

ELICOS STUDENTS - MONITORING ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Rationale

This policy has been developed to meet the requirements of the National Code 2007 Standard 11 and other requirements for CRICOS registration, which requires that registered providers monitor student's compliance with visa conditions relating to attendance and are proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements. Registered providers report students who have breached the attendance requirements under Section 19 of the ESOS Act.

Scope

This policy applies to all Salford College students on a student visa.

Attendance Policy:

Salford College policy is students should attend all classes (100%) of their course to gain optimum learning. However, if students have valid reasons for absence a minimum of 80% of their course contact hours must be maintained to avoid being reported to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

The College believes good attendance is important in order to achieve the desired educational outcomes.

Maintaining satisfactory attendance is a student visa requirement for ELICOS students.

Students must contact the College every time they will be absent *prior to the regular class time*, via email, phone or SMS to a member of staff.

Students who do not advise the College of absences will be contacted/counselled by the Student Support Officer or another staff member.

Regular class attendance is essential in order for students to progress satisfactorily in their course and to be deemed as a genuine / bona fide student.

Salford College will report students for non-attendance via PRISMS as per the conditions outlined in this policy. An outcome of reporting a student for non-attendance via PRISMS is the student's visa may be cancelled.

Salford College will *at the minimum* contact and counsel students who:

- have been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval; or
- are at risk of not attending for at least 80 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours.

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All phone conversations, copies of letters, emails and notices relating to attendance will be kept on the student file.

Student attendance is monitored daily by trainers. Student absences are tracked and monitored at the end of each week.

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

Any absences of **5 consecutive days** without approval will be investigated as a matter of urgency.

- Student Support officer will attempt to contact the student
- If student is not able to be contacted their agent will be contacted.
- Student Support Officer will counsel student on the importance of notifying the College when absent.
- If contact cannot be made the Student Support Officer will discuss with CEO and the relevant authorities will be notified (eg police, DHA, next of kin)

Once a student's attendance drops below the defined levels and there is no possibility of the student reaching that level by the end of the study period the formal process will begin.

Students excluded from class for misbehaviour

Salford College will record any 'period of exclusion' from class as absence (where the enrolment is not officially suspended on PRISMS) and include this absence in attendance monitoring calculations (potentially putting a student with marginal attendance in danger of being reported for unsatisfactory attendance).

Also refer Standard 9 Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment Policy and Procedure.

WARNING 1

90% Attendance

Students whose attendance falls to **90%** or less will be contacted by letter and email to alert them that their attendance is at risk. Students will be advised to discuss the matter with the Student Support Officer.

WARNING 2

85% Attendance

Students whose attendance fall to **85%** will be contacted by letter and email warning them that they are now at risk of being reported to DHA and they must make an appointment with the Student Support Officer ASAP for assistance/advice. Students may take along a support person.

Intention to Report (Less than 80% Attendance)

As soon as the college is aware a student will not achieve 80% attendance, the College will send students an 'Intention to Report letter' which shall inform the student that they have 20 working days in which to access the College's complaints and appeals process. The student will be given another copy of the Complaints and Appeals Policy with the Intention to Report Letter.

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NOTE: Salford College will only await the outcome of our internal and one external appeals process before reporting a student for unsatisfactory attendance (if found in favour of the College).

If a student chooses NOT to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20-working day period, withdraws from the process or the process is completed, and the decision is in support of Salford College, the College will notify the Secretary of DET via PRISMS that the student is not achieving satisfactory attendance **as soon as practicable (within 5 working days)**.

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Salford College *may* decide not to report a student for 80% attendance where the College feels the student is a genuine student and can confirm the student is attending AT LEAST 70% of the scheduled course contact hours *and* maintaining satisfactory academic performance, where the College is satisfied they are a genuine/bona fide student and where they provide:

- documentary evidence demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances for their absences e.g., medical illness supported by a medical certificate, **AND**
- attendance has not fallen below 70%, **AND**
- Academic progress is satisfactory.

Where a student with low attendance is able to demonstrate (and provide evidence of) compassionate or compelling circumstances, the CEO will assess whether a temporary suspension of studies is in the best interest of the student. Refer *Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy*.

In all circumstances if the student's attendance drops to below 70%, students will be reported to DET/DHA via PRISMS.

'Medical certificate' means a certificate issued by a registered medical provider such as hospitals, doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, chiropractors, optometrists, ophthalmologists, psychiatrists and psychologists. Salford College does not accept certificates from alternative medical practitioners such as herbal practitioners, acupuncturists, Chinese therapists, massage therapists, iridologists, psychics etc.

'Satisfactory course attendance' means attendance of at least 80% of scheduled course contact hours for the study period.

'Study period' means - 10 weeks (1 term).

'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 could include, but are not limited to:

- *serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes*
- *bereavement of close family members such as parents 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.

and

this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports) or where the College was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit. Any other circumstance would require evidence to be considered as compassionate or compelling.

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If a student ceases attending a course or does not return from leave, and/or is unable to be contacted, under Section 19(1) of the ESOS Act, Salford College will notify DHA via PRISMS of termination of the student's studies within 14 days of the event via a Student Course Variation. The College in this instance does not have to give students access to the appeals process. Students would not be entitled to a refund unless at the discretion of the CEO.

Online/distance units:

Attendance will not be monitored because students do not attend classes for these units.

PROCEDURE

- Teachers are to mark the roll a minimum of once per day.
- Student Support Officer or delegated staff member is to letter and email all students who do not notify the College of their absence before close of business on the day of absence.
- Student Support Officer will analyse student absences a minimum of weekly and take action as per below for students 'at risk'.

** All absences due to illness should be accompanied by a medical certificate. Student Support Officer is to follow up on medical certificates.*

Any absences of **5 consecutive days** without approval will be investigated as a matter of urgency.

- Student Support Officer will attempt to contact the student
- If student is not able to be contacted their agent will be contacted.
- If still unable to contact student or agent, the next of kin will be contacted.
- Student Support Officer will counsel student on the importance of notifying the College when absent.
- If contact cannot be made the Student Support Officer will discuss with CEO/and the relevant authorities will be notified (eg police, DHA)

WARNING/ PREVENTATIVE ACTION PROVIDED TO STUDENTS:

Once a student's attendance drops below the defined levels below and there is no possibility of the student reaching that level by the end of the study period the formal process must begin.

90% Attendance warning

- letter and email (if available) sent to alert student their attendance is at risk.
- Students will be advised to discuss the matter with the Student Support Officer.
- Student Support Officer will counsel/assist student to rectify the issue.
- All documentation/notes to be kept on student file

85% Attendance

- Students whose attendance falls to **85% or below** will be contacted by letter and email warning them that they are now at risk of being reported to DHA and they **must** make an appointment with the Student Support Officer ASAP for assistance/advice.

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- Student Support Officer will counsel/assist student to rectify the issue.
- All documentation/notes to be kept on student file

Intention to Report (80% Attendance)

- As soon as Salford College is aware a student will not achieve 80% attendance, the College will send the student an 'Intention to Report letter' which shall inform the student that they have **20 working days** in which to access the College's **complaints and appeals process**. The student will be given another copy of the Complaints and Appeals Policy with the Intention to Report Letter.
- Students may wish to request an interview with the CEO.

Course Progress Monitoring:

Salford College assesses students formally to ensure they meet the course progress requirements of the course.

Any student identified as 'at risk' will be offered assistance as soon as this is identified.

Information about the course progress and monitoring of students is detailed in the Progress, Completion and Attendance Policy as well as Intervention strategy.

REFER - COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

- If a student chooses NOT to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20-working day period, withdraws from the process or the process is completed and the decision is in support of Salford College, the College will notify DHA via PRISMS that the student is not achieving satisfactory attendance **as soon as practicable (BUT within 5 working days)**.
- Student is reported via PRISMS should the complaint/appeal not be substantiated (found in favour of the College).
- Salford College *may* decide not to report a student for 80% attendance where the college feels the student is a genuine / bona fide student and can confirm the student is attending AT LEAST 70% of the scheduled course contact hours *and* maintaining satisfactory academic performance. However, the College will issue a warning letter with counselling and support as outlined at 85%. In this instance once the student's attendance has fallen below 70 per cent, the College **must issue a notice of intention to report** the student for unsatisfactory attendance, informing the student of his/her right to appeal.
- Where a student with low attendance is able to demonstrate (and provide evidence of) compassionate or compelling circumstances, the CEO will assess whether a 'suspension of studies' is in the best interest of the student. *Refer Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling the Overseas Student's Enrolment Policy and Procedure*
- All evidence including action taken eg. counselling student, **MUST** be retained on the student file.

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