QAT Policy P035

ELICOS Course Progress Monitoring Policy

References: SNR16
National Code Standard 10 & 9.1

1.0 Purpose

This policy has been defined as a requirement to meet Standards 9 and 10 of the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007. It will also be available and followed by all QAT (Queensland Academy of Technology) staff members involved in the delivery of ELICOS courses.

Like all education providers, QAT is required to systematically monitor the progress of student visa holders and also to have a documented intervention strategy for any student who is at risk of not completing course requirements. Students whose course progress is deemed unsatisfactory, and who do not respond positively to the implementation of QAT’s academic intervention strategy, must be reported to DEST through PRISMS.

Under the terms of the National Code, 2007, course progress must be assessed as “at the end point of every study period”. For QAT, assessment takes place every 3, 4, or 6 weeks (depending on the course), and is collated and monitored over each 12-week module.

Prior to, and again at the commencement of their course, students are advised of QAT’s course progress requirements and of the consequences of not meeting progress requirements. Students are also advised of how to access QAT’s complaints and appeals process in the event they may wish to appeal a decision made by QAT’s academic management staff.

2.0 Background

Monitoring Course Progress is referenced in the National Code Standards 9 and 10 and SNR16 from the Standards for National VET Regulator (NVR) Registered Training Organisations, and the DIISRTE/DIBP Course Progress Policy.

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 10 – Monitoring Course Progress
Registered providers systematically monitor learners course progress. Registered providers are proactive in notifying and counselling learners who are at risk of failing to meet course progress requirements. Under section 19 of ESOS ACT, registered providers report learners who have breached the course progress 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

Study Period – QAT defines a study period, or module, as a period of 12 weeks.

Monitoring is the activity taken by the teacher and Director of Studies whilst following up on student performance and progress throughout the course.

Recording is the activity taken by the teacher whilst recording the student’s progress.

Unsatisfactory progress is defined as follows:

For General English, unsatisfactory course progress is defined as below a pass (50% across all four macro-skills) for the class level at which the student is studying, in any 2 consecutive proficiency tests, or consistent failure to participate or hand in set tasks and homework over a module. Proficiency tests are conducted every 6 weeks.

For IELTS students, unsatisfactory course progress is defined as recording a score below the estimated average score level anticipated for the class in which the student is studying, in any 4 consecutive 3-weekly tests, or, for the evenings, any 3 consecutive four weekly tests.

For EAP, unsatisfactory course progress is defined as below a pass in any 2 consecutive EAP tests, or consistent failure to participate or hand in tasks and assignments over a 12 week course. Tests are conducted every 6 weeks.

Intervention is the strategy used by QAT to assist students who are falling under the minimum level of satisfactory progress as defined in this document.

DIBP - Department of Immigration and Border Protection

4.0 Policy

4.1 Context

Monitoring the course progress of students allows the provider to identify and offer support to those at risk of not progressing or completing their studies within the expected duration of study.

After intervention and the appeals process, QAT will report students who are not making satisfactory course progress to DIBP.

4.2 Responsibility

QAT’s CEO, through the Director of Studies, is responsible for the implementation of this strategy, and also ensuring that staff members and students are aware of and following this policy.

The Director of Studies, acting on advice from the teaching staff is responsible for monitoring the course progress of students and ensuring that all relevant outcomes are recorded on student files.
4.3 Records and Counselling

In accordance with the National Code, QAT staff ensure that accurate academic records are kept for all students. These include records of set assignments and all tests. Staff undergo a thorough training in the maintenance of academic records at their induction.

The purpose of these records is to both enable an accurate assessment of the student’s performance to be made at course completion and to satisfy DIBP requirements. Records of performance on each test will be recorded for each student on the prescribed forms and kept in individual academic progress files. As well, a record of the students’ results is maintained. These records are used to complete periodic reports as necessary and to inform decisions regarding academic performance. They are to be used in conjunction with academic counselling records.

Feedback is given to students after each test, as well as Proficiency Reports for GE students and QAT Class Teacher Counselling Interviews if required.

4.4 Unsatisfactory Course Progress

Where there is unsatisfactory progress as defined above, students are counselled by the teacher or the Director of Studies in the form of an Intervention (see below). If the student has an education agent, the agent is also advised of the situation. The student is also advised of the possible ramifications of their lack of performance via a warning letter.

If the situation is not rectified, and the student continues to underperform on tests over the next 6 weeks, then a final counselling session is arranged, and the student is advised in writing that their performance is to be reported to DIBP. At this point they are also informed of the appeals process.

4.5 Intervention

To ensure that students’ progress can be monitored properly, records of all regular tests and reports are kept in a central file for easy access. In addition, teachers are advised to inform the Director of Studies whenever a student’s performance is deemed to be at risk of becoming unsatisfactory.

If a student has been identified as being at risk of failing to demonstrate satisfactory course progress, the teacher must be able to demonstrate this with concrete examples (e.g. test records, written reports on participation levels, examples of task or assignment work, etc.).

In the instance of a student being at risk of underperforming, it is a requirement under the terms of the National Code of Practice for Registered Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007, that QAT must undertake an intervention strategy to circumvent the problem.
5.0 Procedures

5.1 Monitoring Arrangements

- As the person responsible for monitoring course progress, the Director of Studies ensures that all summative test records are properly and accurately recorded and filed after each six weekly, four weekly or three weekly test.

- Teachers meet with the Director of Studies as required to discuss the summative and any relevant formative results of any at risk students.

- During the course, based on the on-going assessment results, teachers monitor the academic progress of their students and counsel them as required. A record of any counselling sessions is filed with the student record.

5.2 Intervention Strategy

- Any student who is deemed to be at risk in terms of academic progress over a 12-week period is counselled by the Director of Studies. Possible ramifications, including potential reporting to DIBP, will be outlined to the student in the form of the ELICOS Progress Warning Letter 1

- Optional assistance in the form of additional homework, transfer to an easier class, or additional 1:1 assistance (extra fees may be incurred for this option) are offered at this point.

- A report of the assistance offered or provided is kept on the student’s file.

- The student’s performance is then monitored carefully by the class teacher in consultation with the Director of Studies. Regular counselling sessions are provided as deemed necessary.

5.2 Reporting Poor Progress and Appeals

- If the student’s academic performance fails to improve, or deteriorates further over the course of the following 6 week module, then the student is advised through a final warning letter that their poor performance will be reported to DIBP via PRISMS.

- The student is asked to provide any grounds for the continued lack of performance and may appeal the decision to the Director of Studies if such grounds exist.
• The Director of Studies advises the student that they have a right of appeal and provides appropriate guidelines for such an appeal. Please see QAT’s Complaints and Appeals Policy.

• Such an appeal must be in writing, stating the grounds for any lack of satisfactory performance.

• It must be provided within 20 working days of the notification being given to the student.

• If there are no reasonable grounds for the continued lack of performance, then the appeal is rejected then the Executive Director notifies DIBP via PRISMS as soon as practicable, but not more than 10 working days after the decision.

• If there are reasonable grounds (such as a family bereavement, etc.), then the monitoring, assistance and counselling process may be repeated over the following 6 weekly module ending with either an improvement in performance or eventual reporting to DIBP via PRISMS by the Executive Director.

6.0 Forms

• QAT Student Proficiency Report
• QAT Class Teacher Counselling Interview Form
• ELICOS Progress Warning Letter 1
• ELICOS Progress Warning Letter Final (Intention to Report)

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

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Reviewers</th>
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