

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Name of Policy:	Attendance Policy
Applicability:	All Staff and Students
Contact Person:	Administration Manager Admissions Manager
Original Issue date:	April 2010
Current Version approval:	January 2020
Next review:	January 2021
Related policies and procedures:	Academic (Monitoring Course) Progress Policy Complaints and Appeals Policy Student Support Services Policy Procedure for recording and monitoring attendance of overseas students
RTO:	91781
CRICOS Provider Number:	03256G

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled in all courses offered by NORTWEST. Attendance of international students is only monitored for compliance reasons if the designated ESOS Authority requires the RTO to do so.
- 1.2 NORTWEST is proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress through their absence in class.
- 1.3 NORTWEST expects students to maintain good class attendance for in-class assessment events. NORTWEST recognises that attendance assists student's understanding and completion of assessment activities.
- 1.4 The procedures describe how NORTWEST records, calculates and monitors attendance.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 The CEO or nominated officer is responsible for the implementation of this policy and to ensure that staff and students are aware of the requirements and its implications.
- 2.2 Administration Officers are responsible for the ongoing administration of this policy in relation to record keeping and analysing of the attendance records in the student administration system and the subsequent notification actions to students.
- 2.3 The Student Support Officer is responsible for the support and counselling processes for students at risk of not achieving satisfactory attendance and in meeting their obligations; and for monitoring corrective action.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Actual Attendance:** This is actual physical attendance in class. If a student is absent for any reason including illness or injury, they are marked as not attending.
- 3.2 **Projected attendance:** Current actual attendance plus maximum remaining attendance divided by the total scheduled hours for the study period (one Term).
- 3.3 **Consecutive days absent:** Refers to five consecutive days of classes missed, or five days missed without approval over two weeks of classes, whichever comes first.

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- 3.4 Non-commencement of a course:** 5 days absent at the start of a course, student has not started their course of study. This may be due to a critical incident which must be investigated.
- 3.5 International Student:** A person who holds an Australian Student Visa and is an 'International Student' as defined by the ESOS Act.
- 3.6 ESOS Act:** Education Services for Overseas Students Act.
- 3.7 The National Code:** Means the code of practice for registered providers and their registered courses in relation to international students and sets out the national standards required.
- 3.8 PRISMS:** Provider Registration and International Student Administration System – the Government electronic system that holds CoEs and CRICOS data.
- 3.9 Intention to Report letter:** Letter advising students that they have breached a visa requirement and that they have 20 working days commencing three working days from the date of the letter before they will be reported for student visa breach. Students are provided information on how to access the complaints and appeals policy in this letter. Students are provided with information on accessing student support services if they have compassionate or compelling circumstances.
- 3.10 Satisfactory course progress:** Satisfactorily completing more than 50% of units in a study period (Term).
- 3.11 Student Administration System:** In-house student database where attendance is recorded.
- 3.12 Cancellation by Provider:** NORTWEST takes appropriate steps to report a student who has not attended, notified the college of their absence or contacted the college for a period of two weeks or more.
- 3.12 Compassionate or Compelling circumstances:** Circumstances beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. NORTWEST will assess, at its discretion, grounds for determination based on supporting evidence, which may include:
- A 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 (documented evidence required.)
 - Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel.
 - A traumatic experience which may include: involvement in or witnessing of serious accident or crime and that these cases are supported by a psychologist's report.
- These above are only examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. NORTWEST's staff will use their professional judgment to assess each case on its individual merits. Documentary evidence must be provided to support these claims and copies of these documents must be placed and kept on the student's file.
- 3.13 Non commencement of studies:** the student has not or will not take the offer of education on a particular COE.
- 3.14 Critical incident:** A traumatic event or a threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear, or injury. This could include a student who is deemed as missing.

4. PROCEDURE FOR RECORDING ATTENDANCE

- 4.1** Student attendance is recorded weekly and monitored each term.
- 4.2** Attendance is recorded for each actual contact hour of 20 hours per week attended by a student during a study period (one term). Attendance is calculated on a percentage basis for each daily

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session against an overall percentage for the study period. Attendance of 20 hours per week is equal to 100% for that week. Hours absent are recorded as zero (0).

- 4.3 NORTWEST provides 15 face to face course work hours per week on campus, and five hours of prescribed distance learning activity online per week.
- 4.4 Attendance is recorded by trainers for each hour attended in each face-to-face session. At the end of the session/s, trainers sign-off daily on class rolls. Trainers also record a weekly distance learning attendance roll to a maximum of five hours per week following the completion of online learning activities. This is submitted to Reception during the week after its due date for entry into the Student Administration System by Friday of that week.
- 4.5 Attendance records are entered into the Student Administration System on a weekly basis at the end of each week. An attendance tracking report is generated weekly by an Administration Officer and used for monitoring purposes. Administration officers analyse this monitoring report on a weekly basis during the study period to inform appropriate action.
- 4.6 Overall attendance is calculated as a percentage for the duration of the study period.

5. **ABSENCE FOR 5 CONSECUTIVE DAYS OR 0% ATTENDANCE**

- 5.1 Students who are absent from NORTWEST for 5 consecutive days or more at the beginning of a course of study without approval or communication with NORTWEST will be contacted by either telephone, SMS and email as a matter of priority by NORTWEST student services staff. If contact with an international student cannot be made directly, NORTWEST will contact the student's education agent, if applicable.
- 5.2 Students whose attendance is 0% within a study period (one term) will be issued with a reminder letter regarding the need to complete their in-class assessment events. Students 'at risk' of academic progression will be contacted by Student Support Officer and action taken as per Academic progression policy.
- 5.3 If contact with a student is made, NORTWEST will provide counselling in relation to attendance and academic progression requirements.
- 5.4 If there is no attempt by the student to improve attendance:
 - International students will be issued an Intention to Report letter as per Academic progression policy.
 - Students have 28 days commencing from the date of the letter to contact NORTWEST to discuss actions to remedy their attendance and issues.
 - If a student does not contact the college, Admissions staff will take appropriate steps to make a report to the Department of Home Affairs through PRISMS.
- 5.5 Any attempt to contact an international student will be recorded in the student's file.

6. **PROCESS**

- 6.1 NORTWEST staff will enter the attendance of each student in the Student Administration System recorded on the daily class rolls for face to face sessions, which indicates late arrivals or early departures, and on the online distance learning weekly rolls. Attendance is recorded and certified by trainers for each hour at each session. Online distance learning, of up to five hours per week, is recorded as outlined in clause above.

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- 6.2** Absences due to illness, injury or misadventure are included in the recorded absence for the study period. Administration staff will also enter other records of attendance including enrolment changes, special leave approvals, deferrals, cancellations and withdrawals.
- 6.3** Administrative staff input attendance records into the Student Administration System weekly, and generate monitoring reports weekly to track attendance. Based on fortnightly analysis and review of the reports, warning notifications to students will be sent electronically at scheduled intervals per term with details of the required actions needed by the student; or sent when a student becomes at risk of not meeting satisfactory attendance for the study period.
- 6.4** If counselling regarding attendance or support meetings is required, the student is responsible for making contact as indicated in the notification letter and will be reminded of NORTWEST attendance policies, and that satisfactory attendance is a course requirement.
- 6.5** If an intervention program is required to support the student to meet course requirements, administration fees may apply as per the fees and charges schedule.
- International students will be reminded that satisfactory attendance and course progress is a visa requirement.
 - Counselling processes will include informing the student that if attendance falls below the required level, the student may be reported to DoHA.
 - Domestic students will be made aware of the impact attendance has on their course progress.
- 6.6** When an international student has been issued with a warning notice of Non-commencement of the course or an Intention to Report, and subsequently responds to the requirements or appeals the decision to report, NORTWEST may choose not to take further action if the student:
- is maintaining satisfactory course progress; and
 - can provide documented evidence under compassionate and compelling circumstances as defined.
- 6.7** Where actions will be taken by NORTWEST, students are to be advised on the right to appeal (see Complaints and Appeals policy). The student will also be advised that they may appeal externally to the Overseas Student Ombudsman. Student enrolment will remain until internal or external appeal processes have been finalised.
- 6.8** All contact with students are documented by NORTWEST staff and notes made in the electronic Student Administration System. Where contact is not established and the student does not reply nor returns to NORTWEST for counselling or classes, reporting procedures will commence.
- 6.9** All records of letters, meetings, intervention actions and related documents will be stored and filed in the Student Administration System. Letters are recorded in the Correspondence register.

7 RECORDS AND INFORMATION

All documentation will be kept in the Student Administration System both in the main student file and electronically in the Student Administration System.

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8 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Forms and Record Keeping:

Title	Document Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Attendance Record Sheet for online distance learning	Fileshare / Attendance	Admin staff	2 years after last entry
Attendance Record	Student Administration System	Administration Officer	2 years after last entry
Warning letter – notice of Non-commencement of course	1. Student's File 2. Student Administration System	Student Support Officer/ delegate	2 years after last entry
Monitoring and Intervention Form	1. Student's File 2. Student Administration System	Student Support Officer	2 years after last entry
Letter of Intention to Report	1. Student's File 2. Student Administration System	Student Support Office/ delegate	2 years after last entry

9 REFERENCES

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2018
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Standard 8 of the National Code 2018.

10 IMPLEMENTATION

The Attendance Policy and Procedure will be implemented throughout NORTWEST via:

1. An announcement notice emailed to all students and staff
2. Inclusion on the NORTWEST website
3. From reception

11 REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Description of modifications
1	April 2010	Original
2	April 2012	Revised and simplified terminology
3.1	May 2012	Revising copy
3.2	July 2012	Updated the 5 day absence to report
4	July 2014	Revised terminology for currency
4.2	October 2014	Revised terminology for better clarification
15.0	February 2015	Revised terminology in CL 4.1, 4.3 and 6.1 for clarification
15.1	August 2015	Revised terminology for attendance %
15.2	Sept 2015	Revised terminology for attendance > 70%
16	Feb 2016	Review, no change
17.0	March 2017	Update company name, logo and footer
18.0	Jan 2018	Review highlights
18.1	Jan 2018	Update % attendance for intervention, delete repeated process steps

18.2	May 2018	Update % attendance for intervention, delete repeated process steps
20	Jan 2020	Annual review