



# Wollongong College Australia

A College of the University of Wollongong

**Australia**

Wollongong

# Attendance Policy

Wollongong College Australia  
A trading division of ITC Education Limited  
CRICOS Provide Code 02723D  
A University of Wollongong Enterprise ABN 14105312329

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Approved by WCA Academic Board

Reference  
and  
Legislation

- Student Handbook
- Student Grievance Policy – Academic
- Course Progress Policy
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007

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## 1. Purpose of Policy

1.1 The attendance policy establishes:

- a. the expectation of acceptable attendance for College students
- b. requirements, definitions and procedures for systematically monitoring compliance with student visa conditions for international students
- c. the roles and responsibilities of College staff and students with regard to attendance.

1.2 The attendance policy should be read in conjunction with the Attendance section of the WCA Student Handbook.

## 2. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
at risk	any student identified as having an attendance calculation close to the 80% minimum requirement but is still able to achieve satisfactory attendance for the monitoring period
compassionate and compelling circumstances	generally are circumstances beyond the control of the student and have had an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These may include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;</li><li>➤ bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (death certificates must be provided);</li><li>➤ major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel that has impacted on the student's studies;</li><li>➤ a traumatic experience, such as involvement in or witnessing of a serious accident or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, which has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports where possible);</li><li>➤ inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa;</li><li>➤ financial hardship;</li><li>➤ family circumstances requiring the student's presence.</li></ul>

leave of absence	a period of approved leave from the College
monitoring period	a period of time within a course during which attendance will be monitored and calculated
natural justice	principles that ensure that decision-making is fair and reasonable - these involve decision-makers informing people of the case against them or their interests, giving them a right to be heard, not having a personal interest in the outcome, and acting only on the basis of logically probative evidence
official notification	written information delivered in hard copy or electronically
student	a person registered for a course
subject	a self-contained unit of study identified by a unique code
teaching staff	any person who carries out teaching responsibilities

### **3. Application & Scope - Exclusions or Special Conditions**

- 3.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled in:
- a. English language programs
  - b. WCA Higher Education Programs - (Diplomas)
  - c. UOW accredited courses – University Access Program (UAP), Foundation Studies Program (FSP) and Special Tertiary Entrance Program (STEP).

### **4. Policy Principles**

- 4.1 The principles guiding this policy are:
- a. all students shall be treated fairly and openly
  - b. all students are responsible for their own attendance

- 4.2 Underlying the expectations, requirements, definitions, and procedures of this policy are the principles of equity, consistency, transparency and natural justice.

## **5. Expectations for Attendance**

- 5.1 The College expects students to attend all scheduled classes.
- 5.2 The College must monitor attendance for international students in the English Language or Foundation Studies Programs studying on a student visa, to ensure compliance with the requirements of section 19 of the ESOS Act.

## **6. Monitoring Attendance**

- 6.1 Both domestic and international student attendance for all programs will be monitored throughout each study period. The College will endeavour to contact and provide appropriate support to any student who has extended periods of absence.
- 6.2 The WCA Critical Incident Policy will be implemented for any student that the College is unable to contact.

## **7. Specific Requirements for Students on a Student Visa in the English Language Program or FSP**

### **7.1 DIAC Requirements**

- 7.1.1 The requirement of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) for international students studying on a student visa is to attend at least 80% of the scheduled course contact hours. Refer to the Attendance section of the WCA Student Handbook for further details of DIAC student visa requirements.
- 7.1.2 All students who have attended fewer than 70% of scheduled contact hours in any monitoring period must be reported to the Immigration Department.

- 7.1.3 For English language program students the College may decide not to report a student for breaching the 80% attendance requirement where:
- a. the student has a minimum of 70% attendance, and
  - b. the student can provide documentary evidence (such as medical certificates) of compassionate or compelling circumstances to explain the periods of absence.
- 7.1.4 For FSP students the College may decide not to report a student for breaching the 80% attendance requirement where:
- a. the student has a minimum of 70% attendance, **and either**
    - the student is meeting satisfactory course progress, **or**
    - the student can provide documentary evidence (such as medical certificates) of compassionate or compelling circumstances to explain the periods of absence.
- 7.1.5 Where the College decides not to report, students will be counselled and advised of support services. The College may require the student to comply with additional provisions, e.g attend extra classes or sessions.

## 7.2 Calculating Attendance

- 7.2.1 For **English language program** students, attendance will be
- monitored each cycle,
  - calculated for the duration of the confirmation of enrolment (CoE),
  - calculated from the first day of classes
  - based on actual time in class – medical certificates or other documentation to explain periods of absences will not be included in attendance calculations
- 7.2.2 For **FSP** students, attendance will be:
- monitored and calculated each session
  - calculated from the first day of classes
  - based on actual time in class – medical certificates or other documentation to explain periods of absences will not be included in attendance calculations

7.2.3 Students unable to start on the first day of a session or cycle, due to circumstances beyond their control, must provide evidence explaining the reasons for their late arrival. If reasons for late arrival are approved, attendance will be calculated from their actual commencement date.

### **7.3 Communication**

7.3.1 Students at risk of not maintaining the required attendance level shall be sent warning correspondence and notified of the support available to them.

7.3.2 Student's agents or guardian/parents (where applicable) may be advised when students do not respond to warning correspondence.

7.3.3 Students will be required to meet with a Student Advisor to explain their reasons for not attending classes when they are:

- absent for more than five consecutive days, or
- at risk of not maintaining the required attendance level.

7.3.4 Where a student meets with a Student Advisor to discuss reasons for poor attendance the Student Advisor shall record the date and the details of the discussion.

7.3.5 Records of meetings with Student Advisors shall be noted on student files by the College.

7.3.6 Students who do not maintain the required attendance level shall be officially notified and advised of their rights and responsibilities.

### **7.4 Reporting Students to the Immigration Department**

7.4.1 Students who have not met minimum attendance requirements will be reported to the Immigration Department. This is a requirement of the ESOS Act.

- 7.4.2 The College will notify students in writing of the intention to report to the Immigration Department when the student has not met or is unable to meet the attendance requirements outlined in 7.1.

## **7.5 Appealing Reporting to the Immigration Department**

- 7.5.1 Students who are to be reported to the Immigration Department may appeal the decision. Refer to section 7 in the WCA Student Grievance Policy and Procedure – Academic for information on the appeal procedure. The WCA Student Grievance Policy and Procedure – Academic can be accessed at [www.wca.uow.edu.au/Policies](http://www.wca.uow.edu.au/Policies) .
- 7.5.2 Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome or conduct of an appeal within the College, may appeal to an external agency. Students have the right to make a complaint where there is evidence of maladministration or misconduct.
- 7.5.3 Students who choose to appeal to an external agency must notify the College of this decision and provide details of the external agency within 10 days of being notified of the outcome of the last stage of their internal appeal. If the student does not provide this information to the College within 10 days, the College will report the student to the Immigration Department for breaching attendance requirements.

## **8. Roles & Responsibilities**

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the Student Advisor to:
- a. identify and recommend appropriate support
  - b. keep records of recommendations for support.
- 8.2 It is the responsibility of all College students to:
- a. attend all scheduled classes, and
  - b. engage and follow up with recommended support,

8.3 English language program and FSP students on a student visa have the additional responsibility to:

- c. meet visa attendance requirements, and
- d. advise the College as appropriate of the matters referred to in section 7.5.3 (where applicable) within 10 working days

## 9. Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Approved	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	8/11/07	16/11/07	WCA Academic Board	
2	14/08/08	20/10/08	WCA Academic Board	attendance calculation details added, defined compassionate & compelling circumstances and included for FSP, details of external appeals to be provided by students added
3	27/11/08	09/02/09	WCA Academic Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overarching statement on attendance for all WCA students</li> <li>• Section for specific attendance requirements for ELP and FSP students studying on a student visa</li> </ul>