

Attendance Policy

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Related policies	▪ Course Progress Intervention Policy
Related procedures	▪ Attendance Procedure ▪ Course Progress Intervention Procedure
Forms and supporting documents	▪ RTOM ▪ Warning Email Template ▪ ITR (Intention to Report) Template ▪ Final Notice Email Template

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the bases of South Sydney College's attendance requirements and its implementation. This policy applies to all international students enrolled in South Sydney College.

Students will be made aware of our policy and procedures for recording and monitoring their attendance then proactively notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet the attendance requirements.

South Sydney College has set an internal policy that good attendance is necessary for a student to meet the course progress requirements.

All international students will be advised in the International Student Handbook and on the website of the attendance expectations. Complete details on South Sydney College's course progress requirements and implementation are outlined in the Course Progress Policy.

RELEVANT STANDARD(S): Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 Standard 6, 8 and 9; National Code 2018 Standard 6, 8 and 9

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all South Sydney College RTO Operations, including all Marketing, Recruitment, Enrolment, Training, Assessment and Support staff delivering or supporting any nationally accredited training offered by Programmed, regardless of the location and mode of delivery.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Study Period

- 1.1. The study period is 1 term.
- 1.2. Where the course is a shorter course (less than 6 months), then the study period is the length of the course.

2. Attendance Requirements

- 2.1. Students are not allowed to be absent for more than 5 consecutive days without approval
- 2.2. Absences can be approved by the trainer in the following instances:
 - 2.2.1. Being sick or having an infectious/contagious illness
 - 2.2.2. Having scheduled or emergency medical appointment
 - 2.2.3. Being required to attend a recognized religious holiday
 - 2.2.4. Exceptional or urgent family circumstance e.g. attending a funeral
 - 2.2.5. Other reasons as may be approved by the Principal
- 2.3. Student attendance must not drop below 80%
 - 2.3.1. Attendance is calculated as an average across the study period. So, a student timetabled for 20 hours per week (180 hours per term) must maintain 80% attendance which is 16 hours per week (144 hours per term).

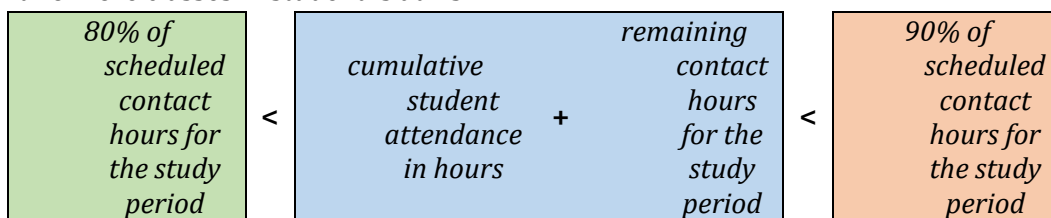
2.4. Students seeking approval must provide supporting evidence.

3. At-risk Student

3.1. Students who are at risk of not meeting the attendance requirements:

3.1.1. Students who incur their fourth consecutive day of absence without approval

3.1.2. Students who will fail the 80% attendance requirement for the study period if they miss one or two more classes. A student is at risk if



4. Course Abandonment

4.1. Students who do not re-enrol in the term and do not make contact in the first 15 days of the term are notified by email and mobile phone SMS that he/she is considered to have abandoned the course.

5. COE Cancellation Notification to PRISMS

5.1. Scheduled Contact Hours:

5.1.1. The hours for which students enrolled in the course are scheduled to attend classes, course-related information sessions, supervised study sessions, mandatory and supervised work-based training, and examinations.

6. Intervention

6.1. Intervention is required for the following students:

6.1.1. Students who incur four consecutive days of absence without approval.

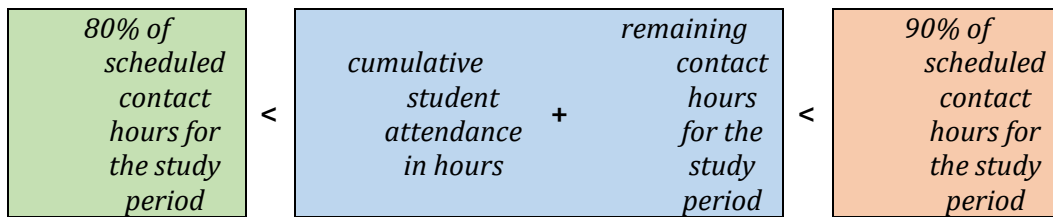
6.1.2. Students who are at risk of not meeting attendance requirements before student's attendance drops below 80 per cent.

7. Warnings by Email and Letter

7.1. Students whose attendance is identified at 80% with satisfactory course progress will be accepted as meeting the College standard for course progress.

7.2. There will be records of all messaging, email, phone and letter contact and counselling. This can be sighted and monitored by management in the RTOM.

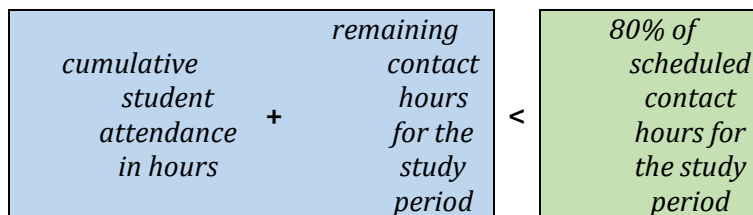
7.3. The student services officer will send a warning email to students who are at risk (See definition for *at-risk students*) of not meeting the attendance requirements. A warning email will be sent to the student for each reporting period where:



7.4. In addition to the warning email, the student services officer will investigate to see what support the staff may be able to offer the student. For example, the student’s absence may not be due to medical reasons, but rather to homesickness or social issues – matters which may be addressed through the provider’s student support services.

7.5. When counselling the student about the absence, the staff will remind the student at South Sydney College’s attendance policies.

7.6. Where the remaining scheduled contact hours will not be enough to meet the 80% attendance requirement, the Student Services Officer will send the student an ITR (Intention to Report) email. The ITR email is sent to students where:



7.7. The ITR (Intention to Report) Email:

7.7.1. notifies the student that the college intends to report him/her for unsatisfactory course attendance

7.7.2. informs the student of the reasons for the intention to report, and

7.7.3. advises the student of their right to access South Sydney College’s complaints and appeals process, in accordance with Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals), within 20 working days

8. Reporting

8.1. The Student Services Officer will report the student’s unsatisfactory course attendance in PRISMS if:

8.1.1. the internal and external complaints processes have been completed and the decision or recommendation supports the registered provider, or

8.1.2. the student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20-working day period, or

8.1.3. the student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process, or

8.1.4. the overseas student withdraws from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying the registered provider in writing.

8.2. Where the student’s unsatisfactory course attendance is reported in PRISMS, the Student Services Officer will send the student a final notice to inform the student:

8.2.1.that his/her unsatisfactory course attendance has been reported to DIBP (Department of Immigration and Border Protection), and

8.2.2.provide the student information on its implications:

- 8.2.2.1. cancellation of enrolment
- 8.2.2.2. collection of any fees owed
- 8.2.2.3. available options

8.3. At the discretion of the Principal, the college may decide not to report the student for breaching the attendance requirements if:

- 8.3.1.the student is still attending at least 70 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours, and
- 8.3.2.the student is maintaining satisfactory course progress.

9. Approvals

9.1. Holidays

9.1.1.South Sydney College will not grant any holiday leave and will not issue any holiday approval letters during the terms. There are 9 week terms with 2 or 3 weeks breaks and longer breaks at the end of year. These provide opportunities for holidays to be arranged.

9.2. Special Leave

9.2.1.The Principal may consider only special leave on compassionate reasons for approval.

9.3. Illness

9.3.1.In cases of illness, students must provide certified documents (ie Medical Certificate) from a registered Medical Practitioner. The documents must state the reason for their absence and the dates they were deemed unfit for class. The documents must also clearly state the Medical Practitioner's contact details.

9.3.2.Students must make a copy of these documents and write their student number on the copy before submitting it to their teacher for filing. The original documentation must be kept by the students for the information of DIBP in the event of an audit or appeal.

9.4. Compassionate or compelling circumstances

9.4.1.Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These may include, but are not limited to:

- 9.4.1.1. serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
- 9.4.1.2. bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents;
- 9.4.1.3. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies; or
- 9.4.1.4. a traumatic experience which could include:
 - 9.4.1.5. involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; and
 - 9.4.1.6. witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime.
- 9.4.1.7. and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports) or
- 9.4.1.8. where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit.

9.4.2. In these circumstances, the Principal may use professional judgment to assess each case on its individual merits. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, South Sydney College will request documentary evidence to support the claim where available and will keep copies of these documents in the student's file. We will make notes of the decision in the student file

10. Counselling and Extra Support

- 10.1. The College is aware that sometimes students fall behind because it is difficult to study in a new country and study in English as a second language. We will offer counselling and extra support to students who demonstrate their commitment to studies.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Compliance, monitoring and review

- 1.1. The CEO is ultimately responsible for students being made aware of their visa obligations and ensuring that the College complies with the ESOS Act and National Code in relation to these matters.
- 1.2. The Principal is responsible for staff training, system and implementation of the attendance policy and administration of the attendance records.
- 1.3. The Student Services Manager is responsible for day-to-day administration of the database and records including attendance.

DEFINITIONS

1. **RTOM** is short for RTO Manager, South Sydney College's Student Management System. This system can generate bulk attendance reports, and can be used to send and record email or SMS messaging to students.
2. **Intervention** in this Policy refers to any documented action targeted at addressing the needs of an 'at risk' student. Intervention is provided so that students will have sufficient time to achieve satisfactory attendance for the study period.
3. **DIBP** is short for Department of Immigration and Border Protection (Immigration). DIBP is responsible for administration of the student visa program under the Migration Act and associated legislation. The ESOS framework also plays a role in ensuring registered providers uphold the integrity of Australia's student visa program through their ongoing contact with overseas students during their stay in Australia. Under subsection 19(2) of the ESOS Act, registered providers are required to notify the Commonwealth when overseas students have breached their student visa conditions, such as by failing to maintain satisfactory course attendance or progress. The National Code 2018 sets out the

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course attendance, progress and completion requirements for overseas students that registered providers must monitor and report on.

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REVISION HISTORY

Date / Version no.	Revision details	Person Responsible	Status	Comments
15/05/2022 1.0	Initial development	A. Rotem	Archived	Creation date
12/07/2023 1.1	Compliance review	S. Roy	Archived	
12/11/2024 1.2	Compliance review	S. Roy	Current	