

# Attendance Policy for ELICOS Programs

## Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Policy establishes how the University monitors and enforces the attendance requirement for International Students studying ELICOS Courses at SCU College required under the [ELICOS Standards 2018](#).

### Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

- a. all University International Students that are on an Australian Government student visa and are studying an ELICOS Course through SCU College;
- b. all University staff with responsibilities for teaching and supporting students enrolled in an ELICOS Course at the University; and
- c. all staff within Southern Cross Global.

## Section 2 - Definitions

(3) For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

- a. Attendance means a student's actual physical attendance at classes and excludes all absences from classes regardless of the reason for such absences.
- b. Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances are generally circumstances beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course or wellbeing. This could include, but is not limited to:
  - i. serious illness,
  - ii. death in the family,
  - iii. major political upheaval, or
  - iv. natural disaster in the home country which requires emergency travel;
- c. ELICOS Course means 'English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students'.
- d. International Student means a student who is a citizen of another country and is studying in Australia;
- e. PRISMS means the Provider Registration and International Student Management System;
- f. Study Period means 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 University. The Study Period for an ELICOS Course is stated in each student's offer of admission.

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) Students must maintain a minimum attendance rate of at least 80% for each Study Period in which they are enrolled.

(5) If a student is required to undertake further ELICOS study after completing their original ELICOS Course designated

in the offer of admission, a new offer of admission will be issued and the calculation of attendance will recommence.

## Section 4 - Procedures

### Advice on Attendance requirements

(6) SCU College will inform students of the importance of meeting the minimum attendance requirements established at clause (4) and outline the consequences of failing to meet these attendance requirements at the orientation meeting for new students. This will be documented in the student's English Language Program Assessment.

### Attendance Monitoring

(7) An ELICOS attendance register will be maintained for each class within ELICOS Courses. The register will indicate the:

- a. date;
- b. name of the class; and
- c. names of students that are required to attend.

(8) During the relevant Study Period, each teacher must mark the ELICOS attendance register according to clauses (10) to (12) for each class.

(9) Students can check their attendance percentage at the end of each class. Each week, teachers will inform students of their attendance percentage. Teachers must tell students to check their student email for a warning letter from Southern Cross Global if at any time their attendance falls below 90%, and subsequently 85% and then 80%.

(10) Teachers must enter the number of class hours the student has attended each day.

(11) Teachers may add the grounds for absence to the student's notes on the ELICOS attendance register on presentation of supporting documentation.

(12) Staff must use the following codes to record absence on the ELICOS attendance register:

- a. S - Sick (medical certificate provided);
- b. B - Bereavement or other compassionate (evidence provided); or
- c. C - Counselling session (pre-approved).

(13) Students are deemed to be absent if they are not in class and are not attending another University activity that has been pre-approved in writing.

(14) The ELICOS attendance register automatically records the student's attendance rate. This percentage is cumulative for the student's current Study Period.

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

### Attendance Reporting

(16) Southern Cross Global has access to the ELICOS attendance register and will inform students when they breach the attendance requirement.

(17) If attendance falls below 90%, Southern Cross Global will issue an initial letter of warning to the student to their University email address. The letter will outline options for counselling and support through SCU College, Southern

Cross Global or another University nominated support service.

(18) Southern Cross Global may, at its discretion, also contact the student by other means such as in-person, letter, telephone or SMS.

(19) If attendance falls below 85%, Southern Cross Global will issue a second warning letter and require the student to make an appointment to meet with the English Language Program Leader at their campus.

(20) The English Language Program Leader will discuss the student's circumstances with them and advise of options for counselling and support through SCU College, Southern Cross Global or another University nominated support service, as appropriate. A translator will be supplied, if requested, so the student clearly understands their obligations. A record of the interview will be kept in the student's file.

(21) The English Language Program Leader will prepare an intervention strategy which the student is required to sign.

(22) If attendance falls below 80% or the student does not respond to the second letter, Southern Cross Global will issue a third and final warning letter to the student.

(23) The third and final warning letter will inform the student:

- a. that they have failed to meet the minimum attendance requirements set by the Government and reflected in this Policy;
- b. of the University's intention to report their non-attendance to the relevant Commonwealth Department through PRISMS;
- c. of their right to appeal and how to lodge an appeal;
- d. that the student has 20 working days from the date of notification in which to lodge an appeal;
- e. 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 lodgement;
- f. who the student may contact if they wish to discuss the implications of the letter; and
- g. that the student may also appeal externally to the [NSW Ombudsman](#).

(24) 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;
- 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 they are enrolled.

## **Appeal**

(25) Upon receiving an appeal, if the Dean, SCU College determines that on the evidence presented clause (24) is satisfied, the appeal will be upheld and the student will not be reported to the relevant Commonwealth Department.

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

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

(28) The decision of the Dean, SCU College is final within the University. However, the student will be advised of their right to access an external appeals process through the [NSW Ombudsman](#)'s Office if they are not satisfied with the result or conduct of the internal appeals process as described.

(29) 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, Southern Cross Global will report the matter to the relevant

Commonwealth Department through PRISMS.

(30) Where a student is reported to the Commonwealth Department, Southern Cross Global will advise the student of the notification and keep a record of the notification on the student's file.

## **Student Support**

(31) If a student has five or more consecutive days of unexplained absences, SCU College will inform Southern Cross Global, who will attempt to contact the student again by telephone and their University email address. They will then conduct a welfare check, if appropriate.

(32) SCU College staff may also interview the student to determine the basis of their absences. Where an interview is undertaken:

- a. a record of the interview will be kept on the student's file; and
- b. the relevant staff member will advise the student of the attendance requirements of the Government and reflected in this Policy and the implications for the student of continuing non-attendance.

(33) If a student is under 18 years of age, all absences from class will be investigated by Southern Cross Global in order to discharge the University's duty of care towards these students.

(34) Where a prolonged absence occurs due to 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**

(35) Students may apply for an attendance statement after completing any SCU College ELICOS Course with a minimum duration of five weeks. The statement will show the student's cumulative attendance percentage from course commencement until the date of statement issue, and the dates of the Study Period over which attendance and absences were recorded and calculated.

## Status and Details

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| <b>Status</b>                | Current  |
| <b>Effective Date</b>        | 17th January 2018  |
| <b>Review Date</b>           | 14th August 2026   |
| <b>Approval Authority</b>    | Vice Chancellor  |
| <b>Approval Date</b>         | 23rd January 2018  |
| <b>Expiry Date</b>           | Not Applicable   |
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