

Australian Computer Society Policies and Procedures: Monitoring Attendance

National Code Standard 11

The National Code states:

Registered providers systematically monitor students' compliance with student visa conditions relating to attendance. Registered providers are proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements. Registered providers report students under Section 19 of the ESOS Act who have breached the attendance requirements.

Purpose and Scope

These Policies and Procedures will apply to all Australian Computer Society (ACS) ICT50115 Diploma of Information Technology (DIT) courses delivered by ACS and/or its Partners.

These policies and procedures for monitoring student attendance, initiating the Australian Computer Society's intervention strategy and for reporting students who fail to meet minimum requirements are designed to ensure compliance with all legislative and regulatory requirements established under the:

- ESOS ACT;
- ESOS Regulations;
- National Code;
- Migration Act; and
- Migration Regulations.

These requirements are effectively summarised under 'Standard 11 – Monitoring Attendance' of the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students*, which states the requirements as:

The following policies and procedures should be read in conjunction with policies and procedures relating to:

- monitoring and reporting students' course progress;
- international student services;
- critical incident response management;
- complaints and appeals; and
- the completion of courses within expected time.



Policy

The Australian Computer Society's attendance policy and procedures comply with Standard 11 of The National Code, *Monitoring Attendance*.

The Australian Computer Society's policy and procedures are designed to ensure full compliance with National Standard 9, *Completion within the Expected Duration* and Standard 10, *Monitoring Course Progress*, and its attendance monitoring, intervention and reporting policy and procedures are key elements in a broader strategy designed to ensure the early identification of all students who are at risk of failure to meet either or both attendance and course progress requirements.

The Standard states:

- 11.1** *The registered provider must record the attendance of each student for the scheduled course contact hours for each CRICOS registered course in which the student is enrolled which is:*
 - a. an accredited vocational education and training course (unless Standard 11.2 applies)*
 - b. an accredited school course*
 - c. an accredited or non-award ELICOS course; or*
 - d. another non-award course.*
- 11.2** *Where the registered provider implements the DEST and DIAC approved course progress policy and procedures for its vocational education and training courses, Standard 11 does not apply.*
- 11.3** *For the courses identified in 11.1 the registered provider must have and implement appropriate documented attendance policies and procedures for each course which must be provided to staff and students that specify the:*
 - a. requirements for achieving satisfactory attendance, which at a minimum, requires overseas students to attend at least 80 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours*
 - b. manner in which attendance and absences are recorded and calculated*
 - c. process for assessing satisfactory attendance*
 - d. process for determining the point at which the student has failed to meet satisfactory attendance; and*
 - e. procedure for notifying students that they have failed to meet satisfactory attendance requirements.*



The Australian Computer Society has adopted criteria based attendance monitoring and intervention policy and procedures. Specific interventions will be triggered by student attendance benchmarks, with the nature of specific interventions depending on the attendance rate benchmark.

Students will be expected to attend 100 per cent, and must attend at least 80% of the scheduled course contact hours for each study period of their courses.

Attendance monitoring and intervention is to be on a semester by semester basis, each semester lasting 11-13 weeks, and there being 3 semesters per year for the completion of the ICT50115 Diploma of Information Technology.

A student's attendance rate will be based on their raw attendance data as recorded in attendance rolls and entered in the student management system with the attendance rate being calculated with the total class hours for the study period as the denominator and the number of hours attended as the numerator. Absences related to verified medical certificates will be included in the total number of hours absent.

Where a student's enrolment is temporarily suspended, either in advance or retrospectively, in accordance with the provisions on *Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Study during Enrolment* under National Standard 13, the number of class hours expected to be attended during the affected study period will be reduced.

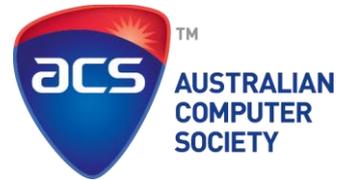
When reporting a student for unsatisfactory attendance in PRISMS any mitigating circumstances such as absences covered by validated medical certificates will be recorded in an appropriate note by the ACS.

Attendance monitoring will occur after each class, when the trainer will be responsible for marking a student present or absent on the student roll and in the student management system. The ACS will have access to this system and the ACS DIT Manager will login to the system and check attendance each week on a Friday.

Milestones will be marked three times in each study period:

- In the fourth week of the study period, based on the first three weeks of attendance out of a total of 60 scheduled class hours, and with regard to their maximum potential attendance rate for the whole study period assuming 100% attendance for the remaining class hours.
- In seventh week of the study period, based on the first six weeks of attendance out of a total of 120 scheduled class hours, and with regard to their maximum potential attendance rate for the whole study period assuming 100% attendance for the remaining class hours.
- In the week following completion of a semester, based on attendance for the total number of scheduled class hours for the semester.

Specific interventions will be triggered when:



- a student is absent for more than five (5) consecutive days or more than 20 consecutive hours of class time at any stage during a study period without explanation and approval;
- a student's attendance falls in the 'at risk' range of from 80 to 84 per cent;
- a student's attendance falls between 70 and 79 per cent; and when
- a student's attendance rate falls below 70 per cent.

Specific interventions will be triggered by current attendance rates for the period being monitored. The nature of those interventions in weeks four and seven will be moderated by the students' potential attendance rate for the full study period, assuming 100% attendance for the remaining classes.

The specific triggers and the nature of the strategic interventions are identified in the Australian Computer Society Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Criteria:

Week Four Intervention Criteria will be based on students' maximum potential attendance rates, combined with consideration of their academic progress, with an official notification being triggered when a student's adjusted attendance rate is demonstrably unsatisfactory and when their maximum potential attendance rate for the study period is simultaneously above the regulated trigger points.

Week Seven Intervention Criteria similarly will be based on students' maximum potential attendance rates, combined with consideration of their academic progress.

The End of Semester Intervention Criteria employed in the third and final intervention for a study period is students' final adjusted attendance rates for the whole period, with consideration of their academic progress.

Student attendance is recorded at each class by the class trainer, who is also responsible for entering each week's attendance data on the attendance roll and the student management system. Overall attendance and attendance records will be monitored on a regular basis (as indicated above) in the first instance by the Partner's Academic Coordinator or manager, and by the ACS.

Students will be expected to submit all medical certificates for health related absences to their trainer or the Partner's Student Services who are responsible for verification and recording the details, including the number of absent class hours covered, on both the hard copy attendance roll and the student management system.

Class hours missed due to late enrolment (within 14 calendar days of enrolment day) as a result of approved Deferment of Enrolment based on verified and approved Compassionate and/or Compelling Circumstances will not be deducted from the expected class hours for the study period and thereby excluded from the calculation of students' attendance rates.



Class hours missed due to late enrolment (within 14 calendar days of enrolment day) without approved Deferment of Enrolment will be classed as hours absent and thereby included in the calculation of students' attendance rates.

If a student fails to enrol within two weeks of the enrolment day and has no approved leave they will have their CoE cancelled for non-commencement.

If a student fails to return to classes within two weeks of a scheduled term break without approved leave, that student will be identified through the attendance monitoring procedures and the Partner's Academic Coordinator or equivalent will initiate the appropriate intervention strategy in consultation with the ACS.

If a student is granted Leave of Absence on grounds of Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances in accordance with ACS **Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation of Study During Enrolment Policies and Procedures** and National Code Standard 13, their studies will be temporarily suspended, and the class time covered by that leave of absence will be deducted from the expected class hours of a study period.

In the first instance, trainers will be responsible for:

- reminding students of their visa attendance obligations;
- informing students of the availability of counselling and support services should they be experiencing study and/or personal problems; and to
- informing students that further action will be taken if their attendance should fall below the requisite 80%.

This information will also be given to students at Orientation.

The Code further states:

11.4 *The registered provider's attendance policies and procedures must identify the process for contacting and counselling students who have been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval or where the student is at risk of not attending for at least 80 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled (before the student's attendance drops below 80 per cent).*

11.5 *The registered provider must regularly assess the attendance of the student in accordance with the registered provider's attendance policies and procedures.*

The ACS DIT Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent) monitors attendance and will identify students whose attendance places them in any of the attendance intervention categories, to the Partner's Student Services. The ACS will also monitor attendance and ensure that this is done at the appropriate times.



the Partner's Student Services will initiate the Australian Computer Society Attendance Intervention Strategy by informing the student appropriately of the issue with their attendance.

A student will be deemed to be 'at risk' if s/he:

- has been absent for more than five consecutive days, or more than 20 consecutive hours (one week) of class time, without notification and approval; or
- has a maximum potential attendance rate for the whole study period of from 85 to 90 per cent after the completion of the first three weeks of the study period; or
- has a maximum potential attendance rate (after week 6) or final attendance rate (after completion of the study period) of from 80 to 84.5 per cent
- their actual attendance after the completion of a Study Period falls to between 80 and 85 per cent

Students will be sent an attendance warning by the Partner's Student Services if they are absent for more than five consecutive days, or more than 20 consecutive class hours (the equivalent of one week of classes), without explanation and/or leave and are thereby identified as being 'at risk'.

This attendance warning will require the student to make an appointment with the Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent) within two (2) working days to discuss the reasons for their absence, and to be referred for further counselling and advice if required (to either the Partner's Student Services or the Partner's Welfare Officer for personal, social and financial problems). Academic problems can be dealt with by the Partner's Academic Coordinator or Manager.

Students who fail to respond to the warning within the required time will be telephoned by the Partner's Student Services and, if need be, further steps will be taken to establish contact with the student. For example, appropriate staff may visit their address or their part-time workplace in order to locate the student.

Students who have made satisfactory academic progress and who meet other requirements will be sent an attendance warning, whether or not they had previously been sent an attendance related warning, if:

- their potential attendance after the first three weeks of a Study Period falls to between 80 and 85 per cent; or
- their potential attendance after the first six weeks of a Study Period falls in the range from 70 to under 80 per cent; or
- their actual attendance after the completion of a Study Period falls in the range from 70 to under 80 per cent.

The attendance warning will inform the student that:

- their attendance has fallen below the 80% requirement;
- failure to meet the 80% attendance requirement for the full study period could lead to further action and their being reported to the Department of Education and the



Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) via the PRISMS reporting system;

- being reported could affect their student visa status; and that
- if they want to avoid being reported, they should attend 100% of classes for the remaining weeks of the period, and that they have to:
 - contact the Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent) within five (5) working days from the date of the warning to explain the reasons of their absence and, if necessary, arrange counselling or other professional support;
 - sign, and comply with the terms of an Attendance Agreement negotiated with the Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent); and
 - ensure that they continue to make satisfactory academic progress (see Australian Computer Society **Policy and Procedure on Monitoring Course Progress** and Australian Computer Society **Policy and Procedure on Completion Within Expected Duration**).

Finally, the warning will notify the student in writing that should they fail to meet the requirements, the ACS intends to report them for unsatisfactory attendance.

11.6 *Where the registered provider has assessed the student as not achieving satisfactory attendance for the courses identified in 11.1, the registered provider must notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student for not achieving satisfactory attendance. The written notice must inform the student that he or she is able to access the registered provider's complaints and appeals process as per Standard 8 (Complaints and Appeals) and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so.*

11.7 *Where the student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period, withdraws from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the registered provider, the registered provider must notify the Secretary of DEEWR (now the Department of Education) through PRISMS that the student is not achieving satisfactory attendance as soon as practicable.*

11.8 *For the vocational education and training and non-award courses identified in 11.1 a. and 11.1 d. The registered provider may only decide not to report the student for breaching the 80 per cent attendance requirement where:*

- a. that decision is consistent with its documented attendance policies and procedures; and*
- b. the student records clearly indicate that the student is maintaining satisfactory course progress; and*
- c. the registered provider confirms that the student is attending at least 70 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled.*



Providers may include as a condition of their documented attendance policy and procedures, consideration of compassionate or compelling circumstances (see examples below). If a provider includes this consideration and b. and c. above apply, a provider may decide not to report a student.

As indicated above, the ACS will not report students for unsatisfactory attendance if their actual and potential attendance falls below 80 but not below 70 per cent of total scheduled class hours for a cycle but if the student:

- is maintaining satisfactory course progress; and
- has responded positively to attendance Interventions; and/or
- the student has demonstrated (with documentary evidence where appropriate) compassionate and/or compelling circumstances which prevented attendance and which subsequently led to the student applying for and being granted Leave of Absence and, as a consequence, their enrolment being temporarily suspended; and/or
- the student has submitted validated medical certificates relating to a significant loss of class time.

If a student's potential or final attendance for a study period falls below 80 but not below 70 per cent at any point in the monitoring sequence and if they have failed to make satisfactory academic progress they will be notified in writing that the ACS intends to report them for unsatisfactory attendance.

If a student's potential or final attendance for a study period falls below 70 per cent that student will be notified in writing the ACS intends to report them for unsatisfactory attendance. Validated Medical Certificates will not be considered as a basis for not reporting these students, but will inform any explanatory notes made in PRISMS when reporting.

This notification will inform the student that:

- their attendance has fallen below a level required for them to maintain a satisfactory attendance record for the study period (from 70 to 79% or below 70% depending on academic progress);
- they have failed to respond positively to Australian Computer Society Attendance and Academic Intervention initiatives;
- the Australian Computer Society intends to report this to the Department of Education and DIBP via PRISMS;
- they have a right to lodge an Internal appeal, within twenty (20) working days from the receipt of the letter, against their enrolment being cancelled; and that
- they have to maintain satisfactory attendance throughout any period of appeal.

The notification will also inform the student of the procedure for entering the internal appeals process and of the possible grounds for an appeal, namely, demonstrating that:

1. The ACS DIT Partner had not made the Attendance and Appeals policies and procedures available to students; and/or



2. The ACS DIT Partner had not recorded or calculated the students' attendance correctly; and/or
3. The ACS DIT Partner had not implemented its intervention and support strategies in accordance with its documented policies and procedures; and/or
4. there existed demonstrable Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances which contributed significantly to the student's attendance falling below 80 but not below 70 per cent, and which subsequently lead to the student applying for and being granted Leave of Absence which raises their attendance rate above the required minimum.

The student's enrolment will be maintained throughout any internal appeals process and, if that process ends in a decision against the student, any possible subsequent external appeals process to the Overseas Students Ombudsman.

All student appeals against being reported for unsatisfactory attendance will be registered, investigated and determined in accordance with the Australian Computer Society's **Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures**.

Students will be informed that they are expected to meet all course attendance and progress requirements throughout the appeals process. If a student's attendance subsequently falls to below the required minimum again, they will be sent a further warning that the ACS intends to report them.

A student will be reported for unsatisfactory attendance to the Department of Education and DIBP via PRISMS if that student:

- fails to maintain satisfactory attendance as defined above; and
- fails to enter the complaints and appeals process within 20 working days of receiving a notification of intention to report for unsatisfactory attendance; or
- if entered, withdraws from the complaints and appeals process before resolution; or
- the complaints and appeals process is completed and results in a decision against the student.

If a student's attendance falls below 80 but not below 70 per cent and that student has not made satisfactory academic progress, the Australian Computer Society generally will not report that student if that student:

- has experienced compassionate or compelling circumstances causing significant periods of absence;
- produces documentary evidence verifying those circumstances and their consequences;
- has successfully applied/applies for Leave of Absence leading to their studies being temporarily Suspended (with or without a change in the expected course duration); and



- the consequential reduction in expected class hours for the study period results in the student's attendance rate being over 80%.

If a student's attendance falls below 70 per cent and that student has made satisfactory academic progress, the Australian Computer Society generally will not report that student if that student:

- has experienced compassionate or compelling circumstances causing significant periods of absence;
- has produced documentary evidence verifying those circumstances and their consequences;
- has successfully applied/applies for leave;
- their studies have been temporarily Suspended (with or without a change in the expected course duration); and
- the consequential reduction in expected class hours for the study period result in the student's attendance rate being over 70%.

Numerous individual medical certificates covering a range of different absences will not be considered in determinations relating to reporting students for unsatisfactory attendance.

Building on definitions in The National Code, The Australian Computer Society defines Compassionate and/or Compelling Circumstances as circumstances which are generally beyond the control of the student and which have an adverse impact on the student's capacity and/or ability to:

- commence their course on the scheduled start date, but within two weeks of that date, or to
- attend scheduled classes for a significant period of time during the enrolment period.

Such circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- the late issue of a student's visa and consequent delay in travel to Australia;
- serious illness or injury, where a verified medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend on the commencement date and/or for a significant time through the course;
- bereavement of close family members such as parents, siblings or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided);
- the student recently giving birth or a student's partner recently giving birth, thus preventing commencement on the published start date or attendance for some time through the course (with supporting documentation);
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country preventing their departure for Australia, or requiring their emergency travel to their home country for the time of their absence;
- a traumatic experience which could include but is not limited to:
 - a. witnessing or involvement in an accident; or



- b. witnessing or being the victim of a crime
- c. and which has impacted on the student's ability to commence classes on the start date and/or attend scheduled classes (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports).

In determining whether or not compassionate and compelling circumstances exist as sufficient grounds to explain a student's absence, the Australian Computer Society accepts that documentary evidence will vary with regard to the specific circumstances, but could include:

- a relevant Death Certificate;
- a police incident report;
- a social worker's report; and or
- appropriate medical evidence.

In determining whether or not compassionate and compelling medical circumstances exist as sufficient grounds to explain a student's absence, the Australian Computer Society has adopted the Australian Medical Association's *Guidelines for Medical Practitioners on Certificates Certifying Illness – 2011* (<https://ama.com.au/position-statement/guidelines-medical-practitioners-certificates-certifying-illness-2011>) namely:

- Name and address of the medical practitioner issuing the certificate
- Doctor's Medicare provider number (where applicable)
- Name of the patient
- Date on which the examination took place
- Date on which the certificate was issued
- Date(s) on which the patient is or was unfit for attendance
- Supplementary information of assistance to the patient in obtaining the appropriate leave especially where there is a discrepancy in the period for which the certificate is issued and the date of the certificate
- Certificates must be dated on the day on which they were written. Under no circumstances can this be breached
- Wherever possible, doctors should avoid issuing sickness certificates to anyone with whom they have a close personal relationship
- The certificate should be written on stationery designed specifically for this purpose
- The Australian Computer Society may, in reasonable circumstances, seek further information from the medical practitioner who issued a certificate

Psychologist certificates must be issued by a registered psychologist, and include a similar range of information to that required for medical certificates.

Certificates not written in English must be translated into English by approved NAATI translators.

When assessing applications for leave on grounds of compassionate and compelling circumstances, copies of supporting documents will be kept, together with a record of the



decision and the basis for the decision, in the student's file, and recorded in the student management system and PRISMS.

If a student's absence has been caused by either a Critical Incident or other Compassionate and Compelling Circumstance, the Partner's Student Services will initiate the critical incident/compassionate and compelling circumstances responses and support procedures, and any absences thereby created will be deducted from the necessary class hours for the study period.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Enrolment/commencement dates for commencing students will be scheduled to coincide with scheduled commencement of classes for specific clusters of units of competency within the organised sequence of units for this course. Students enrolling in the ICT50115 Diploma of Information Technology will attend classes for 20 hours per week in 3 semesters of 11-13 weeks each over the year.

The creation of attendance rolls will reflect this organisation of clusters of units.

Prior to the first scheduled class the attendance roll will be prepared using the list of enrolled students. This roll will be used as the primary method of attendance recording, but attendance may also be recorded on the ACS DIT Partner's student management system. The trainer will be responsible for recording the attendance of students. The ACS will login to the student management system and monitor attendance on a weekly basis.

Students who fail to enrol on the commencement date as specified on their CoE (Orientation day) without an approved Deferral of Enrolment will be reported (via PRISMS) for default within five working days of that start date.

Students who on apply for leave prior to the official start date for a Deferral of Enrolment to a date within two weeks of the official start date, and who have their application approved will be able to commence their course at the approved later start date without being reported for default. The Deferral will be entered into the student management system and the associated hours deducted from the number of class hours for the semester; the application and supporting documentary evidence will be filed in the student's hard copy file; and they will not be reported for default. All such incidents must be reported to the ACS in writing, even if the ACS has been involved in the process.

Students who enrol late (within the first two weeks) with or without approved deferral or leave, will have the number of hours missed recorded on the roll as non-attendance, which will be calculated in the attendance percentage in the normal way.

Students who have been reported for student default and who do not enrol by the Census date (within the first two weeks of classes) without approved Leave of Absence will have their CoEs



cancelled and this will be reported to DIBP via PRISMS within 14 days of the official semester start date.

Students who miss class time due to illness may submit medical certificates to their trainer, the Partner's Student Services or the Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent). The Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent) will check the validity of medical certificates, approve (or disallow) and record the number of absent class hours covered by the certificate in the roll and student management system. While such 'approved' hours will be counted as absences in the calculation of students' attendance rates, they may be considered in relation to attendance interventions and internal and external appeal processes, so long as a student's attendance rate is above 70 per cent.

Student attendance rates will be based on their attendance as recorded in the attendance rolls and entered in the student management system, and as automatically adjusted for approved Deferred Enrolments, class hours for Units awarded through Credit Transfer procedures and Leave of Absence on Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances as determined by the Partner's Student Services. The rates will be calculated as a percentage using the actual hours attended as the numerator over the actual class hours required to be attended over the same time period as the denominator. The actual class hours required to be attended is automatically calculated by the student management system, subtracting the number of hours granted for approved leave from the total number of unit class hours for the study period.

As indicated above, the Australian Computer Society's Attendance Intervention Strategy is based on attendance rate criteria, with specific interventions being triggered when:

- a student is absent for more than five (5) consecutive days or more than 20 consecutive hours of class time at any stage during a study period without explanation and approval;
- a student's attendance falls in the 'at risk' range of from 80 to 84 per cent;
- a student's attendance falls between 70 and 79 per cent; and when
- a student's attendance rate falls below 70 per cent.

As indicated above, while specific interventions will be triggered by current attendance rates for the period being monitored, the nature of those interventions in weeks four and seven will be moderated by the students' potential attendance rate for the full cycle, assuming 100% attendance for the remaining period.

As a part of their attendance recording and reporting activities, trainers will identify any student who is absent for more than 20 consecutive class hours (more than one week of classes) without contact and/or approval. The trainer reports such students' details to the Partner's Academic Coordinator who conveys the information to the Partner's Student Services who in turn notify the student that there is an issue with their attendance. The ACS must also be notified of any such absences in writing, even if they are aware of the situation through their weekly attendance monitoring.



The notification reminds the student of their attendance requirements, and requires the recipient to make an appointment with the Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent) within two (2) working days to discuss the reasons for their absence, and to be referred for further advice, counselling and/or treatment to the appropriate persons.

If a student sent such a warning fails to make the required appointment within the two (2) working days, the Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent) will contact the trainer and follow up with the student by contacting them by whatever means are necessary.

This early intervention procedure will be implemented whenever a student misses more than 5 consecutive days from scheduled classes. However, should this occur for a second time the student will be warned that their attendance is at risk because their attendance rate will have fallen to at least between 80 and 85 per cent for the study period. If this occurs a third time within a study period the student will be sent another warning or be notified of the intention to report them for non-attendance because it will be impossible for them to attend at least 80% of scheduled class hours in the cycle.

As indicated above, attendance monitoring and Intervention occur three times per semester:

- In the fourth week of the semester, based on the first three weeks of attendance out of a total of 60 scheduled class hours, and with regard to their maximum potential attendance rate for the whole semester assuming 100% attendance for the remaining class hours.
- In seventh week of the semester, based on the first six weeks of attendance out of a total of 120 scheduled class hours, and with regard to their maximum potential attendance rate for the whole study period assuming 100% attendance for the remaining class hours.
- In the week following completion of a semester based on attendance for the total number of scheduled class hours for the study period.

With each intervention the ACS and/or Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent) will identify students with either 'at risk' or 'unsatisfactory' attendance and identify which attendance intervention should be initiated for those students.

The Week 4 Intervention, based on the first 60 of the total semester class hours, uses students' potential attendance rates for the whole period as triggers for the following interventions:

- Students with a maximum potential attendance rate of from 85 to 90 per cent for the whole study period will be sent an attendance warning in writing by the Partner's Student Services. While this is above the National Code identified 81 to 85 per cent 'at risk' range, suggesting that the warning is not required, these students' actual attendance for the first three weeks will be well below the 'at risk' and 'unacceptable' levels. However, students will then have the bulk of the semester in which to improve their overall attendance. Combined, the maximum potential



attendance range of from 85 to 90 per cent provides a strong indicator of potential risk.

- Students with a maximum potential attendance rate of from 80 to 85 per cent will also be sent an attendance warning. Again this is above the trigger for such intervention for a full study period, but their attendance pattern during the first three weeks provides a basis for significant concern and for early and strong intervention. Such students will be required to attend a counselling session with the appropriate member of staff, and sign and comply with an Attendance Agreement.
- Students with a maximum potential attendance rate of below 80 per cent will be notified of the intention to report them for non-attendance. These students will be unable to achieve the required 80% minimum attendance for the study period, and there is a demonstrable need for the strongest possible intervention.

The objective of the Week 4 intervention is to identify students experiencing early difficulties with attendance and academic progress, and putting in place procedures and making available academic and personal support assistance and strategies to help resolve the problems.

The Week 7 Intervention, based on the first 6 weeks (120 class hours) of the semester class hours, also uses students' potential attendance rates for the whole period as triggers for the mid-study period interventions:

- Students with a maximum potential attendance rate of from 80 to 85 per cent for the full study period will be sent an attendance warning. Although these students' current attendance rate of under 75 per cent is well below the 'at risk' level, they will be able to attain a full cycle attendance rate of at least 80% without necessarily attending 100 per cent of subsequent classes. Taking both factors into consideration, their actual attendance pattern during the first six weeks provides sufficient basis for concern and early intervention.
- Students with a maximum potential attendance rate from 70 to under 80 per cent for the full study period and who have maintained satisfactory academic progress will be sent an attendance warning with conditions (such as an attendance agreement). Although these students' current attendance rate at the end of week 6 (as low as under 68 per cent) is well into the 'unsatisfactory' range, they will be able to attain a full cycle attendance rate of at least 70% if they attend 100 per cent of subsequent classes.
- Students with a maximum potential attendance rate from 70 to under 80 per cent for the full study period and who have failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress will be notified of the intention to report them. Although these students' current attendance rate at the end of week 6 (under 68 per cent) is well into the 'unsatisfactory' range, they will be able to attain a full cycle attendance rate of at least 70% if they attend 100 per cent of subsequent classes.
- Students with a maximum potential attendance rate of less than 70 per cent for the whole study period will be notified of the intention to report them. With six weeks of the cycle completed these students will be unable to achieve the minimum



allowable attendance rate, signifying a need for the strongest possible intervention, and their only chance of not being reported is to make a successful appeal against being reported.

In the week following the completion of a semester, the Partner's Academic Coordinator (or equivalent) implements the third intervention, in consultation with the ACS, based on students' attendance rates for the whole semester:

- Students with an attendance rate of from 80 to 84 per cent will be sent an attendance warning. While these students have completed the cycle with an acceptable attendance rate, it is desirable to remind them of the need to maintain their attendance record through their remaining studies.
- Students with an attendance rate of from 70 to 79 per cent and who are making satisfactory academic progress will be sent an attendance warning with conditions. Although these students' attendance rates for the cycle has been unsatisfactory, they have made satisfactory academic progress and will be able to progress to the next study period, it is important to require them to enter into an Attendance Agreement and to provide access to counselling and support if required.
- Students with an attendance rate of from 70 to 79 per cent and who have not made satisfactory academic progress but who have entered and are observing both an Attendance Plan and a Study Plan will be sent an attendance warning with conditions. Any necessary adjustments to the expected course completion time and CoE will be made.
- Students with an attendance rate of from 70 to 79 per cent and who are not making satisfactory academic progress and have not agreed to or complied with Attendance and Study Plans will be notified in writing of the intention to report them.
- Students with an attendance rate below 70 per cent will be notified in writing of the intention to report them. These students will have failed to meet the required attendance standards and regardless of their academic progress they will be reported if they fail to engage in the internal and external appeal processes and/or they fail to win their appeal/s.

Intention to Report Notifications and Appeals Procedures

The various attendance warnings will be triggered by attendance rates identified above, and are not bound by any set sequence of warning.

As indicated above, a notification to report will inform students that:

- their attendance has fallen below a level required for them to maintain a satisfactory attendance record for the study period (from 70 to below 80% or below 70% depending on academic progress);



- they have failed to respond positively to the Australian Computer Society Attendance and Academic Intervention initiatives;
- the Australian Computer Society intends to report this to the Department of Education and DIBP via PRISMS;
- they have a right to lodge an internal appeal, within twenty (20) working days from the receipt of the letter, against their enrolment being cancelled; and that
- they have to maintain satisfactory attendance throughout any period of appeal.

The notification will also inform students of the procedure for lodging an internal appeal with the Partner's Student Services, and the possible basis for an appeal, namely, on the demonstrable grounds that:

- the ACS DIT Partner failed to make the Attendance, Complaints and Appeals policies and procedures available to the students; and/or
- the ACS DIT Partner failed to record or calculate students' attendance correctly; and/or
- the ACS DIT Partner failed to implement its intervention and support strategies in accordance with its documented policies and procedures; and/or
- that demonstrable compassionate and/or compelling circumstances significantly contributed to the student's unsatisfactory attendance.

No action on the student's enrolment is taken during the 20 day period open for the student to lodge an internal appeal, but the student's attendance and academic progress will be recorded by the trainers.

If a student appeals against being reported, the appeal evaluation and determination is undertaken by the ACS DIT Partner's RTO Manager and any additional senior staff as the Partner's Manager sees fit within 20 days (excluding unforeseen circumstances). The ACS will also be informed of such appeals, and will be consulted about the decision.

If/when a student appeals, their enrolment is maintained throughout any internal and, if that process ends in a decision against the student, any subsequent external appeals process.

The Australian Computer Society does not report students to the Department of Education and DIBP via PRISMS for unsatisfactory attendance until and unless any appeals process is complete and has supported the provider's decision to report, or unless the student withdraws their appeal.

If a student fails to submit an Appeal within 20 working days of receiving an intention to report notification; or withdraws from an entered appeals process before its resolution; or if the appeals process is completed and results in a decision supporting the Australian Computer Society, the Australian Computer Society will notify the Department of Education and DIBP via PRISMS that the student has failed to maintain satisfactory attendance.

Students who are thus reported will be sent a letter notifying them that they have been reported (*Notification of Reporting Unsatisfactory Attendance to Dept of Edu letter*).



If a student believes there are sufficient grounds to appeal on the basis of compassionate and/or compelling circumstances, the student will complete and submit an application for leave of absence and supporting documentary evidence along with their appeal to the Partner's Student Services.

The leave of absence application will be assessed by Students Services and the ACS and, if approved, the number of hours approved for Leave of Absence will be deducted from the number of expected class hours for the study period, thus modifying the applicant student's attendance rate. If the application is rejected there will be no change in the recorded attendance rate.

All internal appeals will be registered, investigated and determined in accordance with the Australian Computer Society's **Complaints and Appeals Policies and Procedures** and the decision will be conveyed to the student within twenty working days (excepting specific circumstances which prevent completion within that time frame) in writing.

If the Appeal is successful the student will be notified that the appeal has been successful and the student will be advised to maintain satisfactory attendance and academic performance and required to make an appointment with the Partner's RTO Manager to **sign a study and attendance plan** designed to ensure satisfactory attendance and academic progress and course completion within the expected time or, if not possible, to arrange for an extension of course duration and CoE.

If the Appeal is rejected the student will be notified of this and advised:

- of the grounds for the rejection;
- of their right to appeal externally to the Overseas Students Ombudsman within ten working days of the notification being sent;
- that should they appeal to the OSO they will be expected to maintain full attendance;
- that they should inform the Partner's Student Services if they decide to make an external appeal; and indicating
- that if nothing is heard from the student within the 10 days the student will be reported for unsatisfactory attendance.

If a student's Internal Appeal is approved the reason for the approval will be conveyed to the student and appropriate staff members so that any required corrective action/s can be identified and implemented.

If a student submits an External Appeal to the Overseas Student Ombudsman their enrolment will be continued for as long as the external appeal process takes.

At all times through any appeals procedures the student's file and record will be promptly updated on the student management system and PRISMS to include the outcome of any appeals process, and any subsequent actions.



If a student's external appeal to the OSO is successful the student will be informed and the Partner may be notified (by the OSO) of any need for policy and or procedural changes, which will be implemented.

Student Failure to Improve Attendance after Successful Appeal

If a student has appealed an Intention to report successfully, but then their attendance does **not** improve, and they do not comply with their **Study and Attendance Plan**, they will be notified a second time of the intention to report them for unsatisfactory attendance.

The student will again have the right to appeal the decision to report them, but due to the student's failure to improve their attendance since the previous appeal, the second appeal is very likely to be unsuccessful, unless there are compassionate or compelling circumstances for the student's continued poor attendance.

So, in summary, the following actions will be taken:

1. Once it becomes apparent that attendance is not improving, the student will be sent a second Intention to Report letter, stating that they have failed to comply with their Study and Attendance Plan.
2. The student must be given 20 days to appeal this in writing.
3. If an appeal is received, the appeal will be rejected, based on evidence of previous inadequate attendance and failure to remedy this after first appeal.
4. The student will be sent an Appeal Rejected Letter.
5. The student then has 20 days to appeal externally to the OSO.
6. If notification of external appeal is not received from the student or OSO within 20 days, the student will be withdrawn due to unsatisfactory attendance and sent *Notification of Reporting Unsatisfactory Attendance to Dept of Edu letter*.
7. The student is withdrawn in PRISMS via a Course Variation citing unsatisfactory attendance as the reason for the withdrawal.

For any questions regarding this Policy and Procedure, please contact:

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End of Document
Monitoring Attendance Policy and Procedure

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Version History

Date	Version	Revision History	Author /Reviser
September 2014	1	Original document	DS
November 2014	2	Clarification of roles of ACS and Delivery Partner incorporated	DS
September 2015	3	Rectification of header, new DIT Code, new Version Control Panel added	DS
January 2017	3.1	Information added about process if student appeal is successful but then attendance is not improved. Removed reference to Section 20 Notice – no longer relevant.	DS

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Date of issue and version details must be entered upon approval.

Name	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Asheley Jones	Director, Education	September 2014	1
Asheley Jones	Director, Education	March 2015	2
Simon Taylor	Director, Education	September 2015	3
Allyn Radford	Director, Education	January 2017	3.1

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