



COURSE PROGRESS AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy is available to staff and to students.

Overseas students are required to meet and maintain satisfactory course progress and attendance requirements under visa condition 8202 and under Standard 8 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

1. Course Progress

- a) The College will monitor record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.
- b) The course progress of all students will be assessed at the end of each study period (semester) of enrolment.
- c) Overseas students who have begun part way through a semester will be assessed after one full study period of attendance.
- d) To demonstrate satisfactory course progress, students will need to achieve a grade of 'C' in at least 50% of subjects in any study period, and achieve an overall effort of '2' in at least 50% of subjects in any study period.
- e) If a student does not achieve as noted in (d) in at least 50% of subjects studied in an assessment period, the Head of Department will formally contact the parents/carers to advise that the student is at risk of breaching the course progress requirement and that there will be a meeting with the student and parents/carers to develop an intervention strategy for academic improvement. This may include;
 - i. Additional supervised study periods
 - ii. Tutorial assistance
 - iii. other intervention strategies as deemed necessary
- f) A copy of the student's individual strategy and progress reports in achieving improvement will be forwarded to parents.
- g) The student's individual strategy for academic improvement will be monitored over the following study period by Head of Sub College and records of student response to the strategy will be kept.
- h) If the student does not improve sufficiently academically and achieve satisfactory course progress by the end of the next study period, Heights College will advise the student in writing of its intention to report the student for breach of visa condition 8202, and that he/she (or parent/carer on the student's behalf) has 20 working days in which to access the College's internal complaints and appeals process. The notification of intention to report will be issued to the student prior to the commencement of the next semester. Following the outcome of the internal process, if the student wishes to complain or lodge an external appeal about a decision made or action taken by Name of College, he/she may contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman at no cost. This must be done within 10 working days. Please see Heights College's Complaints and Appeals Policy for further details.

- i) The College will notify the ESOS Agency via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress as soon as practicable where:
 - i. the student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 days, or
 - ii. the student withdraws from the complaints and appeals process by notifying the Headmaster in writing, or
 - iii. the complaints and appeals process results in a decision in favour of the College

2. Completion within expected duration of study

- a) As noted in 1.a., the College will monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.
- b) Part of the assessment of course progress at the end of each semester will include an assessment of whether the student's progress is such that they are expected to complete their studies within the expected duration of the course.
- c) The College will only extend the duration of the student's study where it is clear the student will not be able to complete their course by the expected date because of:
 - i. The student can provide evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances (see Definitions below)
 - ii. The student has, or is, participating in an intervention strategy as outlined in 1.e.
 - iii. an approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted in accordance with Heights College's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.
- d) Where the College decides to extend the duration of the student's study, the College will report this change via PRISMS within 14 days and/or issue a new COE if required. In this case, the student will need to contact the Department of Immigration to seek advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.

3. Monitoring Course attendance

- a) Satisfactory course attendance is attendance of 80% of scheduled course contact hours. *[NB the National Code St 8 specifies a minimum attendance requirement of 80%, or under certain conditions, of 70% as outlined in St 8.15. School policy can require a higher minimum attendance rate.]*
- b) Student attendance is:
 - i. checked and recorded daily
 - ii. assessed regularly
 - iii. recorded and calculated over each study period.
- c) Late arrival at College will be recorded but will not be included in attendance calculations.
- d) All full-day absences from College will be included in absentee calculations and should be accompanied by a medical certificate, an explanatory communication from the student's carer or evidence that leave has been approved by the Head of Department.
- e) Any absences longer than 5 days without approval will be investigated.
- f) Student attendance will be monitored by Student Reception every 5 days, over a study period to assess student attendance using the following method:

- iv. Calculating the number of hours the student would have to be absent to fall below the attendance threshold for a semester e.g. number of study days x contact hours x 15%. (For example, a 19 week semester with 6.5 contact hours a day would equal 617.5 contact hours. 15% of this is 92 hours.)
 - v. Any period of exclusion from class will not be included in student attendance calculations. (See **Heights College Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy** points 5 and 6.)
- g) Parents/carers of students at risk of breaching Heights College's attendance requirements will be contacted by phone and follow-up email and students will be counselled and offered any necessary support when they have unexplained absences totalling 10% of any study period.
 - h) If the calculation at 3.f. indicates that the student has passed the attendance threshold for the study period, Heights College will assess the student against the provisions of Item 3.i. (below). Where the student has failed to meet the minimum attendance requirement, and Item 3.i. does not apply, the school will promptly advise the student of its intention to report the student for breach of visa condition 8202, and that he/she has 20 working days in which to access the College's internal complaints and appeals process.
 - i) The College will notify the ESOS Agency via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance as soon as practicable where:
 - i. the student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 days
 - ii. the student withdraws from the complaints and appeals process by notifying the Headmaster in writing,
 - iii. the complaints and appeals process results in a decision in favour of the College.
 - j) Students will not be reported for failing to meet the 80% threshold where:
 - i. the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances e.g., medical illness supported by a medical certificate or as per definition, below , and
 - ii. has not fallen below 70% attendance for the study period.
 - k) The method for calculating 70% attendance is the same as that outlined in 3.f. with the following change; number of study days x contact hours x 30%.
 - l) If a student is assessed as having nearly reached the threshold for 80% attendance, the Head of Primary or the Head of Teaching and Learning will assess whether a suspension of studies is in the interests of the student as per Heights College's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.
 - m) If the student does not obtain a suspension of studies under the Heights College's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy, and falls below the 70% threshold for attendance for the study period, the process for reporting the student for unsatisfactory attendance (breach of visa condition 8202) will occur as outlined in 3.h) – 3.i).

4. Definitions

- a) Compassionate or compelling circumstances - circumstances beyond the control of the student that are having an impact on the student's progress through a course. These could include:
 - i. serious illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes

- ii. bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (with evidence of a death certificate if possible)
- iii. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel that has impacted on their studies
- iv. a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (these cases should be where possible supported by police or psychologists' reports)
- v. where the College was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
- vi. inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

For other circumstances to be considered as compassionate or compelling, evidence would need to be provided to show that these were having an impact on the student's progress through a course.

- b) Expected duration – the length of time it takes to complete the course studying full-time. This is the same as the registered course duration on CRICOS.
- c) College day – any day for which the College has scheduled course contact hours.
- d) Study period – a discrete period of study within a course which cannot exceed 24 weeks. Heights College defines a "study period" for the purposes of monitoring course attendance and progress as a semester.

(Policy last updated 10 February 2018)