Enrolments - Monitoring Attendance Procedure (International Foundations and ELICOS)

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure establishes processes to monitor the attendance of international students studying Foundations or ELICOS courses at Victoria University (VU).

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to:

a. all VU international students who are on an Australian Government student visa and are enrolled in Foundation or ELICOS courses at VU which are registered on CRICOS; and
b. all staff with responsibilities for teaching and supporting international students enrolled in Foundations or ELICOS courses at VU.

Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(3) Enrolments Policy

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Teachers	- Mark attendance register via EBECAS at each and every teaching session or mandatory activity. - Inform Course Manager and Senior Admin Officer if a student has been absent for three consecutive days.
Course Managers	- Ensure teachers follow attendance procedures. - Meet students who have received a Second Email of Warning and record outcomes on EBECAS.
Foundations and ELICOS administration	- Monitor attendance via EBECAS on a weekly basis. - Issue attendance reminders to students when the attendance monitoring system flags attendance breaches. - Contact students if they have been absent for 3 consecutive days and notify the Course Manager. - Send attendance reports relating to scholarship students to scholarship bodies (e.g. Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission, Kuwait Cultural Office).

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Roles	Responsibilities
Enrolments	- After the conclusion of all review and appeal processes: 1. Report the student's attendance to the relevant Australian Government department. 2. Withdraw all active courses in S1 and cancel all active CoEs. 3. Email a final notification to student to advise that all appropriate actions have been taken.
Manager, Foundations	- Oversees attendance procedure for Foundation students.
Manager, VU English	- Oversees attendance procedure for ELICOS students.
General Manager, VU English	- Oversees procedure across program areas.
Director, Centre of VU Transitions	- Review student cases when attendance falls below 80% to determine if student has compassionate and compelling reasons for unsatisfactory attendance. Refers case to International Enrolments when review has an unsuccessful outcome.
International Enrolments	- Send Notification of Intention to Cancel when student has unsatisfactory attendance.
Appeals Panel	- Hear a student's appeal against the decision of the Director, Centre of VU Transitions if grounds for appeal are met (as specified in the Student Appeals Regulations 2019).
Support Person	- Provides support to student, but does not actively participate in the process.

Part B - Attendance Requirements

(4) As a condition of their Student Visa:

a. International Students enrolled in Foundations Courses at VU must maintain a minimum attendance rate of 80% for each study period in which they are enrolled;
b. ELICOS students must maintain a minimum rate of 80% overall attendance over their course of study as per COE; and,
c. Foundation students must maintain a minimum of 80% overall attendance for each study period (trimester).

(5) If attendance falls below 80% and it is evident that the student will not be able to reach 80% by the end of the course in the case of ELICOS students, and by the end of a study period in the case of Foundation students, VU is required to report the student to the Department of Home Affairs.

(6) VU will inform international students undertaking Foundation and ELICOS Courses of the importance of meeting minimum attendance requirements and outline the consequences of failing to meet these attendance requirements. In addition to documentation within their offer of enrolment, students are informed of VU attendance processes and requirements via the following:

a. Student Orientation;
b. VU Collaborate;
c. Student Information Booklet;
d. Noticeboards in classrooms;
e. VU website;
f. In-class communication.

(7) If an International Student undertakes further study after completing the Foundations or ELICOS course designated in their offer of admission, the calculation of attendance will recommence if the subsequent course has attendance requirements.

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Part C - Attendance Monitoring

(8) An attendance register is maintained for each class within Foundations and ELICOS Courses, with absences recorded in hourly blocks in EBECAS each week.

(9) EBECAS calculates an attendance percentage on a weekly basis for each International Student undertaking Foundations or ELICOS Courses. This percentage is cumulative for the current study period (Foundation) or period of enrolment (ELICOS).

(10) International Students will be deemed absent:

a. for one hour if they arrive more than ten minutes late to a morning class, or if they arrive more than five minutes late to an afternoon class; or,
b. if they are not in class and/or not attending another VU activity that has been approved in writing; or,
c. if they are unwell (students must obtain a medical certificate to cover the period of illness, however this will not cancel the
non-attendance. Students should retain medical documentation in case their attendance falls below 80%.).

(11) Attendance data will be stored securely and may be stored electronically, in accordance with VU's Records Management Policy and Records Management procedures.

Part D - Attendance Notifications

(12) Where a student is absent for 3 consecutive days without prior notice or approval and cannot be contacted via their Emergency Contact or their International Agent, the Director, Centre of VU Transitions and VU International must be notified and will proceed as per the Critical Incident, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Policy.

(13) Where attendance does not meet the minimum requirements of Clause (4), or students are at risk of not meeting their attendance requirements, they will be notified as follows:

Attendance	Action
Friendly Reminder: Overall attendance is 90% but current attendance falls below 80% threshold for a study period	Student issued with an attendance reminder via email through their official VU email address, informing the student that they are at risk of not meeting their attendance requirements and the potential consequences. This email will outline options for counselling and support at VU. Students are also contacted by text. Record updated on EBECAS.
Attendance Reminder: Overall attendance falls between 86% and 89% for a study period	Student issued with an attendance reminder via email through their official VU email address. Students are also contacted by text. Teachers will meet with students regarding attendance. Teachers will provide an overview of the entire attendance procedure and will outline options for support and counselling at VU. An appointment will be made with a Foundation or ELICOS Senior Educator or Manager to discuss attendance requirements, potential consequences of continued unsatisfactory attendance and support required to achieve satisfactory attendance. Notification and outcomes of meeting (or non-attendance) recorded on EBECAS.

Attendance	Action
Attendance Reminder: Overall attendance falls between 80% and 85%	Student issued with an attendance reminder via email through their official VU email address. Students are also contacted by text. An appointment will be made with a Foundation or ELICOS Senior Educator or Manager to discuss attendance requirements, potential consequences of continued unsatisfactory attendance and support required to achieve satisfactory attendance. Notification and outcomes of meeting (or non-attendance) recorded on EBECAS.
Final Attendance Notification: Attendance falls below 80% for a study period	Student issued with a final attendance notification via email through their official VU email address. Student will be notified of the opportunity to have their case reviewed by Director, Centre of VU Transitions. An Internal Review will be conducted to determine if the student has compassionate and compelling reasons to support unsatisfactory attendance.
Notification of Intention to Cancel Confirmation of Enrolment	Student will be sent a Notification of Intention to Cancel Confirmation of Enrolment by International Enrolments when: 1. They do not access the Internal Review process. 2. They receive an unsuccessful outcome from the internal review conducted by Director, Centre of VU Transitions. Student will be notified of support they can receive from VU to make a formal Appeal.

(14) The Notification of Intention to Cancel Confirmation of Enrolment must state:

a. They have failed to meet the minimum attendance requirements established under this Procedure;
b. This is a breach of their visa condition in relation to attendance requirements under Standard 11 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth);
c. That it is VU's intention to report their non-attendance to the relevant Australian Government Department;
d. That the student has a right to appeal VU's decision to report their non-attendance provide details of how to activate the appeals process under VU's Student Appeals Regulations 2019. Decisions to report students for non-attendance are considered to be statutory decisions for the purposes of the Student Appeals Regulations 2019;
e. They have 20 working days from the date of notification (which should be stated) in which to lodge any appeal;
f. That if an appeal is lodged, it is the student's responsibility to provide all information relevant to the appeal at the time of the appeal;
g. That their enrolment will be maintained, and no action will be taken to report the student until after the appeals process (if invoked) has been completed;
h. Who they may contact if they wish to discuss the implications of the letter; and
i. That they may also appeal to an appropriate, independent external body if they feel there has been a breach of process by VU.

(15) Students with 5 or 10-week CoEs will be sent a Final Attendance Notification for Unsatisfactory Attendance with no reminder letters if their overall attendance drops below 80% (i.e. 5-6 consecutive days).

(16) Documentation of all attendance reminders will be kept on the student's file in EBECAS.

Part E - Appeal processes

(17) If a student appeals VU's decision to report them to the relevant Australian Government department, the matter will proceed according to VU's appeals process outlined in the Student Appeals Regulations 2019 and Student Appeals Procedure. Decisions to report students for non-attendance are statutory decisions for the purposes of the Student Appeals Regulations 2019.

(18) The student’s enrolment will be maintained for the duration of the appeal.

(19) Students may seek an external review of a university decision from an appropriate, independent external body as per the Student Appeals Procedure, Part E. Students must notify VU of their Lodgement Referral Number in order not to be reported to the Department of Home Affairs and notify VU of the outcome of their external appeal.

Part F - Support for Students

(20) VU will advise students throughout the process of VU support services available to them, such as access to Student Services providing academic support, information, counselling, referral to health services and clarification of International Student obligations as visa holders.

(21) Students whose appeal is upheld will receive support, counselling and monitoring, as necessary. Students will be required to comply with any conditions attached to the decision. Counselling and support are provided in the event of an unsuccessful internal appeal.

(22) If the student’s overall attendance continues to fall but is between 70%-80% they will be issued a Notice of Intention to Report Letter and the process will recommence. If the student’s attendance falls below 70%, they will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS without further notification.

(23) If the student receives an overall fail result for their English course, the student’s CoE for English and for the principal course will be cancelled.

(24) If the student receives an overall pass result for their English course, the student’s CoE for English will be cancelled, however the CoE for the main course will not be cancelled.

Part G - Government Reporting

(25) VU Enrolments team will report a Student Default and Student Course Variation to the relevant Australian Government Department via PRISMS when a student has:

a. chosen not to access the internal appeals process within the 20-working day period;
b. chosen not to access the external appeals process;
c. withdrawn from the process; or
d. had an unsuccessful outcome from the appeals process.

(26) VU will advise the student of the notification and retain a record on the student’s file.

(27) The VU Internal Appeals Panel may decide not to report an International Student for breaching the 80% attendance rate if:

a. There is documentary evidence demonstrating that Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances apply, and such documentary evidence is maintained in that student’s file; and
b. The student is attending at least 70% of the Foundations or ELICOS Course contact hours for which they are enrolled; and
c. The student's performance remains satisfactory, and the student remains on track to complete within the expected course duration.

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Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS ALIGNMENT

(28) HESF: Standard 1 Student Participation and Attainment.

(29) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth): Standard 3 Formalisation of enrolment and written agreements; 8 Overseas Student Visa Requirements; 9 Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas students' enrolment; 10 Complaints and Appeals.

Section 6 - Definitions

(30) Attendance: actual physical attendance at all required course activities. It excludes all absences from activities, regardless of the reason for such absence.

(31) Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances: are circumstances beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course engagement or wellbeing. They could include (without limitation):

a. serious illness or injury (where a medical certificate states the student was unable to engage with scheduled course requirements);
b. death of a close family member;
c. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the student's home country which requires emergency travel; or
d. a traumatic experience (such as involvement in or witnessing a serious accident, involvement in legal proceedings).

(32) Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE): A document, provided electronically, which is issued by the registered provider to intending overseas students and which must accompany their application for a student visa. It confirms the overseas student's eligibility to enrol in the particular course of the registered provider (definition from National Code 2018).

(33) Current Attendance: Attendance within current 2 weeks.

(34) EBECAS: an internet hosted student administration software designed to monitor attendance according to ESOS requirements for International Students studying Foundation courses.

(35) Foundations Courses: refers to VU's foundation studies courses and units, which are non-award courses for students who wish to develop skills and transition into higher education at VU. They are comparable to an Australian Year 12.

(36) International Student: a student on a student visa who is a citizen of another country and is studying in Australia.

(37) Notice in Writing: is considered to be discharged by an email sent to a student's VU email address. Letters may be sent as inline text within the body of an email, or as an attachment to an email.

(38) Overall Attendance –
ELICOS: Attendance from beginning of the course date until the end of the course date as listed on a student's Confirmation of Enrolment.
Foundation: Attendance from beginning of current Study Period to end of current Study Period.

(39) PRISMS - The Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is the system used to process information given to the Secretary of DOE by Victoria University.

(40) Study Period: a defined period of time in which teaching is delivered, as defined by VU. Each study period has its

own set of key dates, including start, end and census dates.

Status and Details

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Accountable Officer	John Germov Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer +613 9919 5077
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