
ATTENDANCE

Policy and Procedures Manual

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Issue History

DATE	REVISION DETAILS
31.9.07	Initial Draft
10.12.07	Revised document
27.04.10	Additional statement re Warning Letters Procedure
30.05.10	Review and reformat
22/07/10	Adopt National Code Standard 11 Attendance policy in line with audit conditions July 16 2010
10/03/11	Continuous improvement amendments
9.5.11	Continuous Improvement Amended Version – operational for 2011
2.6.11	Amended
8/08/11	Procedures updated to include relevant compliance issues from VETAB audit 2005/62649.17C
25/10/14	SCPL update (v1.0) and new policy created for progress policy updates – 2.7 Course progress and Completion in Expected Duration
24/06/2015	Updated process to exclude reporting for attendance

1. Policy

Strathfield College states that there is a direct relationship between the successful completion of assessment events, competency achievement with attendance and active class participation. Therefore the College monitors class attendance and keep records of unexplained absences. Strathfield College maintains a policy of 80% attendance. Students are required to undertake all in-class tasks in a group situation. This policy and these procedures are to ensure students complete their studies and achieve the qualification within the duration of their CoE.

In accordance with the guidelines of Standard 11 of the National Code Strathfield College will report students to DIAC when they fail to meet satisfactory attendance requirements. If a student's attendance is less than 80 per cent, or if a student is absent for more than five consecutive days, Strathfield College may choose to not report a breach if:

- the student's attendance is at least 70 per cent;
- the student is maintaining satisfactory academic performance;
- there are compassionate and compelling reasons or circumstances; and
- the assessment is consistent with the provider's documented attendance policies and procedures.

Strathfield College will also monitor academic performance of each student and will intervene where that performance is not satisfactory across two consecutive units.

2. Definitions

- **RTO** - Registered Training Provider
- **Intervention Strategy** - Those actions, that the teacher or management recognises as needed for a student to successfully complete a course. See SC Intervention Policy.
- **Unsatisfactory progress** - not successfully completing or demonstrating competency in at least 50% of the course requirements in a study term period.
- **Unsatisfactory attendance** – not meeting the 80% attendance rate for scheduled classes in a study term period which is required to meet student visa conditions, and not making satisfactory academic progress where the attendance falls below 80% and above 70%.
- **Unexplained absence** - Any absence of more than five consecutive days that is not supported by legitimate evidence e.g. funeral notice, doctors certificate, dental statement or with prior approval.
- **SMS** – The Student Management System is Edupoint.
- **20 hour absence without leave** – Absence of 20 hours in one week between Monday and Friday. All classes are scheduled for 20 hours a week.
- **Pairs Projects** – trainers form pairs to review assessment tasks for units of work and to provide pre- assessment validation of the assessment of a unit.

3. Procedures

The College has attendance rules which are communicated in the Letter of Offer and in the Conditions of Enrolment attached to the Application form and the Letter of Offer. This attendance policy will also be continuously available to students via the policies on the company website, the student Pre-Enrolment handbook on the website, the Welcome handbook and Orientation, the

shared folder on the student network and through continuous orientation and class induction procedures.

- The College will monitor student progress and provide training intervention and support to enable the students to complete qualifications within the life of the CoE – see Course Progress and Completion in Expected Duration policy.
- Trainers will mark the class roll to record attendance and enter the absences in the SMS. Trainers monitor academic progress on a weekly basis and at the end of each term.
- The College will monitor record and assess students' attendance across each study term period, which is usually two units and approximately two months.
- At Orientation, students are given a copy of the Attendance Induction Letter which explains the attendance policy and what students should do.
- Where a student does not maintain satisfactory attendance of 80% across a term period of their course, or where an absence of 20 hours in one week without prior approval occurs, an intervention program begins. The student will be first contacted by email when their attendance falls to 85% or when they are absent for 20 hours in one week. They will receive a letter by email informing them of the situation and the implications of a falling attendance rate.
- The College will next contact the student by email when the attendance falls to 75% through a warning letter issued by the VET DOS. The VET DOS will check the academic progress of the student after the assessments have been marked and recorded for each unit and where the academic progress is also not satisfactory, the VET DOS will be notified.
- Where attendance falls below 70% (69%) and the student is not making satisfactory academic progress the student will be issued with an ITR [Intention to Report] outlining the college's intention to report to the D for failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress and attendance.
- Where students are absent for 20 hours in a week without approved leave they will be contacted and issued a warning letter.
- After an Intention to Report letter is issued, the student will have 20 days to appeal. If no appeal is made or if the appeal is not upheld, the student will be reported to DEEWR-DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance.
- The student may appeal the decision to report them to DEEWR-DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance on the following grounds:
 - Strathfield College fails to record or calculate attendance accurately,
 - There are compassionate or compelling circumstances, or
 - Strathfield College has not implemented its intervention strategy or other policies according to its documented policies and procedures that have been made available to the student.
- 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. These could include, but are not limited to:
 - 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;
 - major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies;or
 - a traumatic experience which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; and

- witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police psychologists' reports)
- If a student's appeal is successful the result will vary. For example:
 - If the appeal shows that there was an error in calculation, and the student actually met a satisfactory attendance rate or made satisfactory academic progress (successfully completed more than 50% of the course requirements for that study period), Strathfield College will take no action.
 - If the appeals process shows that the student has not met a satisfactory attendance or made satisfactory academic progress, but there are compassionate or compelling reasons for the lack of progress, ongoing support will be provided to the student and the report will not be made.
- The Registrar is responsible for reporting and filing.

Procedures: Attendance

Processes for Professional Development of Trainers and Support Officers and, Informing, Monitoring, Counselling, Issuing Warnings letters, Reporting to DIAC and Maintaining Records for Students

Process	Who	When	What
1. Professional Development	VET DOS, Compliance Manager	Week 2 each term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training meetings and information e-mails to ensure that VETDOS, Trainers/Support Officers/Administration and Registrar are able to follow the procedures. • SMS training is conducted when trainers are inducted and issued with access and when the SMS is updated or refresher courses are needed. • Ongoing training and support is available from the SMS Administrator and/or VETDOS • This table will be used to inform VETDOS, Trainers, Support Officers, Administration of their roles and the roles of others.
2. Publication of Attendance Rules	Enrolling officers Student Support Officer VET Administrator	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College has attendance rules which are communicated in the Letter of Offer and the Conditions of Enrolment attached to the Application form and the Letter of Offer. • This attendance policy will also be continuously available to students via the policies on the company website, the student Pre-Enrolment handbook on the website, the Welcome Handbook. Attendance Induction Letter and Orientation, the shared folder on the student network and through continuous orientation and class induction procedures.
3. Counselling	Trainer	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainers will maintain email contact with students to provide counselling and make diary notes in SMS. • Warning letters or counselling notices will be sent to the students' email address which was supplied on enrolment day and or updated as required as a condition of the student visa.
4. Student Support	Student Support Officer	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Support Officers are available to provide ongoing support to students with problems, to contact agents to request advice on attendance issues and their impact on students' visas and make diary notes in SMS.
5. Sign In; Sign Out	Students under Trainer supervision	Each training session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students sign for each session; stating actual times of arrival and departure under the supervision of the trainer. • The class roll is a record of attendance which may be used as legal proof of attendance for DEEWR-DIAC.
6. Maintain class rolls and SMS records for Attendance	Trainer Administration Department	Session rolls and weekly entry to SMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Administration Department will create class timetables for each term and will correct problems that trainers identify with rolls on an ongoing basis. • Trainers will supervise the student signing in and out times and calculate hours of absence which is then entered into the SMS by Monday noon each week. • They record any relevant information relating to absences in the SMS diary notes section. • Trainers will notify the VET DOS when students are absent without leave for 20 hours in a week by email. • Rolls will be spot-checked for accuracy and adherence to policies and procedures by the Administration

			<p>Department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMS entries will be monitored by the Administration Department.
7. Class Changes	Students Receptionist Trainer VET DOS	On demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students may apply to change classes using a form from Reception. Class changes will be checked by the current trainer and approved by the VET DOS Diary notes will be made in SMS.
8. Calculation of Attendance	Student Management system (SMS)	On demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMS will calculate attendance across the reporting period – one term, using a deficit model. A range of reports can be generated to assist the monitoring and reporting processes.
9. Posting attendance	VET DOS and Reception	Every 2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance lists by student number will be posted on the VET Student Noticeboard – using student ID numbers, every 2 weeks.
10. Student Applications for Approved Leave	Receptionist VET DOS	As required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will complete applications for leave and provide evidence of the need for Approved Leave – doctor’s certificate etc. VET DOS will approve/not approve. Diary notes will be recorded regarding Approved Leave.
11. 85% Warning Letter	VET DOS	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will be contacted by email where their attendance rate is 85% with a first warning letter to warn them of the implications of not meeting satisfactory attendance. Diary notes will be made in SMS.
12. 20 Hours in one week absent without leave	VET DOS	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will be contacted by email when they are absent for 20 hours in one week without Approved Leave to warn them of the implications of not meeting satisfactory attendance. Diary notes will be made in SMS.
13. 20 Hours in one week absent without leave – second time	VET DOS, Trainer, Student Support Officer	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will be issued with an Intention to Report warning. Their Support Offices and Trainer will be sent a copy of the letter. The Support Officer will counsel the student about the Appeal process and notify the agent. Diary notes will be made in SMS.
14. 75% Warning Letter	VET DOS	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will be contacted by email to attend a meeting with their trainer for counselling where their attendance rate is 75%. Their Support Officers and Trainer will be sent a copy of the letter and diary notes will be made in SMS
15. Intention to Report to DEEWR-DIAC	VET DOS	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will be issued with an Intention to Report letter when their attendance rate is at 70% and they are not making academic progress. The Student Support Officers and Trainer will be sent a copy of the letter. The Student Support Officer will counsel the student about the Appeal process. Diary notes will be made in SMS Where it is not possible to contact the student by email, telephone or via the student’s agent, DIAC will be notified and the CoE cancelled.

16. Appeal process	Student VET DOS Independent Student Representative Overseas Student Ombudsman	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students must appeal using the Student Appeals Form. • They will have 20 working days to appeal and may invite another person to the Appeal Meeting. • Student Support Officer is available to answer student questions and to guide them about completing the appeal letter. • An appeal will be upheld if the student provides evidence show for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The College failed to record or calculate a student’s attendance accurately, ▪ The College has not implemented its intervention strategy and other policies according to its documented policies and procedures that have been made available to the student. ▪ There are compassionate and compelling circumstances. • The student may invite another person to the Appeal Meeting. The Student Support Officer is available to answer student questions and to guide them about completing the appeal letter. • Students may use the Overseas Student Ombudsman for external appeal facilities. To access the external appeal process, students must begin the appeal within 10 working days of the College decision date for appeal. • The VET DOS is responsible for hearing student appeals.
17. Reporting Students to DEEWR-DIAC	VET DOS Registrar	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If no appeal is received or the appeal is not upheld the student will be reported to DEEWR-DIAC as soon as practicable through PRISMS. • The Registrar will assemble the documentation, make the report, and file the documentation. During this process, the CoE will be cancelled.
18. Monitoring the entry of Attendance into the SMS	Registrar Trainers VETDOS Administration Department	Each unit Issue of Certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainers will enter attendance into the SMS under the supervision of the Registrar by noon on Monday of each week. • Accuracy and timeliness will be monitored by the Registrar and the VET DOS.