

PROGRESS, COMPLETION & ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides a documented process for monitoring students' academic progress and completions, with a view to ensure completion within the expected CoE duration and the consequent procedures for reporting to the relevant Immigration and Education departments of international students' unsatisfactory performance.

This policy has been developed to satisfy the requirements of The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, known as 'the National Code 2018' Standard 8 - Overseas student visa requirements. This policy determines the academic and attendance requirements for all Empyrean students.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Empyrean students current and prospective. This policy is relevant to Empyrean Education Institute as a registered training organisation required by the regulators and Australian Department of Home Affairs to report upon students' academic progress. Within this policy are items for attendance monitoring requirements in accordance with EEI policy and procedures.

The attendance of each client enrolled with Empyrean will be monitored closely to ensure there is full-time study activity, as attendance is necessary for satisfactory course progress. However, the Progress, Completion and Attendance Policy does not require the RTO to report unsatisfactory attendance under the conditions of the overseas student visa. However, as part of our academic support and monitoring, our internal policy is that students must attend classes and we record attendance at every class for both international and domestic students.

3. DEFINITIONS

Academic performance	Assessment of competency as a student progresses through the qualification
CoE	Confirmation of Enrolment
Course	Refers to the specific course a student is enrolled
Intervention Strategy	Systematic plan of action consciously adapted in an attempt to address and reduce the causes of academic failure to complete studies within the course duration
Learning Contract	Intervention strategy
Satisfactory course progress	Attending scheduled classes and successfully completing all assessments and obtaining a Competency (C) in all the units in the prescribed study period.
SSO	Student Support Officer(s)
Unit	Unit of Competency
Unsatisfactory course progress	Where the student is deemed Not Competent (NC) in 50% or more of the units attempted in any study period
VET	Vocational Education and Training
SMS	Student Management System
Study Period	A study period is the regular scheduled term of study between study breaks, often of ten weeks duration

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The monitoring of and awareness of student progress plays an essential role in ensuring that students experiencing academic difficulties and who are at risk of failing can be identified in sufficient time and provided with appropriate academic support and counselling and access to appropriate student services.

All students are clearly informed about the requirements to achieve satisfactory course progress and attendance in each study period, prior to their commencement in any course.

4.1. ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Empyrean Education Institute will continue to record attendance in every training session via the EBECAS SMS. This attendance record is used to determine last point of contact with students and assist in students who don't achieve competency on assessments regarding intervention strategy meetings, or alternately fail to achieve satisfactory academic completion or attendance requirements.

4.2. RULES OF ATTENDANCE

There are two areas of the Attendance monitoring process: Lateness and Absence. When calculating a student's attendance, BOTH absence and lateness are considered.

4.2.1. LATENESS

- A student who is not in their seat at the normal starting time will be marked late. Students who arrive at school and the training venue after 9:00am must report immediately to the Student Service department. A record of lateness is kept. If an international student is marked as late (more than 30mins) this is recorded as a half day's absence on the international students' absentees register.
- Students who arrive after 9:00am without previous notification of lateness when scheduled for training at a work-based training venue, will not be allowed into the venue and will be marked absent for the full day. If records of lateness appearing more than 3 times, EEI may issue a warning letter or process for further action as appropriate.

4.2.2. ABSENCE

- Students are expected to attend School and work-based training from the first day of term until the last day of term, including scheduled work experience.
- If it is known in advance that a student will be absent, permission should be sought in writing as early as possible. All notes requesting special permission for absence, for reasons other than medical appointments, should be addressed to Student Services and as much notice as possible should be given. Absence on grounds other than an illness or on a medical basis is strongly discouraged as this may affect a student's ability to meet their attendance requirement and student visa requirement.
- School and work-based training: If a student is unexpectedly absent, the student should ring student services (9228 1600) before 9.00am on the first day of the absence. Any absence unaccounted for by 9.00am will be checked by student services by telephone. If the absence is due to illness, upon her/him return to school, the student must present a medical certificate to the student service officer or trainer at the training premises.
- Students may not leave the school premises during school hours unless a written request is received by their trainer. If a student leaves school or any training premises without notice, she/he will be marked as absent for half a day.
- Students enrolled in the Certificate III in Commercial Cookery course that miss more than one practical class with/without a medical certification must make up the practical class missed on another day when they do not have a scheduled practical class. This can be during the term or during re-assessment weeks as approved by their assigned cookery trainer. The intention of this is to ensure the student receives as much practical training as they can to qualify for the qualification.

4.3. COURSE COMPLETION WITHIN THE EXPECTED DURATION OF STUDY

Empyrean Education Institute is required to manage student's course progress and workload to ensure they complete within the specified timeframe as outlined in the Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) and in accordance with the registered course curriculum.

4.4. STUDENT LEAVE

Empyrean recognise that students may have to interrupt their studies for a variety of reasons. However, Empyrean will not generally approve student leave during a study period unless compassionate or compelling reasons apply. Students must first complete and submit a student leave application which will be determined by the Empyrean Student Services under liaison with the Empyrean Academic Coordinator.

Empyrean may approve/disprove leave applications dependent on the students' academic progress and subsequent course duration and pathway.

4.5. APPROVED LEAVE- DOMESTIC STUDENT

- Students cannot apply for approved leave for a teaching period after the academic withdrawal date for that teaching period.
- The maximum period of approved leave that may be granted in the first instance is 12 months.
- To extend a period of approved leave a student must apply in writing.
- Students who have been granted approved leave and re-enrol by the stipulated re-enrolment date do not have to re-apply for readmission to their course.
- Students who do not re-enrol by the due date for any teaching period and who have not been granted a period of approved leave are taken to have cancelled their enrolment and are considered as having discontinued their course.
- Students who have been classed as having discontinued their course must re-apply for admission if they wish to resume their studies.

4.6. APPROVED LEAVE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- Applications for holiday leave during a teaching period will not be approved unless the student has applied for the leave period (gap between two courses) prior to enrolment and had the application approved by EEI Student Services prior to enrolment.
- International students will be granted an approved leave for medical reasons but not more than of two weeks where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes.
- If or when student needs to take an approved leave not more than two weeks for reasons other than medical, the student needs to pay the resit fee for the unit/units missed.
- International students can temporarily suspend enrolment for a maximum period of six months.
- Deferral, suspension or cancellation of enrolment may affect the student's visa
- If an international student's enrolment is suspended for more than six months, the student's visa may be cancelled by DIBP.

4.7. DURATION EXTENSION

This policy recognises that EEI must only grant an extension to the duration of a student's study in the limited circumstances. The extension can only be granted if the student is under intervention strategy due to compassionate and compelling circumstances.

Empyrean Education Institute will only extend the duration of the student's study where the student is assessed as not being able to complete the course within the expected duration, as specified on the students COE, as the result of:

- Compassionate or compelling circumstances as assessed based on demonstrable evidence, or;
- Implementing or being in the process of implementing, an Intervention Strategy for students who are at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress, or;
- Approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted
- All Intervention Strategies or Extensions will be assessed individually, considering the circumstances of the student.

4.8. Except in the circumstances listed above, the expected duration of study specified in the students COE must not exceed the registered course duration.

4.9. If an extension to the duration of the student's enrolment is granted, Empyrean Education Institute will advise the student in writing of this decision and of the need for the student to contact Immigration immediately for advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.

4.10. COMPASSIONATE OR COMPELLING CIRCUMSTANCES

- Serious illness to injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
- Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible death certificate should be provided).
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel and this has impact on their studies

5. MONITORING & TRACKING COURSE PROGRESS & COMPLETION

5.1.1. Each course is setup within the Student Management System, with the required units, qualification rules, timeframes, delivery methods and sessions for delivery.

5.1.2. Students are then enrolled into the course and a timetable is printed and provided to the student.

5.1.3. The timetable will be provided to the student on their orientation day, there are college timetables available at Empyrean reception

5.1.4. The class schedules for each study period are then monitored to ensure that students are meeting the minimum 50% competency requirement and is achieving satisfactory academic progress.

5.1.5. This process enables Empyrean Education Institute to identify any students at risk of not completing within the expected duration on their CoE, and promptly reminds them to hand in assessments, helping to minimise any adverse effects to the student.

5.1.6. At the immediate end of each study period, this process is repeated and students who are failing to achieve better than 50% completion rate are sent a warning letter. The warning letter notifies the student about options for connecting with a SSO to plan an effective intervention strategy for the student to progress to a positive academic progress that enables the student to complete their studies as per the duration stated on their CoE.

5.1.7. Every student that receives a warning letter will be recorded on a register to ensure all students have an effective follow up plan. This register also enables Empyrean staff to manage the response from students in an appropriate and unbiased procedure.

5.1.8. Students who fail to achieve satisfactory academic progress in two consecutive study periods and fail to engage in an intervention strategy will be issued with an Intention to Cancel Enrolment letter as soon as practicable, notifying them of:

- our intention to report the overseas student to Australian Department of Home Affairs for unsatisfactory course progress- International Students
- their right to access our complaints and appeals process, in accordance with Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals), within 20 working days.
- our intention to cancel the student enrolment

6. REPORTING FOR UNSATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS- INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

6.1. Empyrean Education Institute will only report unsatisfactory course progress in PRISMS and advise Australian Department of Home Affairs in accordance with section 19(2) of the ESOS Act if:

- All internal and external complaints/appeals processes have been completed and the decision or recommendation supports Empyrean Education Institute as the registered provider, or
- the overseas student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20-working day period, or
- the overseas student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process, or
- the overseas student withdraws from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying the registered provider in writing.

6.2. Only when the above criteria are met the student's case may be referred to the Admissions Manager for cancellation of CoE and the subsequent updating to Australian Department of Home Affairs as soon as practicable.

7. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Monitoring and recording attendance of Empyrean students, will be conducted

- 7.1. Each students' attendance is recorded and calculated over the period of a term/study period using information from attendance records which are input to the student management system (SMS).
- 7.2. Using this information in the SMS the weekly attendance records are reviewed and a report is generated to identify Students at risk of not satisfying attendance requirements.
- 7.3. The student identified as being at risk are notified by email and their current attendance percentage is given in the form of an Attendance Reminder Notice. This notification is recorded in the SMS against the contacted students' contact log.
- 7.4. Students with will falling attendance percentages will be notified by email before their attendance level reaches the 80% minimum. In each contact the Attendance Warning issued will include:
 - a request that the student contact student support staff for assistance in getting back on track with the options for intervention processes and any other assistance that may be viable
 - a statement explaining that Empyrean Education Institute is obligated to monitor attendance and notify the Australian Department of Home Affairs of students with attendance below 80%, which may ultimately result in the cancellation of the student's visa- overseas students
- 7.5. Should the student be absent for four consecutive days absent without prior approval, they will be contacted by email and may also be phoned to initiate an intervention process and book an intervention interview.
- 7.6. Should the attendance rate of a student fall to 80% a Final Attendance Warning Letter is sent to the student requesting an immediate intervention interview with student support staff and further warning the student of the imminent risk of reaching attendance percentages under the 80% minimum rate.
- 7.7. At five consecutive days absent without our prior approval or having reached attendance levels below 80% the student is sent a Notification to Report letter outlining our intention to cancel the student enrolment and report the student to Australian Department of Home Affairs, (overseas students), the reasons and their right to access the appeals and complaints process within 20 days.

7.8. Any student who fails to attend and contact Empyrean within 14 days of course start will have their enrolment immediately cancelled.

8. REPORTING FOR UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE

- 8.1. Students whose attendance rates fall below 80% in a study period, will receive an intervention notice from Empyrean Student Services.
- 8.2. Students may also receive a Notice of Intention to Cancel if their attendance falls below 80% in any study period.
- 8.3. Empyrean Education Institute will only report unsatisfactory attendance in PRISMS and advise Australian Department of Home Affairs in accordance with section 19(2) of the ESOS Act if:
- All internal and external complaints/appeals processes have been completed and the decision or recommendation supports Empyrean Education Institute as the registered provider, or
 - the overseas student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20-working day period, or
 - the overseas student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process, or
 - the overseas student withdraws from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying the registered provider in writing.
- 8.4. Only when the above criteria are met the student's case may be referred to the Admissions Manager for cancellation of CoE and the subsequent updating to Australian Department of Home Affairs as soon as practicable.

9. EXTENSION TO COURSE DURATION

Empyrean Education Institute will only extend the duration of the student's study where the student is assessed as not being able to complete the course within the expected duration, as specified on the student's COE, as the result of:

- Compassionate or compelling circumstances as assessed based on demonstrable evidence, or;
 - Implementing or being in the process of implementing, an Intervention Strategy for students who are at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress, or;
 - Approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted
 - All Intervention Strategies or Extensions will be assessed individually, considering the circumstances of the student.
- 9.1. Except in the circumstances listed above, the expected duration of study specified in the student's COE must not exceed the registered course duration.
- 9.2. If an extension to the duration of the student's enrolment is granted, Empyrean Education Institute will advise the student in writing of this decision and of the need for the student to contact Immigration immediately for advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.

10. PUBLISHING & DISSEMINATION OF COURSE PROGRESS MONITORING

- 10.1. Course Progress Monitoring information will be published in all student information so that students and/or future students will be notified of:
- The requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress
 - The process for assessing satisfactory course progress
 - The Intervention strategies that will be implemented for students at risk of failing to achieve Satisfactory course progress

- The process for determining the point at which the student has failed to meet Satisfactory Course Progress
- Procedure for notifying students that they have failed to meet satisfactory course progress requirements

10.2. Empyrean Education Institute will also make this policy and intervention strategy readily available to staff and will instruct trainers and student service staff appropriately.

11. RESPONSIBILITIES

Trainers and SSO will be responsible for:

- reminding students of their attendance obligations;
- Reminding students of their requirement to maintain satisfactory academic progress
- informing students of the availability of counselling and support services should they be experiencing study and/or personal problems; and
- informing students that further action will be taken should they make unsatisfactory academic progress
- informing students that further action will be taken should not meet attendance requirements

11.1. As soon as SSO become aware of any student who fails to meet the intervention strategy the SSO must inform Academic Coordinator & Compliance Manager.

11.2. Student Services or the Compliance Manager shall be responsible for correspondence to or meetings with students at risk.

11.3. The Compliance Manager is responsible for final decisions about students at risk and those who have been deemed to have made unsatisfactory academic progress.

12. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Progress Completion and Attendance Procedure
- Student Intervention Policy and Procedure
- Student Intervention Strategy Form
- Academic Progress Warning Letter
- Attendance Warning Letter
- Notice of Intention to Cancel
- Complaints and Appeals Form