

International Students

Course Attendance Policy

1. Policy

Kennedy Baptist College is committed to assisting international students to meet attendance requirements and to maintain satisfactory attendance.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure compliance with the Department of Home Affairs student *Visa Condition 8202* and *Standard 8 – Overseas Student Visa Requirements* of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to staff, international students and parents/guardians for the duration of their enrolment at Kennedy Baptist College.

Staff should read this Policy in conjunction with the *Attendance Policy* available on CompliSpace.

Students and parents/guardians should read this Policy in conjunction with the *Attendance Policy* in the *Kennedy Handbook* available on the College website: <https://www.kennedy.wa.edu.au/about/policies/>.

4. Definition

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the international student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or well-being.

These could include, but are not limited to:

- Serious illness or 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 a death certificate should be provided);
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies; or
- 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 student. These cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports.

5. Satisfactory Course Attendance

The College expects 100% attendance from all students. However, as a visa condition, international students are required to achieve satisfactory course attendance which, at a minimum, must be 80% of the scheduled contact hours in each school term.

6. Attendance Requirements

Attendance from the first day to the last day of each school term is compulsory.

It is compulsory that students attend their course at Kennedy Baptist College on a full-time basis, that is Monday to Friday from 8:15am to 3:15pm, except during public holidays and end of term school holidays.

Students are required to be punctual and to be present from 8:15am to 3:15pm.

7. Absences

Any absences must be advised in writing and a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner is required after two or more days' absence from school.

Parents/guardians of students who need to attend appointments or who will be absent during class times, should notify Student Services by 9:00am on the day of absence by either:

- Explaining the absence in writing by email to attendance@kennedy.wa.edu.au;
- By a phone call to the Absentee line (08 6188 0698); or
- By completing the *Online Absentee Form* available on the College website: <https://www.kennedy.wa.edu.au/kennedy-community/parent-information/online-absentee-form/>.

The College monitors students' attendance throughout each school day. All parents/guardians are notified of absences daily via text messages.

For extended leave of absence:

A *Leave of Absence Form* obtained from Student Services or the Registrar, is to be completed if a student needs to be absent from school for an extended period of time for **compassionate or compelling circumstances**.

Parents/guardians are required to notify the Principal in writing via the *Leave of Absence Form* prior to the extended period of absence in order to obtain permission for the absence.

Parents/guardians must notify the student's Head of Year who will assist the student by providing schoolwork to be completed during their absence.

If a student is absent from the College without permission or leaves the College without permission, the following policy applies:

1st Instance	Parents/guardians are informed. The student is suspended for one day.
2nd Instance	Parents/guardians are informed. The student is suspended for one day.
3rd Instance	Parents/guardians are informed. The student is excluded from the College.

8. Monitoring Course Attendance

To ensure international students complete their course within the duration specified in their *Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)* and achieve academic success, the College monitors each student's attendance. Students who fail to attend school are monitored and followed up by the College.

Student attendance is:

- Recorded by class teachers during form and at the beginning of every period of class during the day; and
- Checked daily by the Attendance Officer with a daily Absentee list given to the Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care.

Twice a term an Attendance Report is provided to the Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care. Students at risk of breaching the attendance rate are highlighted.

The Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care is responsible for monitoring international student attendance.

9. Failing Satisfactory Course Attendance

Where an international student fails to meet satisfactory course attendance, they risk disciplinary action, breaching their student visa conditions, having their *Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)* cancelled and their student visa revoked.

The College must report international students who do not meet course attendance requirements to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

The College is proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet satisfactory course attendance.

10. Intervention Strategies

If an international student is not achieving satisfactory course attendance or has been absent for more than five (5) consecutive days without approval, the Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care will request an interview with the student and their parent/guardian.

In the **interview** the student will need to:

- Provide reasons for their poor attendance record. Where the student provides documentary evidence that **compassionate or compelling circumstances** exist for their poor attendance record, the College will keep copies of these documents in the student's file; and
- Negotiate a plan of action to achieve satisfactory attendance.

The plan of action will include strategies to assist the student in liaison with their parent/guardian and may include:

- Attending extra tuition and support to be organised;
- Personal strategies to encourage the student to attend school; and/or
- Counselling and continued monitoring of attendance.

All meetings and strategies arranged are documented throughout.

The student will be reminded:

- Of the College's *Attendance Policies*. (Available in the *Kennedy Handbook* on the College website);
- That maintaining satisfactory course attendance is a College and student visa requirement; and
- That failing to meet satisfactory course attendance will require the College to report the student to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and the student's visa may be cancelled.

Assessing whether a student is achieving satisfactory course attendance or not is done on a case-by-case basis, using our professional judgement and discretion, in accordance with policies and procedures.

Should the student not achieve satisfactory course attendance in the next school term, even though all strategies have been implemented to assist the student, including advising parents/guardians, the College is obligated to notify the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) which may result in the cancellation of their student visa.

11. Strategy for Student Attendance Below 80%

The College may decide not to report a student for breaching the attendance requirements if the student is still attending at least 70% and the student provided

genuine evidence demonstrating that **compassionate and compelling circumstances** exist.

The College will continue to monitor and support the student, as per section 10 above, in completing their course within the expected duration specified in their *Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)*.

Where a student is assessed as having nearly reached the threshold of 70% attendance for the school term, the Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care will assess whether a suspension of studies is in the best interest of the student in accordance with the *Deferment, Cancellation or Suspension of Study Policy*.

If the student does not obtain a suspension of studies in accordance with the *Deferment, Cancellation or Suspension of Study Policy*, and falls below the 70% threshold for attendance for the school term, the process for reporting the student for unsatisfactory attendance will occur as outlined in sections 11 and 12 below.

12. Notice of Intent to Report

Where the College has assessed that a student is not achieving satisfactory course attendance despite implementing strategies for improvement, the Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care will request a meeting with the student and their parent/guardian.

The purpose of this meeting is to inform the student and their parent/guardian of the College's intention to report unsatisfactory course attendance to the DHA:

- When a student and their parent/guardian failed to respond to interview requests or attend interview meetings;
- When a student and their parent/guardian failed to provide evidence demonstrating compassionate and compelling circumstances;
- The student fails to meet the intervention strategies; or
- The student fails to achieve satisfactory course attendance in the next school term, even though all steps have been taken to assist the student.

During this meeting, the Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care will present the *Notice of Intent to Report* to the student and their parent/guardian and inform the student of the reasons for the intention to report.

The written notice will be explained to the student and their parent/guardian to ensure they fully understand the implications of the report to be made to the DHA. The student will be required to sign the written notice in the presence of their parent/guardian and the Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care.

The student will be informed that they are able to access the College's internal complaints and appeals process and that they have 20 working days in which to do so.

A copy of the signed notice will be handed to the student, a copy scanned and emailed to their parent/guardian and the original will be placed on the student's file.

The College will not report until the process is completed and the student has either lost their appeal or not accessed the complaints and appeals process within 20 working days of being notified of the College's intention to report.

During the complaints and appeals process and provided the student has not exhausted options available under the College *Discipline Policy* for inappropriate behaviour, the student's enrolment will continue without prejudice.

13. Reporting Breach of Visa Condition 8202

The Registrar reports to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) through PRISMS that the student is not achieving satisfactory course attendance when:

- The Internal and External Complaints and Appeals Process have been completed and resulted in a decision supporting the College;
- The student has chosen not to access the Internal Complaints and Appeals Process within the 20-working day period;
- The student has chosen not to access the External Complaints and Appeals Process; or
- The student withdraws from the internal or external appeals process by notifying the College in writing.

The student and their parent/guardian are notified in writing that:

- The student's *Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)* has been cancelled;
- The student can no longer attend the College; and
- The student should seek advice from the DHA on the potential impact on their student visa.

Also refer to the *Deferment, Cancellation or Suspension of Study Policy*.

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