

# Attendance Policy and Procedure

RSY-ACAD-PY-v3.2Attendance Policy and Procedure

**Document History**

Version	Date of Review	Date of Approval	Change(s)
1.0	-	18 Jun 2009	-
1.1	Sep 2011	29 Sep 2011	Amended format of Policy Updated Policy Framework for minimum attendance from 75% to 80% in a given subject/term, failing which, the student's work will be ineligible for assessment.
1.2	Oct 2014	Jan 2015	Updated Policy Framework for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 2b Students will be marked as absent if they are late for more than 30 minutes for a scheduled class</li> <li>Section 2c-d Degree / VET students will be marked absent for a full class if they are marked late 3 times and 2 times respectively in a single term</li> </ul>
2.0	Apr 2015	1 May 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated to RCDC standard policy template</li> <li>Section 2 Updated Definitions of Terms</li> <li>Section 6 Added Procedure for Monitoring Attendance</li> <li>Section 7 Added Attendance Requirements for International Students in VET courses</li> <li>Section 8 Added References and Documents</li> </ul>
3.0	Apr 2017	Apr 2017	Updated Policy for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 1: Amended to Policy Statement</li> <li>Section 2: Expanded Scope</li> <li>Section 3: Added Definition of Terms</li> <li>Section 4: Amended to clarify the attendance requirements for all students. Added grounds of compelling and compassionate circumstances.</li> <li>Section 5: Added procedure for recording attendance</li> <li>Section 6: Amended to clarify the attendance warning stage.</li> <li>Section 7: Added a procedure of internal appeal</li> <li>Section 8: Added a procedure of external appeal</li> <li>Section 9: Added a reporting procedure for international students enrolled in VET courses.</li> <li>Section 10: Updated references.</li> </ul>
3.1	Dec 2017	1 Dec 2017	Updated Policy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include a minimum attendance requirement to meet the course requirement.</li> <li>replace DIBP with Department of Home Affairs</li> <li>update references</li> </ul>
3.2	May 2018	11 May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 5.1: Item d. removed</li> <li>Section 6: Wording updated to expand and define scope</li> <li>Minor grammatical corrections and formatting updates</li> </ul>

**Approved by: Academic Board**      on **11 May 2018**

**Distribution List**

To: RCDC Academic Staff  
RCDC Student Services Staff  
RCDC Students

## Table of Contents

1	Policy Statement .....	5
2	Scope .....	5
3	Definition of Terms .....	5
4	Policy Framework.....	6
5	Procedure for Recording Attendance .....	7
6	Procedure for Monitoring Attendance.....	7
7	Internal Appeal .....	9
8	External Appeal .....	10
9	Reporting to Department of Home Affairs due to Unsatisfactory Attendance (International Students enrolled in VET Courses).....	10
10	References .....	10
11	Supporting and Related Documents .....	11

## 1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The objective of the Policy is to:
- a. Outline the process for monitoring attendance to ensure all students progress through their course in accordance with RCDC course requirements and legislative requirements of accrediting and regulatory government bodies.
  - b. Make accessible information to students of the impact of unsatisfactory attendance or lateness on their course progress and results.
  - c. Encourage students to attend all scheduled classes to optimise academic success and practice discipline needed in the work place.
  - d. Ensure international students enrolled in VET courses comply with their student visa conditions.
- 1.2 This document is to be read in conjunction with the Course Progress Policy and Procedure and the Student Grievance and Appeal Policy and Procedure.

## 2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all RCDC onshore students.
- 2.2 All lecturers are responsible for accessing the class rolls for classes under their supervision and recording student attendance into the Student Database Management System.
- 2.3 The Student Services Manager is responsible:
- a. for monitoring attendance on a regular basis and taking required actions under the provisions of this Policy and Procedure, in a timely manner.
  - b. for contacting students by written and verbal communication.
  - c. for ensuring all records associated with this policy are kept on the student's file, in accordance with RCDC Document and Records Management Policy.
- 2.4 Program Directors and the Student Services Manager are responsible for providing consultation and counselling to students with attendance matters and to recommend remedial actions throughout the monitoring process.

## 3 Definition of Terms

**A scheduled class** refers to one session of class time, in accordance with the attendance roll.

**A full class** refers to the total contact hours timetabled for the subject in a week.

**Onshore** students refer to RCDC's students (both domestic and international) studying in its campus in Australia.

**PRISMS** refers to Provider Registration and International Student Management Systems

**TPS:** refers to Tuition Protection Service of the Australian Government.

**CoE** is a Confirmation of Enrolment issued to international students for lodgement of a student visa.

**International student:** refers to a student studying in Australia on a student visa who is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident.

**Satisfactory attendance** refers to at least 80% of the scheduled course contact hours for the duration of the study period.

**Degree** is a qualification awarded on successful completion of a course of study in higher education at a college or university such as Associate Degree, Bachelor or Master.

**VET (Vocational Education and Training)** is that part of tertiary education and training which provides accredited training in job-related and technical skills. The sector offers qualifications such as Certificates, Diploma and Advanced Diploma.

**Unit of Competency** is the smallest unit of study that can be assessed and recognised.

**Compelling or Compassionate Circumstances** are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing as outlined in Section 4.3.c.

## 4 Policy Framework

4.1 RCDC will systematically monitor attendance for all domestic and international students in all units of study and subjects, and in all courses. Students' attendance will be recorded in the Student Database Management System.

- a. Students who are **present** for a scheduled class **will be marked (P)**.
- b. Students who are **more than 10 minutes late** for a scheduled class **will be marked late (L)**.
- c. Students who are **more than 30 minutes late or absent** for a scheduled class **will be marked absent (A)**, and not allowed to enter the room until a suitable break occurs.
- d. If a VET student has been marked late 2 times in a single term, they will be marked absent for a full class.

4.2 Due to the nature of RCDC courses specialising in Design, the courses are offered in a combination of theoretical and practical components and require both individual and group activities, in which students' participation and attendance is essential.

As part of the course requirements, students are expected to attend all classes on time and as scheduled in their timetable. Students are required to attend a minimum of 80% of the scheduled classes for each subject in which they are enrolled, in each term. When a student's attendance falls below 80% without adequate explanation, the student will be regarded as not making satisfactory course progress. Students not making satisfactory course progress due to attendance below 80% will incur the following penalties:

- a. All students enrolled in Higher Education courses: The final mark for the subject, in which a student is enrolled and attendance is below 80% will be marked as **Fail (F)**.
- b. Domestic students enrolled in VET courses: The result for the unit of competency, in which a student is enrolled, will be automatically marked as **Not Yet Competent (NYC)**.
- c. International students enrolled in VET courses: will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs through PRISMS unless RCDC decides not to report the student if:
  - the student is maintaining satisfactory course progress,
  - the decision is consistent with its documented policies and procedures; and

- the student is attending at least 70% of the scheduled course contact hours.

4.3 RCDC will act in a fair manner:

- a. Student appeals on lateness and non-attendance will be dealt with on a case by case basis under the provisions of this Policy and Procedure and the Student Grievance and Appeal Policy and Procedure.
- b. If a student is absent for medical reasons, they must submit a medical certificate to Student Services. (Normally they will not be marked absent, however further enquiries can be made.)
- c. If a student is absent on compassionate and compelling grounds, the student must inform the relevant Program Director or Student Services Department in writing and make an appointment with them for special consideration. In some cases, further information and documentation may be required.

4.4 RCDC will assess individual student's circumstances on a case by case basis and may decide to temporarily suspend the enrolment of the student on compassionate or compelling circumstances as prescribed under the Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure. The compassionate and compelling circumstances could include, but are not limited to:

- a. Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes.
- b. Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents.
- c. Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies.
- d. A traumatic experience which could include involvement in, or witnessing a serious accident and 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.
- e. Where RCDC was unable to offer the pre-requisite subject.

4.5 RCDC will keep records of all contact and counselling made with students throughout the monitoring process.

## **5 Procedure for Recording Attendance**

5.1 Lecturers will ensure that:

- a. The class roll for each scheduled class under their supervision is obtained from the Student Database Management System at the commencement of each week for the duration of the program.
- b. The Student Services Manager is notified immediately if any students are attending classes without their names on the rolls.
- c. The attendance is marked for each scheduled class and accurately recorded in the Student Database Management System in accordance with the clause 4.1.

## **6 Procedure for Monitoring Attendance**

- 6.1 Students are expected to attend all classes in all subjects on time as scheduled on the timetable. Satisfactory attendance is deemed to be greater than 80% of the scheduled course contact hours. Anything below the minimum attendance requirement of 80% is not regarded as sufficient, if a student is to perform well at study.
- 6.2 The Student Services Manager will monitor student attendance recorded in the Student Database Management System.
- 6.3 Students who have been absent for 10% of the classes in a subject will be identified as being at high risk of unsatisfactory attendance. The Student Services Manager will take a proactive approach to notifying students of the consequences of their low attendance or recommend possible options for deferring or withdrawing (if under compassionate or compelling circumstances).
- 6.4 The Student Services Manager will identify students with low attendance and send notification letters by email. When issuing the notification letters, a separate letter template for Higher Education students, VET domestic students and VET international students detailing their attendance requirements must be used.
- a. **Stage 1. First Warning Letter:** Where a student's attendance falls below 90%, the student will be issued a warning letter. This is the only attendance warning letter that will be issued to Higher Education students for the non-attendance of a single subject.
- b. **Stage 2. Second Warning Letter:** Where a VET student's attendance falls below 85%, the student will be issued a second warning letter and required to have a counselling session with the relevant Program Director and Student Services Manager. The student is required to make an appointment with them within 5 working days of receiving the notice.

At the counselling session, the student should discuss their concerns and questions regarding their attendance and the Program Director and Student Services Manager will:

- Identify the reason for the student's low attendance.
  - Review the student's current course progress.
  - Explain the implications for their student visa and future study if the student is an international student enrolled in a VET course.
  - Recommend remedial action to meet the course requirements if the student's low attendance has an impact on their course progression.
  - Decide to implement an intervention strategy which may include regular meetings with the relevant Program Director and/or Learning Support Officer for study assistance and learning support.
- c. **Stage 3. Intervention Strategy:** Where the relevant Program Director determines that implementation of an intervention strategy is required for a student and when both parties are in agreement with the recommended improvement plan, the student will be added to the list of students receiving an intervention strategy and his/her attendance and course progress will be closely monitored throughout the term.
- d. **Stage 4. Notice of RCDC's intention:** Where a VET student's attendance falls below 80% and the student has failed to attend the Stage 2 counselling session or has not satisfied the Stage 3 implemented remedial action or recommendation, the student will be issued a notification of RCDC's Intention to Act and RCDC will take the required actions. If an appeal against the decision is not submitted within 20 working days of notice:
- Domestic Students enrolled in VET courses: will be issued a **Notice of Intention to Act** due to Unsatisfactory Attendance(**NIA**), notifying RCDC's decision to implement this policy and that the

final result of the unit of competency, in which the student is enrolled will be marked as **Not Yet Competent (NYC)**.

- International Students enrolled in VET courses: will be issued a **Notice of Intention to Report for Unsatisfactory Attendance (NIR)**, notifying RCDC's decision to report the student to the Department of Home Affairs through PRISMS for breach of their student visa conditions.
- e. RCDC may decide not to report the VET international student for unsatisfactory attendance that is, not achieving a minimum 80% attendance, if the student records clearly indicate that the student is maintaining satisfactory course progress, and the student's attendance is at least 70% of the scheduled course contact hours for the course as described in clause 4.2.c.

## 7 Internal Appeal

- 7.1 A student who has been issued a Notice of RCDC's intention has the right to access an internal appeal against the decision within 20 working days of notice.
- 7.2 To access an internal appeal, a completed Student Appeals Form must be submitted to the Student Services Department by email to [studentservices@raffles.edu.au](mailto:studentservices@raffles.edu.au) along with the relevance documentary evidence stating:
  - a. The reasons why the student has failed to meet the satisfactory attendance requirements;
  - b. The actions that the student has taken as a result of receiving the low attendance warning letters; and
  - c. The actions that the student intends to take in the future to ensure satisfactory attendance is achieved.
- 7.3 The Student Services Manager will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 working days and commence an investigation process within 10 working days of lodgement and the request will be assessed by the Appeals Panel in accordance with the Student Grievance and Appeal Policy and Procedure.
- 7.4 During the appeals process, the student may be required to attend meetings with the Appeals Panel, relevant Program Director and Student Services Manager and to provide further documentation that supports the grounds of appeal.
- 7.5 The person or panel considering the appeal will:
  - a. assess the information and documentation provided by the student if the grounds of the appeal fall under compelling or compassionate circumstances as outlined in clause 4.4 and the provision of this policy;
  - b. review the student's course progress and the counselling reports; and
  - c. recommend the implementation of an intervention strategy and/or remedial action for the following term.
- 7.6 At the conclusion of the appeal assessment, the person or panel considering the appeal must make a determination that includes one of the following actions:
  - a. Uphold the original decision; or
  - b. Re-enrol the student in the following term; and/or
  - c. Impose additional conditions requiring the student to enrol in a specified subject and/or course.

- 7.7 The Student Services Manager will issue a notification of the outcome of the appeal to the student explaining and providing information about the implementation and recommendation including the student's right to access an external appeals process within 5 working days of the notification.

## 8 External Appeal

- 8.1 If a student has been issued a notification of the outcome of the appeal and is not satisfied with the decision, the student has the right to access the external appeals process within 5 working days of notification.
- 8.2 If the student has chosen to access the external appeals process, the student must submit a letter from the external organisation acknowledging receipt of the request to appeal within the required time frame and RCDC will maintain the student's enrolment and will not take any actions stated in the notification of the outcome of the appeal until the external appeals process is complete.
- 8.3 Please refer to the Student Grievance and Appeal Policy and Procedure for more details about the avenues for external appeal.

## 9 Reporting to Department of Home Affairs due to Unsatisfactory Attendance (International Students enrolled in VET Courses)

- 9.1 An international student who is enrolled in a VET course will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs for unsatisfactory attendance through PRISMS if:
- The student has been issued a notice of intention to report and chosen not to access the internal appeals process within 20 working days of notice; or
  - The student has been issued a notification of outcome of an appeal and has not chosen to access the external appeals process within 5 working days of notice.
- 9.2 The Student Services Manager will report the student to the Department of Home Affairs and notify the Secretary of Tuition Protection Service (TPS) through PRISMS.
- 9.3 The Student Services Manager will send the student a notification of the cancellation of their enrolment and CoE.
- 9.4 If the student has chosen to access the external appeals process within 5 working days of notification of the outcome of an appeal and submitted a letter from an external organisation acknowledging receipt of the request to appeal, RCDC will maintain the student's CoE and enrolment until the external appeals process is complete. Failure to provide evidence of accessing the external appeals process and/or to meet the required time frame will result in cancellation of the student's enrolment and CoE.
- 9.5 The Department of Home Affairs will consider all the information available and if they decide to consider cancellation of the student's visa, the Department of Home Affairs will send a **Notice of Intention to Consider Cancellation (NOICC)** prior to a decision being made to cancel the student's visa. The student will be given an opportunity to respond to the NOICC and explain their situation.
- 9.6 International students are strongly advised to contact the Department of Home Affairs office to seek advice on their current visa status.

## 10 References

- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act 2011)  
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2015L01639>
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015:  
[www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017C00663](http://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017C00663)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018  
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182>
- Anti-Discrimination Board: [www.antidiscrimination.justice.nsw.gov.au](http://www.antidiscrimination.justice.nsw.gov.au)
- Australian Human Rights Commission: [www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)
- Overseas Students Ombudsman: [www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/overseas-student-ombudsman-landing-page](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/overseas-student-ombudsman-landing-page)
- Department of Home Affairs: <http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/>

## 11 Supporting and Related Documents

- Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure
- Document and Records Management Policy
- Student Grievance and Appeal Policy and Procedure
- Course Progress Policy and Procedure
- Student Appeals Form