

# Attendance Policy for ELICOS Programs

## Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This policy establishes principles and processes to monitor the attendance of international students studying ELICOS courses as part of SCU's English Language Programs. It allows SCU as the registered provider to meet its obligations under Standard 11 of the [National Code](#) of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 which requires registered providers to:

- a. systematically monitor students' compliance with visa conditions relating to attendance;
- b. be proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements; and
- c. report students (under section 19 of the [Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 \(ESOS\)](#)) who have breached attendance requirements.

### Scope

(2) This policy applies to:

- a. all SCU international students that are on an Australian Government student visa and are studying an ELICOS course within the English Language Programs (through SCU College); and
- b. all staff with responsibilities for teaching and supporting students enrolled in English Language Programs at SCU.

## Section 2 - Definitions

(3) Attendance:

- a. refers to actual physical attendance at classes and excludes all absences from classes regardless of the reason for such absence;

(4) Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances:

- a. are generally circumstances beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course or wellbeing; and
- b. could include (without limitation): serious illness, death in the family, major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country which requires emergency travel;

(5) International Student:

- a. means a student who is a citizen of another country and is studying in Australia;

(6) Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS)

- a. PRISMS provides a secure system for Providers registered on the Commonwealth Register of Courses and Institutions for Overseas Students (CRICOS) to comply with legislative requirements by:
  - i. issuing bona fide confirmations of enrolments as "evidence of enrolment" in a registered full-time course, and
  - ii. reporting changes in course enrolment, particularly where study ceases (non-compliance), or the duration of the study changes.

(7) Study Period:

- a. a discrete period of study within a course, namely term, semester, trimester, short course of similar or lesser duration, or as otherwise defined by the registered provider. The study period for an ELICOS course is stated in each student's offer of admission.

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(8) International students enrolled in ELICOS courses at SCU must maintain a minimum attendance rate of 80% for each study period in which they are enrolled.

(9) Subject to clause (10), where a student does not meet the 80% attendance threshold for a study period, the University will notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student to the relevant Commonwealth Department. The written notice will inform the student

- a. of a right to appeal and provide details of how to activate the appeals process; and
- b. that the student has 20 working days from the date of notification in which to register an appeal.

(10) The University may decide not to report a student for breaching the 80% attendance rate if:

- a. there is documentary evidence demonstrating that Compassionate or Compelling circumstances apply; and
- b. the student is making satisfactory progress within the ELICOS course; and
- c. the student is attending at least 70% of the course contact hours for which he or she is enrolled.

(11) If a student is required to undertake further ELICOS study after completing their original duration designated in the offer of admission, a new offer of admission is issued and the calculation of attendance will recommence.

## Section 4 - Procedures

### Advice on Attendance requirements

(12) SCU College will inform ELICOS students of the importance of meeting the minimum attendance requirements established at clause (8) and outline the consequences of failing to meet these attendance requirements at the orientation meeting for new students.

### Attendance Monitoring

(13) An attendance roll will be maintained for each class within ELICOS courses. The roll must indicate the:

- a. date;
- b. time of the class;
- c. name of the class;

- d. name of the teacher;
- e. names of students' that are required to attend; and
- f. location of the class.

(14) During the relevant Study Period and normally 3 times per day, each teacher must mark the attendance roll according to clause (15) for each class, and pass this information to the College administration team for uploading to the College attendance register.

(15) The available codes which must be used in the attendance roll to record attendance are:

- a. P - Present;
- b. S - Sick (medical certificate provided);
- c. B - Bereavement or other compassionate (evidence provided);
- d. C - Counselling session (pre-approved); or
- e. A - Absent (all other absences).

(16) Students will be deemed to be absent if they are not in class and/or not attending another university activity that has been pre-approved in writing.

(17) At the end of each week, an attendance percentage must be calculated by SCU College Administration staff for each student. This percentage is cumulative for the students' total study period.

(18) Attendance data must be stored securely and may be stored electronically by SCU College.

## **Attendance Reporting**

(19) If attendance falls below a 90% threshold, SCU College will report the non-attendance to SCU International.

- a. An initial letter of warning will be issued by SCU International to the student through their official SCU email address.
- b. The letter will outline options for counselling and support through the either SCU College, SCU International or another university nominated support service.

(20) At the discretion of SCU International staff, the student may also be contacted by other means such as verbal warning, letter, telephone and/or SMS.

(21) The student must acknowledge the receipt of the letter by returning a signed and dated copy of the letter to SCU International within 5 days. If no acknowledgement is received the process will proceed to the next stage.

(22) If attendance falls below 84% SCU International will be informed and:

- a. a second letter of warning will be issued;
- b. an appointment will be made for the student with the SCU International Student Support Officer. A translator will be supplied, if requested, so the student clearly understands their obligations; and
- c. notes of the interview will be kept in the student's file.

(23) The student must acknowledge the receipt of the letter by returning a signed and dated copy of the letter to SCU International within 5 days. Notes of the interview will be kept in the student's file.

(24) If a student's attendance falls below 80% the SCU International will be informed and a third and final warning letter will be sent informing the student of SCU's intention to report their non-attendance.

(25) The student must acknowledge the receipt of the letter by returning a signed and dated copy of the letter to SCU International within 5 days. If no acknowledgement is received the process will proceed to the next stage.

(26) The third and final warning letter will inform the student ;

- a. they have failed to meet the minimum attendance requirements established under this Policy;
- b. of SCU's intention to report their non-attendance to the relevant Commonwealth Department;
- c. that the student has 20 working days from the date of notification in which to lodge an appeal to the Director, SCU College;
- d. that if an appeal is lodged, it is the student's responsibility to provide all information relevant to their appeal at the time of the appeal;
- e. who they may contact if they wish to discuss the implications of the letter; and
- f. that they may also appeal externally to the relevant state Ombudsmen.

## **Appeal**

(27) Upon receiving an appeal, where the Director, SCU College determines that on the evidence presented clause (10) is satisfied, then the appeal will be upheld and the student will not be reported to the relevant Commonwealth Department.

(28) The Director, SCU College may seek advice in relation to the appeal at his or her discretion.

(29) The student's enrolment must be maintained for the duration of the appeal.

(30) The decision of the Director, SCU College is final within the University. However, all students will be advised of their right to access an external appeals process through the relevant State and Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office if they are not satisfied with the result or conduct of the internal appeals process as described.

(31) If the student lodges an appeal and it is dismissed on the basis that the student has not met the attendance requirements established under this Policy, SCU International will report the matter to the relevant Commonwealth Department through PRISMS.

(32) Where a student is reported to a Commonwealth Department, SCU International will advise the student of the notification and a keep record of this notification on the student's file.

## **Student Support**

(33) If a student has 5 consecutive days or more unexplained absences:

- a. SCU College staff will attempt to contact the student by telephone and official email;
- b. the student may be interviewed by an SCU College staff member to determine the basis of their unexplained absences

(34) Where an interview is undertaken according to clause (33)b:

- a. a record of the interview session will be kept on the student file;
- b. the relevant staff member will advise the student of the attendance requirements established by this Policy and the implications for the student of continuing non-attendance.

(35) If a student is under 18 years of age, all absences from class must be investigated by SCU College staff in order to discharge the University's duty of care towards these students.

(36) Where absence may be prolonged at no fault of the student, they may request that the University temporarily suspend their enrolment on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances in accordance with the Enrolment Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Procedures - International Students.

### **Attendance Statement**

(37) Students may apply for an attendance statement after completing any SCU College ELICOS course with a minimum duration of 5 weeks.

- a. The statement will show the students' cumulative percentage attendance from course commencement until the date of statement issue, and the study period over which attendance and absences were recorded and calculated.

## **Section 5 - Guidelines**

(38) Nil.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
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