ELICOS Attendance Monitoring

1.0 Purpose

This policy has been defined as a requirement to meet the National Code Standard 11 – Monitoring Attendance.

It will be available and followed by all QAT (Queensland Academy of Technology) staff members involved on the ELICOS delivery and course development.

International students who are Student Visa holders are required to attend a minimum of 80% of tuition time, and as a provider, QAT is responsible for maintaining and monitoring attendance records. Students whose attendance falls below 80% must be reported to DIBP through PRISMS, under section 19 of the ESOS Act.

The Director of Studies, acting through the teachers and welfare counsellor, has the responsibility to ensure that students complete all course requirements within the expected duration of their CoE. To this end, QAT views the maintenance of accurate student records as being critical to the success of the college and an essential part of fulfilling QAT’s statutory obligations.

In instances where the records indicate that students are deemed at risk of not meeting course requirements, QAT’s academic intervention strategy will be triggered.

2.0 Background

Monitoring student’s attendance is referenced in the National Code Standards 11 and SNR16 from the Standards for National VET Regulator (NVR) Registered Training Organisations. National Code Standard 9 also refers to the student’s completion within the expected duration of study.

SNR16 The NVR RTO adheres to the principles of access and equity and maximises outcome for its clients, as follows:

16.6 Learners have timely access to current and accurate records of their participation and progress

National Code Standard 11 – Attendance Monitoring

Registered providers systematically monitor students’ compliance with student visa conditions relating to attendance. Registered providers are proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements. Registered providers report students, under section 19 of the ESOS Act who have breached the attendance requirements.

National Code Standard 9 – Completion within the expected duration of study

The registered provider must have and implement documented policies and procedures for monitoring the progress of each student to ensure that at all times the student is in a position to complete the course within the expected duration as specified on the student’s CoE. In monitoring this enrolment load, the registered provider must ensure that in each compulsory study period for a course, the student is studying at least one unit that is not by distance or online learning.

3.0 Definitions

ELICOS – English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
DIBP – Department of Immigration and Border Protection
PRISMS – Provider Registration and international Students Management System
ESOS – Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
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, as defined in QAT’s policy on Deferment, Suspension, and Cancellation.

4.0 Policy

4.1 Context

Monitoring the student’s attendance allows QAT to identify and offer support to those at risk of not completing their studies within the expected duration of study and who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements.

After intervention and the appeals process, QAT will report students who are not meeting satisfactory course attendance to DIBP, under Section 19 of the ESOS Act.

4.2 Notification

At the time of enrolment, students are advised of the course attendance requirements as part of their written agreement with QAT and are also advised of the possible consequences of poor attendance. All students at the time of enrolment are asked to sign an agreement which includes an undertaking to maintain at least an 80% attendance rate.

Information on course attendance requirements is included in the international student handbook, the orientation presentation, and posted on the notice boards in each classroom, including information on:

- The 80% attendance requirement
- The consequence of not maintaining satisfactory attendance
- The requirement to notify the provider if they change their contact details
- The requirement to notify the provider if the student is sick
- The requirement to provide a medical certificate for absence due to illness
- Students are advised again verbally during the first day’s orientation session

Information on study period durations is communicated to the student via the QAT Written Agreement.

5.0 Procedures

5.1 Contacting students

All attempted communication with students must be registered and saved against the students file on TEAMS and a hard copy placed on their file.

- Attempts to contact students shall be made via:
  - Email address
  - Telephone number
  - Face to face
  - Written letters to home address as per the student file.

5.2 Recording Student Attendance
QAT ELICOS teachers, in conjunction with student administration staff, will record each student’s attendance to class, on the class roll, hourly during the class. Attendance records will be maintained in the student management system (TEAMS).

At their induction, teachers are clearly instructed as to accurate roll keeping practices and also as to the significance of marking and initialising the rolls accurately.

Medical certificates provided by students are received by the class teacher, attached to the roll, and kept on the student’s file for reference.

5.3 Student Attendance Monitoring and Counselling

QAT staff will ensure that accurate attendance records are kept for all students, and that they maintain a satisfactory attendance level while studying at QAT. At all times the aim is to ensure that the student is not suffering from any problems that may be causing the unsatisfactory attendance. The student’s welfare is always the main concern.

A four step process is undertaken to ensure that the student is given every opportunity to maintain their required course attendance.

1. A first letter of warning is sent out to students when their current attendance has fallen below the 80% attendance requirement. This initial warning letter is accompanied by an e-mail, advising student of current attendance and overall attendance, and advises the student to speak to the Student Contact Officer or to make an appointment with the Attendance Administrator/Student Counsellor to discuss any issues which may be impacting on their ability to maintain a satisfactory rate of attendance. A copy of the letter is saved and any communication logged.

2. If the student’s attendance issues persist and attendance is still below 80% at the halfway point of the remainder of their course duration, a second warning letter is issued stressing the urgency of the situation. This second warning letter is accompanied by an e-mail, advising student of current attendance and overall attendance, and advises the student to speak to the Student Contact Officer or to make an appointment with the Attendance Administrator/Student Counsellor to discuss any issues which may be impacting on their ability to maintain a satisfactory rate of attendance.

3. If the student’s attendance has fallen below 80% of the overall course attendance requirement and the situation cannot be rectified within the scheduled course duration, a letter informing the student that QAT intends to report them to DIBP, along with a copy of QAT’s Complaints and Appeals Process, is sent to the student. The student will also be told that this may affect their student visa.

NB: In cases

4. If the student fails to respond within 20 working days, or if the student’s appeal is not upheld and any subsequent external appeal is rejected, under Section 19 of the ESOS Act, QAT will notify DIBP via PRISMS.

5. QAT will only uphold an appeal where the student’s attendance is at least 70%, and where evidence is provided of compelling or compassionate grounds.

NB: Either or both of Steps 1 and 2 may be omitted, depending on the length of a student’s enrolment. Once a student has fallen below 80% of the overall course attendance and the situation cannot be rectified, an immediate notice of intention to report the student to DIBP will be issued.
5.4 Student Absence for a consecutive period of five days

If a student is absent without approval (e.g. without approved holidays) for more than five consecutive days, the student is sent a warning letter advising them of the potential ramifications of continued absence. The student is advised to make an appointment to discuss any problems with the Attendance Administrator/Student Counsellor.

5.5 Notation of Students Attendance at completion of course

Students’ attendance records are stated on their end of course Statement of Attainment as either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Students who receive a satisfactory attendance comment must have attended more than 80% of classes.

Students who request an Attendance Certificate at any time are issued with one. The certificate shows the actual attendance of students as a percentage of the total required attendance to that date. A note will be taken of the students who take approved holidays and these periods will not be recorded as absences.

5.6 Monitoring Student Attendance

All ELICOS Teachers are responsible for marking the hard copy roll for each teaching session. Student Administration is responsible for entering the attendance data into the student management system TEAMS.

5.7 Monitoring Periods

Attendance is monitored over the entire enrolment period, up to a maximum of 24 weeks. After this time, the student’s attendance is reset to 100% and the monitoring takes place over the remainder of their enrolment.

6.0 Forms

- Attendance Warning Letter 1
- Attendance Warning Letter 2
- Attendance Warning Letter Final
- Attendance Warning Letter 5-Day Absence

7.0 References

Standards for National VET Regulator (NVR) Registered Training Organisations

National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007

QAT Student Handbook
### Version history

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