

Attendance Policy, English Language Teaching

POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to comply with the legislative requirements relating to overseas student visas in Australia. UTS Insearch is required to:

- monitor and record overseas students' course attendance, consistent with their student visa conditions;
- be proactive in notifying and counselling overseas students who are at risk of not meeting course attendance requirements; and
- notify the Department of Home Affairs if UTS Insearch finds that a student has not met course attendance requirements.

The above requirements come from Standard 8 of the National Code. The National Code sets out standards that support Australian higher education providers deliver quality education and training to overseas students. This policy should be read in conjunction with the *ELT Student Attendance Management Procedure*.

SCOPE

The policy applies to:

- All overseas students on a current student visa who are enrolled in an English Language Teaching (ELT) course
- All staff involved in managing and reporting these students' attendance

It **does not** apply to domestic students, or overseas students on another type of visa (such as a tourist or working holiday visa).

DEFINITIONS are set out at the end of this policy.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

Principle	Responsible
1. Regular class attendance is essential for a student to progress satisfactorily in their course and to be deemed a genuine student.	
a. Students are expected to attend 100% of the scheduled class hours for their course, as set out in their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).	Student
b. Students must attend at least 80% of the scheduled class hours to comply with the satisfactory attendance condition of their student visa.	Student

2. Students are responsible for maintaining satisfactory attendance.	
a. Students, where possible, advise their teacher that they will be absent <i>before the scheduled class</i> .	Student
b. Where an absence is due to illness, students should provide a medical certificate to Student Centre.	Student
c. Where absence is due to other compassionate or compelling circumstances, students should provide documentary evidence to demonstrate that these circumstances apply.	Student
3. UTS Insearch proactively makes students aware of what is expected and required of them in relation to attendance.	
a. Our offer letters to prospective students outline our expectations and requirements of them in relation to attendance, and provide links to our current attendance policy and procedure.	SSCR
b. We publish our current attendance policy and procedure in the ELT handbook, and on the UTS Insearch website and student extranet.	Education Services team
c. We remind enrolled students of our expectations and requirements of them in relation to attendance at orientation.	Academic Advisers
4. UTS Insearch records and monitors students' attendance regularly for the purpose of determining whether they are maintaining satisfactory attendance.	
a. We record each student's attendance each day.	ELT teaching staff
b. We monitor each student's absences, and calculate their projected attendance each week.	ELT teaching staff, Academic Advisers and ICT
5. UTS Insearch proactively contacts, warns and supports students at risk of not maintaining satisfactory attendance.	
a. We contact and counsel students who fail to advise their teacher that they will be absent from class.	ELT Teaching staff
b. At a minimum, we contact and counsel students who we identify are at risk of not maintaining attendance of at least 80%.	Academic Advisers
c. We investigate as a matter of urgency, any unapproved student absence longer than 5 consecutive days.	Student Welfare Team

d. We issue a reminder to students when their projected attendance is calculated as 95% or less, and advise them to discuss this matter with their Academic Adviser.	Academic Advisers/Compliance Officer
e. We issue a warning to students when their projected attendance is calculated as 87% or less, and require them to make an appointment with their Academic Adviser for assistance and advice.	Academic Advisers/ Compliance Officer
6. UTS Insearch notifies students who fail to maintain satisfactory attendance and gives them the opportunity to appeal before reporting them to the Department of Home Affairs.	
a. When a student's projected attendance falls to 80% or less we send them an 'Intention to Report letter' (ITR letter) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informs them of this intention • explains their opportunity to appeal this intention. 	Academic Advisers
b. We will not report such a student before their appeal period is over and any appeal process is complete.	Academic Advisers and SSRC
7. UTS Insearch has discretion not to report a student whose attendance falls below 80% of scheduled class hours in limited and defined circumstances.	
a. We may decide not to report a student for failing to maintain satisfactory attendance if the student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is attending at least 70% of the scheduled class hours, and • has provided documentary evidence that demonstrates compassionate and compelling circumstances for their absences. 	Academic Advisers and Dean of Studies
b. We may grant Approved leave to an eligible student who has failed to maintain satisfactory attendance if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student has provided documentary evidence that demonstrates compassionate and compelling circumstances for their absences, and • we consider Approved leave is in the best interests of the student. 	Academic Advisers
8. UTS Insearch reports students who fail to maintain satisfactory attendance to the Department of Home Affairs as soon as practical.	
a. We notify the Department via PRISMS that a student has failed to maintain satisfactory attendance as soon as practical.	SSCR
b. In line with Section 19(1) of the ESOS Act, we will terminate a student's studies when they stop attending a course, and will notify the Department via PRISMS within 14 days of this event.	SSCR

DEFINITIONS

Approved leave	Temporary suspension of studies for a period of up to 5 weeks. ELT students are eligible for Approved leave if they have already completed at least 20 weeks of continuous study
Compassionate or compelling circumstances	<p>Circumstances beyond the control of the student that affected their course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> serious illness or injury (supported by a medical certificate that states that the student was unable to attend classes) death of close family members, such as parents or grandparents a major political upheaval or natural disaster in the student's home country that has required the student to return home a traumatic experience (such as involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident, or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime) that has affected the student's ability to attend classes (supported by police or psychologist reports); and any other circumstance considered as compassionate or compelling that prevented the student from attending class (supported by documentary evidence).
Confirmation of enrolment (CoE)	A document we provide electronically to intending overseas students that must accompany their application for a student visa. The CoE confirms the overseas student's eligibility to enrol in a particular course at UTS Insearch.
ELT	English Language Teaching program.
ESOS Act	Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth).
Genuine student	A student who regularly attends and participates in their scheduled classes and makes regular progress in their course.
Intention to Report (ITR) letter	A letter from UTS Insearch to a student to notify them that we intend to report them to the Department of Home Affairs for failing to maintain satisfactory attendance, in breach of student visa conditions.
Medical certificate	<p>A certificate issued by a registered medical provider including doctors, dentists (Emergency appointments only), psychiatrists and psychologists.</p> <p>UTS Insearch does not accept certificates from alternative medical practitioners such as herbal practitioners, acupuncturists, Chinese therapists, massage therapists, iridologists, psychics etc.</p> <p>The medical certificate must be original and must state the provider number. Medical Certificates bought on-line are not acceptable.</p>

National Code	National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, legislative instrument under the ESOS Act.
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Student Management System.
Projected attendance	A student is given a 100% attendance at the beginning of the study period, then the attendance will be calculated using $\text{Already Attended hours (Total hours - Absent hours) + Remaining future hours} / \text{Total hours} = \% \text{ Attended.}$
Scheduled class hours	Timetabled classes for a study period.
SSCR	Student Sponsorship Compliance and Reporting
Students	In this policy, 'students' refers to overseas students on a current student visa.
Study period	One term of 5 weeks.
Teacher	Any ELT class teacher or level leader.
UTS Insearch	Insearch Limited.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Include the title of supporting documents such as legislation, associated policies, related procedures and other UTS Insearch resources.

- ELT Student Attendance Management Procedure
- Student Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Deferring or Cancelling Student Enrolment Policy

ADMIN USE ONLY

APPROVAL	
Signature:	
Position title:	Chair of the Academic Board Managing Director (all other policies) Date: 17 August 2018
Policy Title	Attendance Policy, English Language Teaching
Senior Leader	Dean of Studies
Manager	Associate Dean of Studies
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