



ELICOS Attendance Policy and Procedure for English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) students

POLICY NUMBER: NC18-PP008

RESPONSIBILITY: OFFICE MANAGER

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1. Policy

1.1 The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that WAIFS is compliant in monitoring attendance for international students studying ELICOS courses at the college.

1.2 The National Code 2018 states:

“Registered providers of ..ELICOS.... must have a documented policy and process for monitoring and recording both attendance and course progress for overseas students. The minimum requirement for attendance is 80 per cent of the scheduled contact hours for the course.”

The requirements for attendance and monitoring of ELICOS students are set out in:

- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code), Standard 8: Overseas student visa requirements

1.3 This policy and procedures support Standard 8 of the National Code of Practice for Providers to International Students. They ensure that WAIFS monitors students attendance and identifies students whose attendance is a cause for concern and/or who may be “at risk” of not being able to complete their studies within the expected duration of their course.

1.4 It also supports the identification of students who may have a compelling and/or compassionate reason for poor attendance and/or progress so that WAIFS can provide support as required.

1.5 ‘Compassionate or compelling’ circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the overseas student and which have an impact upon the overseas student’s course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas student was unable to attend classes
- (ii) bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (a death certificate and proof of blood relationship would generally be required)
- (iii) Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the overseas student’s studies; or
- (iv) A traumatic experience, which could include:
 - Involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - Witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists’ reports)
 - Where WAIFS was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or the overseas student has failed a prerequisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol.



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1.6 These are only some examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. WAIFS will consider any submission on its own individual merits.

2. Procedures

- 2.1 WAIFS Procedures are outlined below and are to be followed on any day where an ELICOS class is running at WAIFS.
- 2.2 Where a specific WAIFS employee is stated e.g. Office Manager, a suitable alternative can always be used.

3. What is a study session?

- 3.1 WAIFS' ELICOS classes are divided into 4 study sessions in a day and 2 study sessions per day for a half day class (being either morning or the afternoon)
- 3.2 Study sessions are:

| Session | Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday | | Wednesday |
|---------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| | Classrooms 1,2,3,4,5,11,12 | Classrooms 6,7,8,9,10 | All Classrooms |
| 1 | 8.45a.m. – 10.30a.m. | | 8.45a.m. – 10.30a.m. |
| 2 | 10.45a.m. – 12.30a.m. | 10.45a.m. – 12.45a.m. | 10.45a.m. – 1.45p.m. |
| 3 | 1.15p.m. – 3.30p.m. | 1.30p.m. – 3.30pm | |
| 4 | 3.45p.m. – 5.00p.m. | | |

4. How do class lists work for attendance monitoring?

- 4.1 WAIFS' Administration prints the class list for each ELICOS class the day before class.
- 4.2 The class lists are given to the class trainers.
- 4.3 Trainers keep the attendance sheets on their desks. 15 minutes after the start of a study session, the trainer does a role call of all the students in class and marks them as in class/absent based on this.
- 4.4 Trainers must also do a head-count each time to ensure all students are present that have been ticked as present – this is to ensure a WAIFS' student cannot state a student is present on their behalf when they are not.
- 4.5 At the end of the study day, the student signs out and enters the time that they are leaving class. The attendance sheet is on the trainer's desk for this purpose and the trainer ensures the time signed out is correct.

Note:

- Students who do not attend any study session in their class in a day will be marked as absent for the whole day.
- Students who are 15 minutes late or more for any study session will:
 - (i) Not be allowed into the classroom - entrance of late students disrupts the flow of learning in the class and the students therein.
 - (ii) Be marked absent for that study session and attendance will not be recorded until the following study session (if they then attend on time). If a student comes late, is not allowed into class and stays on campus, they will still be marked absent as they were not in class and learning.

4.6 If students are unwell and cannot attend classes, they are required to present a medical certificate from a General Practitioner or Pharmacist to WAIFS.

Note: WAIFS does not accept medical certificates from:

- (i) Practitioners of holistic/alternative medicine/Chinese medicine
- (ii) Online medical services such as www.gdoctor.com.au/

4.7 WAIFS contacts all providers of medical certificates to ensure they are genuine. A student may be requested to give WAIFS permission to do this. WAIFS will never ask what is wrong with a student or any other personal information.

4.8 WAIFS enquiry will be limited to requesting confirmation of:

- Whether the certificate was issued for the named student on the named date
- Whether the certificate was issued by the medical practitioner stated
- Whether the certificate was issued for the duration stated.

4.9 WAIFS reserves the right to not accept medical certificates where a student attends a medical practitioner after an absence from WAIFS and the medical practitioner states the following (or similar):

“XXXX presented today and stated they have been suffering from XXX since XXX. I have no reason to doubt this.”



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- 4.10 A copy of the medical certificate will be filed in the student's electronic file.
- 4.11 Students will be marked as absent for medical reasons. The absence will not count towards the calculation of their attendance percentage.

5. What does WAIFS do and when if students are absent?

- 5.1 WAIFS must contact and counsel students who:
- Have been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval; or
 - Are deemed to be at risk of not attending for at least 80% of their scheduled course contact hours.
- 5.2 Attendance is entered into the student management database daily by WAIFS' admin. ELICOS classes can operate from Monday to Friday.
- 5.3 The weekend admin officer runs weekly calculations on the Student Management Database on Sunday mornings (after ensuring all attendance for the previous Monday to Friday week has been entered).
- 5.4 This is completed by generating 2 reports from the student management database and exporting to Excel – one for absences more than 5 consecutive class days, one for current attendance % for all classes to date.
- 5.5 For students who have missed 5 classes in a row, the office manager calls them and requests an explanation for the absence. If the student:
- Has a personal issue then the office manager must arrange for the student to come in and see a WAIFS student support officer.
 - Has no reason for not coming to class/the reason is unacceptable, the office manager emails the student that they have spoken on the phone, what the reason was for non-attendance and the importance of coming to classes as attendance is monitored for all ELICOS classes. Informs them also to let us know if at any future point they have any issue which may affect their attendance and not to simply not come to class.
- 5.6 Students with unacceptable attendance rates are then contacted as follows:
- 1st warning letter - Current Cumulative Attendance to date drops to 90% (see Appendix A)
 - 2nd warning letter - Current Cumulative Attendance to date under 86% (see Appendix B)
 - 3rd warning letter - Current Cumulative Attendance to date under 83% (see Appendix C)
 - 4th warning – meeting with Operations Manager/CEO/MD (see Appendix D)
 - 5th and final communication before appeals process commences (See WAIFS' Complaints and Appeals Policy) – Notice of Intention to Report for Poor Course Attendance. (see Appendix E)

Note: Appendices are for internal WAIFS use only and are not made available to students.

- 5.7 The Office Manager (or suitable alternative) notifies all students who have attendance as above as follows:
- By email that:
 - They have been noted as absent
 - What the acceptable attendance rates are
 - To attend class 20 hours per week
 - By phone and by email that:
 - They have been noted as absent
 - What the acceptable attendance rates are
 - To attend class 20 hours per week
 - By email that they are required to attend a meeting with the Campus Manager/Operations Manager (83.0% to 85.9%). The student will be informed that they can bring a support person to the meeting if they wish. They will also be informed that they should bring any evidence they have that may explain the reason for their attendance (and that 3rd party, independent evidence is preferred that can be verified by WAIFS). If the student does not contact WAIFS within 5 working days to arrange a meeting, WAIFS admin phone the student (making notes of the call in the student management database) and arranging the date and time of the meeting.
 - By email that they are required to attend a meeting with the Operations Manager/CEO/MD (80% to 82.9%). The student will be informed that they can bring a support person to the meeting if they wish. They will also be informed that they should bring any evidence they have that may explain the reason for their attendance (and that 3rd party, independent evidence is preferred that can be verified by WAIFS). If the student does not contact WAIFS within 5 working days to arrange a meeting, WAIFS admin phone the student (making notes of the call in the student management database) and arranging the date and time of the meeting.



(v) NOIR letter sent by email.

- 5.8 To control the procedures, WAIFS Admin Officer will mark in the Excel spreadsheet (or alternative effective system):
- When each student is contacted - (how and date)
 - Follow up phone calls made (date)
 - Meetings arranged (who and date)
 - Meeting outcomes
- 5.9 Outcomes of contact with students are updated in the student management database so that all appropriate WAIFS' staff can see it. If there is need (e.g. an immediate response is required. e.g. from a trainer) an email should be sent directly to a WAIFS staff member, as required.
- 5.10 If the student's current attendance is below 80%, WAIFS will issue the final letter to the student which is a Notice of Intention to Report for Unsatisfactory Course Attendance. The student will be informed that they can access the internal appeals policy and to refer to the Complaints and Appeal policy at www.waifs.wa.edu.au/policies-procedures.
- 5.11 WAIFS admin will also advise the student's education/migration agent and/or parent/guardian (if under 18) (if relevant) if the student has an overall attendance level under 86% and under 80%.
- 6. How does a student appeal?**
- 6.1 The student will be informed that they can access the internal appeals policy and to refer to the Complaints and Appeal policy at www.waifs.wa.edu.au/policies-procedures.
- 6.2 If the appeal within WAIFS is not successful, then the Manager, Student Administration Services (or appropriate alternative) will offer the student an opportunity to appeal through an external party. The student will have 20 days to inform WAIFS in writing that they have lodged a formal appeal with the Overseas Student Ombudsman.
- 6.3 If the student decides not to appeal through the internal or external appeal processes with regard to student attendance, or when an external appeal supports WAIFS's decision to report the student, then the student will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) for unsatisfactory attendance.
- 6.4 WAIFS will inform the student when reporting has been finalised and inform them to contact DoHA in relation to their student visa in Australia. The contact details will be provided.