



Policies



Procedure



North Melbourne College
THE POWER OF QUALITY EDUCATION

MONITORING ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

National Code 2018

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Monitoring Attendance Policy and Procedure

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Monitoring Attendance Policy and Procedure

Purpose

This policy establishes principles and processes to monitor the CRICOS student's attendance as part of Clauses 8.1 and 8.10 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to overseas Students 2018. It allows North Melbourne College, as the registered provider, to meet its obligations under the National Code which requires registered providers to:

- A. Systematically monitor a student's compliance with visa conditions relating to attendance;
- B. Be proactive in notifying and counselling any "student at risk" who is at risk of failing to meet 80 per cent attendance requirements; and
- C. Report students (under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS) who have breached attendance requirements.

Scope

All students enrolled at North Melbourne College (NMC) in a Vocational Education and Training (VET) program, who hold a current student visa granted by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), and who use that visa to gain enrolment into VET programs. All NMC staff with responsibilities for teaching and supporting students enrolled at NMC.

Policy Statement

Overseas students enrolled in NMC courses must maintain a minimum attendance rate of 80 per cent for each study period in which they are enrolled. NMC maintains a policy of monitoring attendance of each student in each study period. Under NMC's monitoring attendance policy, students must attend scheduled classes for 20 hours per week.

- A. Where a student does not meet the 80 per cent attendance threshold in two consecutive study periods (one study period is equal to one term), NMC will notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student to the Department of Education through PRISMS. The written notice of intention to report will be sent to the student via email or mail.
 - a. Notification to cancel the eCoE, due to non-commencement of their study, will be sent to the student after two weeks of the term start.
 - b. The student has 20 working days from the date of notification in which to register an appeal against the decision.

- c. During the period of assessment of the appeal, students must attend classes and maintain their enrolment as per requirements.
- B. North Melbourne College (NMC) may **decide not to report** a student for breaching the 80 per cent attendance rate if:
- a. There is documentary evidence demonstrating that “compassionate or compelling” circumstances apply; and
 - b. The student is making satisfactory progress and attending classes, and their projected attendance is at a satisfactory level of 85 per cent following the first warning letter;
 - c. The student’s actual attendance is at least 70 per cent of the total study period course contact hours for the course in which they are enrolled, and they have compassionate or compelling reasons for their low attendance
 - d. The student’s actual attendance is at least 70 per cent after a second warning letter and projected attendance is at least 85 per cent of the remaining scheduled classes.
 - e. If a student is required to undertake further study after completing their original duration designated in the written agreement, a new offer of admission will be issued, and the calculation of attendance will recommence.
 - f. The student is still attending at least 70 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours and is maintaining satisfactory course progress’.
- C. North Melbourne College (NMC) has created and adheres to this policy based on the following:
- a. NMC will regularly monitor student attendance by taking signature on the weekly class rolls, to ensure students are complying with conditions relating to attendance. Admin staff will calculate the attendance using Excel on a weekly basis.
 - b. Students who have been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval will be contacted by NMC and flagged as "student at risk". Early intervention strategy will be implemented at this stage.
 - c. Attendance in class includes minimum expectations for a student in a teaching and learning environment for a total of 20 hours per week.

Procedure:

Purpose

The college has attendance rules which are communicated in the letter of offer and in the written agreement. NMC will follow the Monitoring Attendance Policy and it will also be continuously available to students via

the policies on the NMC website (nmc.edu.au/policy), the student handbook, on orientation day, and during class induction procedures.

Scope

In accordance with attendance requirements prescribed in the *National Code 2018, Standard 8* for students who have been granted student visas and who are enrolled in VET courses, NMC will keep attendance records. These records will progressively reflect the attendance/absences of each student in each study period during enrolment (scheduled course contact hours). Individual class attendance records for each student will be maintained on an enrolment basis, and a student's attendance will be calculated over an identified attendance calculation period depending upon the timetabling and course delivery arrangements.

Manner in which attendance and absences are recorded

Attendance records (class rolls) are kept in hard copy with student and trainer/assessor signatures. The day to day rolls forms the hard copy and are signed by the trainer/assessor and the RTO Manager. Administration staff record the class roll in the Student Management System (Wisenet) and staff communicate regularly with trainers/assessors about the need to accurately record student attendance on hard copy attendance rolls.

Student attendance is entered into NMC Wisenet at the end of each week, thus it is vital that rolls are marked and returned to the designated staff member. The staff member will store the hard copy in the designated storage location each week. Attendance recording in Wisenet is implemented by administration staff and monitored weekly by the RTO Manager and monthly by the Compliance Officer.

Attendance monitoring

Students' individual attendance is recorded and calculated over the period of the enrolment as stated on the confirmation of enrolment offer letter and written agreement. Student attendance is monitored over the enrolment period.

Process for assessing satisfactory attendance

NMC administration staff review student attendance regularly to identify students who are at risk of not maintaining satisfactory attendance requirements. Regular assessments will be undertaken at intervals which will ensure that the administrative staff will be able to make an accurate assessment of whether the student:

- is absent for more than five consecutive days without approval
- is maintaining satisfactory attendance according to the required threshold (80%)
- is maintaining satisfactory attendance projections to the required threshold (85%)
- is flagged as a "student at risk" of not attending at the required level for the relevant attendance calculation period (one study period – midterm calculation)
- actual attendance has fallen below the required attendance level within one study period threshold of 70 per cent and projected calculation is below 85 per cent

- actual attendance has fallen below the threshold of 70 per cent in two consecutive study period.

Regular assessment/calculation of attendance

At the end of each week the RTO Manager will generate a written report on the total number of students attended 20 hours of scheduled classes and student absences. The report will be sent on Monday morning to the Chief Executive Officer and cc'd to the Compliance Officer.

Administration staff will immediately contact/send a text message via Wisenet to any student who is absent from their 20 hours scheduled class.

Administration staff will contact/send a text message via Wisenet to any student who is absent for five consecutive days.

All communication with students must be recorded in Wisenet under file notes.

The RTO Manager will generate an Excel spreadsheet report on the last Friday of each month on the total number of students attending and absent with file notes on the reasons for any student not attending the classes. A monthly attendance monitoring report will be sent to the CEO and cc'd to the Compliance Officer.

Process for calculating a student's projected maximum possible attendance and for monitoring attendance

- Student attendance data is taken on a weekly basis from the class rolls and is entered into Wisenet and into the Excel attendance spreadsheet by the administration staff. An Excel spreadsheet report is generated following the weekly data entry showing each student's projected maximum possible attendance. Students at risk of not satisfying attendance requirements are identified on the Excel spreadsheet reports and flagged. The attendance reports show the student's number and the projected maximum possible attendance for each student from data entered into Wisenet from the hard-copy class rolls and the date of the generation of the report.

Calculation of Attendance:

- NMC calculates a student's projected attendance and the maximum possible attendance figure using a formula set within the Excel spreadsheet.
- Actual attendance is recorded in Wisenet from the signed class rolls duly signed by the trainer/RTO Manager and entered into the attendance data in Wisenet and onto the Excel spreadsheet by administration staff.
- Weekly report calculated by the RTO Manager using the attendance from the term start date to the term end date for one study period.
- The projected maximum possible attendance figure, which is expressed as a percentage, incorporates the actual number of hours absent together with a figure to incorporate the

assumption that the student will not be absent from any timetabled class for the remaining attendance calculation period.

- The projected maximum possible attendance figure (at any point of calculation) expresses the maximum attendance percentage that the student can maintain if that student sustains no further absences within the attendance calculation period.
- It is the student's responsibility (as advised during student orientation) to ensure that they regularly check the attendance reports, and if they have any concerns about the data on these reports, they are urged to make an appointment with the administration staff/RTO Manager.
- A session absence report for each student can also be generated from the database if a student wishes to query and/or review their attendance information at any time.
- A student may present, at a complaints and appeals hearing, a medical certificate or other suitable documentation as evidence of a compelling or compassionate circumstance which may have prevented the student from maintaining the 80 per cent attendance requirements.
- Current practice is to consider public holidays as attended classes until the missed class is rescheduled.

Five consecutive days

The process for determining how a student is contacted and counselled when absent for **five consecutive days** without approval:

- i. Administration staff conduct a manual check of every class roll once per week. Those students who have been absent for more than five consecutive days are identified.
- ii. Trainers/assessors are required to also check their students' attendance every day and email the RTO Manager with the details of any student who has missed a whole week's classes or four consecutive days (two weeks sessions).
- iii. A list of students identified in items (i) and (ii) is created manually by the administration staff.
- iv. An attempt to contact each student is made via text message and telephone call.
- v. Contact is also made via email and notification sent via email to any potential "student at risk", querying if they are not able to attend their scheduled classes, and progressing in the course.
- vi. The contact is aimed at understanding the student's reasons for continued absences, and to ascertain if they might be experiencing transition issues, need welfare counselling or are encountering any issues otherwise relating to their personal or academic welfare.
- vii. If issues identified in item (vi) apply, the students are immediately offered an appointment for welfare counselling or academic support.

- viii. For those who do not appear to have such issues, a notice is given of the importance of attendance in their selected course. They are also reminded of the importance of adhering to the stipulations required on the holders of an international student visa in Australia, that is attendance is compulsory as per the ESOS Act and NMC's Monitoring Attendance Policy.
- ix. For those students who are unable to be contacted, attempts are made to contact and counsel through administration or the student agent.
- x. A full log of all successful or unsuccessful attempts to contact the student is kept in Wisenet.
- xi. If a student continues to be absent or NMC is not able to contact them, the early intervention strategy for a student at risk stipulates that NMC delegates staff to follow the "student at risk" procedure. A first warning letter needs to be sent. See "student at risk").

Student at Risk

The process for determining the point at which a student is at risk of not maintaining a minimum of 80 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours:

- Reports of student's potential attendance generated from Wisenet identifies when students are at risk of not meeting attendance requirements by showing every student's actual attendance for the first five weeks and projected maximum possible attendance. NMC flags "Student at risk" in their first study period (by week 5). Students are also informed as to how they can make an appointment to seek advice or counselling if required. Early intervention strategy is initiated if a student's projected attendance is below 85 per cent in the first study period. NMC endeavours to contact the student to determine the reason for their absence/not returning to classes after a term break and to advise the student that the college may cancel their eCoE for breach of their attendance requirements as well non-commencement of their study after two weeks of the term start.
- When a student's projected maximum possible attendance falls below 85 per cent over the calculation period a first warning letter is sent to these students by email/post. NMC flags these students as "student at risk". The email advises students of their obligation to maintain satisfactory attendance whilst undertaking their course of study with the college, and the consequences of not doing so. Early Intervention Strategy is initiated by NMC, and students must make an appointment with the RTO Manager to discuss the intervention strategy and be present at an attendance warning session.
- The above process is repeated for students whose actual attendance continues to fall and is below 80 per cent in the first study period.
- Throughout the above process, students are communicated with via text message/telephone call to inform them that they have emails in their inbox regarding their low attendance, and that they should make an appointment to discuss their issues with the RTO Manager. A communication log of successful or unsuccessful contact with students is recorded in Wisenet and student file notes.

Attendance warning session:

At an attendance warning session, examples of what could be discussed, but not limited to, are as follows:

- Current attendance levels
- Reminding the student of the action that could occur when a student is in breach of the attendance requirements
- An aim to identify why the student has been absent
- To inform the student to collect and collate any documentation in support of their absences
- To inform the student that the Student Welfare Counsellor/Academic Support are available to assist if required
- Requiring the student to sign the meeting form (intervention strategy form) stating they have understood the content of the meeting and that they are aware of their obligations and communication process

Reporting process – Warning letters

Notification to cancel eCoE

- NMC will send notification to cancel the eCoE if the student does not commence their study after the term break.

Warning letter:

- NMC will send a warning letter to a “student at risk” if the student has missed five consecutive days.

First warning letter:

- NMC will send a first warning letter if a student’s projected attendance in the first term falls below 85 per cent or actual attendance is less than 80 per cent.

Second warning letter:

- NMC will send second warning letter if student actual total attendance in second consecutive term below 80 per cent or projected below 80 per cent’.

Notification of Intention to Report (NIR)

- NMC will send a notification of intention to report if a student’s actual total attendance in two consecutive terms falls below 70 per cent or is projected to be below 70 per cent.

Where the student has not maintained satisfactory attendance as per North Melbourne College's documented requirements, the student will send a Notice of Intention to Report (NIR) advising them of the college's intention to cancel their enrolment and report the student to the Department of Education via PRISMS.

The letter will also inform the student that if they wish to lodge an appeal against the college's intention to report them for breach of their student attendance requirements, that they have 20 working days from the date of the NIR (plus an additional five calendar days) to access the college's internal complaints and appeals process. Students are advised that if they are not satisfied with the college's conduct of the internal complaints and appeals process, they will be able to access an external complaints and appeals tribunal. Students are also advised that their enrolment will be maintained until the completion of internal (and external) complaints and appeals processes, and that they should continue to attend their classes whilst enrolled in their course.

- Medical certificate or other documentation may be considered acceptable during a complaints and appeal process.
- Public holidays are to be considered as absences from attended classes in projection calculation until the class is re-scheduled.

Deferring/suspension:

The college allows a student to defer their enrolment or the commencement of their reenrolment or return after a course break on the grounds of:

- The attendance calculation will be modified accordingly, and absences will be disregarded for the period of the approved deferral/suspension.
- The intervention strategy meeting concluded that the student needed to defer their studies.

Note: Students who have not applied for, nor have had an official leave or permission to defer their course commencement, will be recorded as absent for the period.

Policy Owner

RTO Manager, Compliance Officer and trainer/assessor

Policy Monitoring: Chief Executive Officer (internal process check), external auditor (during quarterly audit).

Approved by: CEO/November 2019.

Definitions:

Compassionate or Compelling

Compassionate and 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' report) or
- Where the registered provider was unable to offer a prerequisite unit.

Appeal against decision:

If a student 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, NMC College will take no action.
- If the appeals process shows that the student has not met a satisfactory attendance rate but there are compassionate and completing reasons for the lack of attendance, ongoing support will be provided to the student and the report will not be made.

RTO:

Registered Training Provider (North Melbourne College)

Intervention Strategy:

Those actions, that the trainer/assessor or NMC recognises as needed for a student to successfully complete a course. For more details please see NMC intervention strategy policy.

Unexplained absence:

Any absence from the scheduled 20 hours per week, or absence of more than five consecutive days that is not supported by legitimate evidence.

SMS:

Student Management System.

20 hours absence without leave:

Absence of 20 hours in one week from scheduled time tabled classes.

Document Control

Policy	Policy Owner and Delegated Authority		Approved By/Date
Attendance Policy	Policy Owner: CEO/RTO Manager Delegated: Admission Manager/Compliance Officer		CEO/16.12.2019
Policy Connections	Policy Location	Policy Implementation Date	Policy Circulation
Fees and refund Admissions Pre-enrolment TPS	Google Drive/Compliance/Policy Library/National Code/ Hard copy access from RTO Manager.	Jan 2020 (with the start of the term)	Circulation - send through via email.
Next Review Date	Current Version Detail	Version History (if any)	
Dec 2020	V1.0.19		