maintained satisfactory attendance.
- 3.7 If the student does not respond within 10 working days, the Director of Studies will send out Final Warning Letter with Intention to report and allow student 20 working days for appeal.
- 3.8 If the student turns up within the 20 working days and the appeal is successful, the student will be given a chance to maintain 80% attendance. Student will be monitored through the next study period to ensure student has maintained satisfactory attendance.
- 3.9 If the student does not respond to the intention to report letter or does not access the internal appeal within 20 working days, the Director of Studies will advise the Student Administration Manager to report the student to DHA via PRISMS for non-compliance.
- 3.10 If the student responds to the intention to report letter within the 20 working days, but the internal appeal is unsuccessful, the student can lodge external appeal within 5 working days. If the external appeal is successful, the student will be given a chance to maintain 80% of attendance. If the external appeal is unsuccessful, or the student does not access the external appeal within 5 working days, the Director of Studies will advise the Student Administration Manager to report the student to DHA via PRISMS for non-compliance.

#### **4. Academic Course Progress Policy and Procedure**

- 4.1 Students are required to successfully complete various tests, examinations, projects, practical demonstrations. The assessment tasks and dates are set out in the Delivery and Assessment timetable that are distributed by trainers and on the AIC noticeboards at the commencement of each term. Academic course results will be recorded by the trainers and submitted to the Director of Studies. Students will receive feedback on results for every assessment from trainers.
- 4.2 Unsatisfactory progress is defined as not successfully completing at least 50% of the units/subjects attempted in a compulsory study period (an academic term of 10 weeks).
- 4.3 Monitoring during a term, the trainer will inform the Director of Studies of students who have missed assessments, showing no interest of study or have related attendance issues. These measures allow the identification and the monitoring of students who are at risk of not making satisfactory course progress.
- 4.4 After the assessments or at the end of the term, the Director of Studies will assess each students performance. The Director of studies will identify with the help of the RTOManager the students who have failed 50% of the subjects in the corresponding study period. The Director of Studies will ask the Student Service Officer to send the “warning letter for unsatisfactory course progress” and come within next 10 working days for an interview.
- 4.5 The Director of Studies will counsel the student during the interview to identify the reason for the failed subjects and discuss an appropriate intervention strategy. The intervention strategy could include but is not limited to providing students with English language support, providing the students with the opportunity to do reassessment for the failed subjects, providing additional classes and providing counselling if personal issues lie behind the poor academic progress.
- 4.6 The Director of Studies will record the details of the “at risk students” in the Course Progress Monitoring sheet so monitoring and recording can be carried out.
- 4.7 If the student fails to come for the interview and does not show any progress in the intervention strategy in the second consecutive study period, the intention to report letter will be sent which allows the student 20 working days for appeal.
- 4.8 If the student does not respond to the intention to report letter or does not access the internal appeal within 20 working days, the Director of Studies will advise the Student Administration Manager to report the student to DHA via PRISMS for non-compliance.
- 4.9 If the student responds to the intention to report letter within the 20 working days, but the internal appeal is unsuccessful, the student can lodge external appeal within 5 working days. If the external appeal is successful, the student will be given a chance to address the failed subject and to continue studying. If the external appeal is unsuccessful, or the student does not access the external appeal within 5 working days, the Director of Studies will advise the Student Administration Manager to report the student to DHA via PRISMS for non-compliance.