Macquarie University College Attendance Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy establishes the attendance expectations for all students studying at the Macquarie University College (The College).

(2) This Policy documents the requirements for international students enrolled in the Standard Foundation Program to maintain satisfactory attendance as set out in the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code), Standard 8. Maintaining satisfactory attendance is a visa condition for international students in the Standard Foundation Program.

Background

(3) The College considers attendance and active participation in classroom activities to be critical to a student's learning and success. It monitors all students' attendance, participation and assessments during each term to measure their academic performance and to identify students who may be at risk of not meeting course progression requirements. This enables The College to assist students to put in place strategies and support to achieve satisfactory course progress.

(4) The College takes additional steps to monitor the attendance of international students in the Standard Foundation Program, and report those who do not maintain satisfactory attendance to the Department of Home Affairs, in compliance with the National Code of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) and associated regulations.

Scope

(5) This Policy applies to all domestic and international students enrolled at The College.

(6) Specific clauses of the Policy under Part B apply only to international students in the Standard Foundation Program.

Section 2 - Policy

Part A - Attendance – All Students

Attendance

(7) All students are expected to attend 100% of scheduled contact hours in a term. Information about the scheduled contact hours for a unit is provided in Unit Guides which are linked from the online learning management page for the unit on iLearn. Specific class times are shown on a student's timetable for a term which is accessible online.

(8) A student is not permitted to 'swap' classes or to attend a class other than the one in which they are registered without prior permission (an authorisation form) from a College Student Advisor. If a student's name does not appear on the class attendance list and they do not have an authorisation form to attend a substitute class, the teacher wil not mark them present and will immediately refer them to a Student Advisor.

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Attendance Monitoring During a Term

(9) Teaching staff of The College are responsible for recording student attendance in every class. Attendance is recorded using the University's online learning management system, iLearn. If a student does not attend the entire time scheduled for a class (for example is late or leaves early) the teacher will only record the time the student was actually in class.

(10) Students can view their attendance record for the units in their current term through iLearn. Both actual and potential attendance for the current term are available.

Circumstances Impacting Attendance

(11) Students who experience circumstances that impact their ability to attend class should seek assistance from a Student Advisor at The College or from Student Wellbeing at the time the circumstances arise. This will allow support strategies to be discussed and put in place to reduce the impact on the student's course progression. If a student has a pre-existing condition or circumstance it is recommended that they discuss this with a Student Advisor at The College at the beginning of their studies to discuss the support strategies and services the University may offer. Students who have missed an assessment or test due to serious and unavoidable circumstances can request special consideration under the Special Consideration Policy.

Certificate of Attendance

(12) Students can request an official Certificate of Attendance from the Student Services Section of The College.

Part B - Attendance – Standard Foundation Program International Students

(13) International students in the Standard Foundation Program must maintain satisfactory attendance (refer to Definitions below) in their program of study. This is a visa condition for international students in the Standard Foundation Program.

(14) The College monitors and records an international Standard Foundation Program student's actual and potential attendance in each term, and then uses these to calculate potential attendance on an ongoing basis against the total possible scheduled contact hours of the student's program of study.

(15) The College uses potential attendance for the program (expressed as a percentage) to determine how a student is tracking against the minimum satisfactory attendance threshold of 80% of total scheduled contact hours.

(16) The Governance section of The College is responsible for monitoring the attendance of International Standard Foundation Program students as per the requirements of the ESOS National Code, Standard 8.

(17) The Student Services team of The College is responsible for identifying International students in the Standard Foundation Program who have missed more than three (3) consecutive days of class. In these cases, these students may be asked to discuss any circumstances impacting their study with a Student Advisor. Based on the discussion, strategies and support may be suggested, or a student may be referred to other specialist learning or wellbeing and support services.

(18) If an International student in the Standard Foundation Program has been absent for five (5) consecutive days without advising The College and attempts by The College to contact them have been unsuccessful, The College will consider this a critical incident and will escalate the matter to Student Wellbeing.

Attendance Calculation for Compliance Monitoring

(19) Potential attendance is calculated using:

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(a) the total scheduled contact hours of the program that a student has attended and completed, excluding units from which a student has withdrawn, to date;
(b) the maximum number of scheduled contact hours for the program still remaining; and
(c) the total number of scheduled contact hours for the student's full program of study.

(20) Potential attendance is expressed as a percentage. That is: (a+b)/c*100.

Attendance Warnings

(21) The College will send attendance warnings to an international student in the Standard Foundation Program as their potential attendance drops.

(22) When the student's potential attendance has dropped below 90% of the scheduled contact hours of their course, The College will send a First Warning.

(23) When the student's potential attendance has dropped below 85% of the scheduled contact hours of their course, The College will send a Second Warning.

(24) The warnings will be sent to the student's University email address. If the student is under the age of 18, copies of the warnings will also be sent to the student's parents or legal guardian. Students may be required to attend a meeting with a Student Advisor to discuss their attendance.

Notice of Intention to Report to the Department of Home Affairs

(25) International Standard Foundation students who fall below the required 80% of scheduled contact hours for their program (i.e. do not maintain satisfactory attendance) will be issued with a Notice of Intention to Report as required by the ESOS National Code. The Notice of Intention to Report will be sent to the student's University email address. If the student is under the age of 18, a copy of the Notice of Intention to Report will also be sent to the student's parents or legal guardian.

(26) Following the notice period, students will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs for unsatisfactory attendance and excluded from the course and not permitted to return for a period of one (1) year after the report. If the student wishes to return to the course after this time they must re-apply.

Appeals

(27) The Notice of Intention to Report will detail that a student is entitled to appeal a decision to report the student for unsatisfactory attendance. The grounds of appeal are:

a. that the student has genuine evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances that have impacted their attendance, and that The College is satisfied that the student's attendance will not continue to be impacted by those circumstances; and/or;
b. that the student demonstrates the process for dealing with this matter was not followed correctly.

(28) The student will have twenty (20) working days to appeal. A report to the Department of Home Affairs will not be made until the period of appeal has lapsed or, if the student appeals, the appeal process has concluded, and their appeal is unsuccessful.

Appeal to Associate Director, Learning and Teaching

(29) The request to appeal the decision must be made in writing to The College and is to be addressed to the Associate Director, Learning and Teaching. Any relevant supporting documentation must be submitted with the student's appeal.

(30) The Associate Director, Learning and Teaching will assess the written appeal and supporting documentation and confirm the outcome of the appeal to the student in writing within twenty (20) working days.

Review by the Director, Macquarie University College

(31) If the appeal to the Associate Director, Learning and Teaching is not upheld the student is entitled to request that the decision is referred to the Director, Macquarie University College for further review under the following grounds:

a. the student is able to provide additional evidence to support their case, that was not, for good reason, included in their initial appeal; and/or;
b. the student demonstrates that the process for dealing with this matter was not correctly followed

(32) The request to review must be made in writing to The College within five (5) working days of the date of the appeal outcome letter from the Associate Director, Learning and Teaching. A request for review must address how the request meets the grounds of appeal. Requests for review that do not address the grounds of appeal will not be accepted.

(33) The Director, Macquarie University College will assess the original appeal and supporting documentation along with any new evidence or information the student has provided, and the Associate Director, Learning and Teaching's decision. The Director, Macquarie University College will confirm the outcome of the review in writing within ten (10) working days.

(34) After the internal right of appeal specified in this Policy is exhausted, a person in respect of whom a decision has been made may complain to the NSW Ombudsman about the decision under the Ombudsman Act 1974 of New South Wales.

(35) Where a student has lodged or intends to lodge a complaint with the NSW Ombudsman, the student must notify the University of this within four (4) weeks of the outcome of their appeal.

Reporting to the Department of Home Affairs for Unsatisfactory Attendance

(36) If a student has exhausted the appeals process (including a complaint to the NSW Ombudsman), and/or the student chose not to lodge an appeal or complaint at any stage of the process, the student will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs as specified in the Notice of Intention to Report unless the appeal was upheld.

(37) If the appeal was upheld, a report to the Department of Home Affairs will not be made and the student may continue to study. The student's attendance will continue to be monitored as per clause 19. If the student's attendance continues to decline after a successful appeal the Notice of Intention to Report process per clause 25 (including the opportunity to appeal) will be activated again at the following attendance thresholds: 70% 60% 50% 40% 30% 20% and 10%.

Section 3 - Procedures

(38) Refer to the Macquarie University College Attendance Procedure.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(39) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(40) Commonly defined terms are located in the University Glossary. The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Actual attendance means the number of scheduled contact hours a student has attended to date, excluding units from which a student has withdrawn (a), compared to the total number of scheduled contact hours to date (b), expressed as a percentage. That is: a/b*100.
b. Compassionate or compelling circumstances means circumstances beyond the control of the student which have an impact upon the student's wellbeing or progress in a program of study. These include, but are not limited to:
    i. serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
    ii. bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (supported by documentation);
    iii. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel when this has impacted on the student's studies; or
    iv. a traumatic experience which could include:
        - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident;
        - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime; and
    v. which has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports).
c. Course is an unofficial term for a program of study.
d. Course progress is the measure of a student's academic performance within a program of study prior to completion.
e. The Department of Home Affairs is the Commonwealth Government department responsible for issuing international students with visas.
f. eCoE: Electronic Confirmation of Enrolment means–a document, provided electronically, which is issued by Macquarie University to intending international students confirming the international student's eligibility to enrol in the particular course at Macquarie University. It must accompany their application to the Department of Home Affairs for a student visa.
g. ESOS Framework is the legislative framework which regulates the delivery of education services to international students. It is comprised of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act), the Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 (ESOS Regulations) and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code).
h. International Student means a student who holds a student visa and is permitted to study in Australia.
i. Notice of Intention to Report means the written communication sent to a student notifying them of the University's intention to report them to the Department of Home Affairs when required under the ESOS Framework.
j. Potential attendance means the maximum attendance a student can attain by the end of the term or program of study in which they are enrolled if they attend all of the remaining scheduled contact hours.
k. PRISMS is the Provider Registration and International Student Management Systems (PRISMS) database that the Commonwealth Government maintains to support education providers with legislative requirements relating to overseas students.
l. Program of study means the sequence of required study which enables a student to qualify for an academic award.
m. Satisfactory attendance means attendance of at least 80% of the scheduled contact hours (also known as class hours) in a program of study.
n. Scheduled contact hours (also known as class hours) means the hours in a program of study in which students

are scheduled to attend classes and any other mandatory learning sessions.

o. Term means a seven (7) week period of study at The College, including six (6) weeks of classes and an examinations period, in which an entire unit is delivered.

p. Unit means a discrete component of study within a program of study, each worth a fixed number of credit points. At The College, each unit is worth three credit points. A unit is sometimes known as a subject.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Rorden Wilkinson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
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