

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Department	Administration		
Effective Date	15th January 2010	Review Date	15th January 2011
Version	7	Implementation Date	15th January 2010
Application	Head of Administration, Senior Administration Manager– Overseas Representative Office in India, PRISMS Administrator, Head of Accounts/Finance, Accounts Officer and Student Support Officer		
Replaces	N/A		
Relevant Policies	Standard 10 of The National Code 2007		
Approved by	Campus Manager		
Administered by	Attendance Administrator		

### Policy

This policy contains requirements that apply to all students that are currently studying or formally enrolled with us at The Ashmark Institute of Australia (thereafter known as AIA).

### **In order to remain compliant with student visa conditions, what percentage of classes a student must attend?**

- 1) For a student to achieve satisfactory attendance, (he/she) needs to attend **at least 80%** of scheduled classes during a semester (or a course, if the course is shorter than a semester).
- 2) However, if, at any point during the semester (or course, if the course is shorter than a semester), a student's attendance of scheduled classes falls **below 80% but remains at or above 70%**, The Ashmark Institute of Australia (thereafter known as AIA) may choose not to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance,

#### **Scenario 1:**

- a) The student's attendance is at least 70%; and
- b) The student is making satisfactory academic course progress

#### **Scenario 2:**

The student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating that compelling or compassionate circumstances apply.

*\*Please refer to the policy - Satisfactory Course Progress on AIA's website for more information.  
(<http://www.ashmark.edu.au>)*

- 3) At any point during a semester (or a course, if the course is shorter than a semester), if a student's attendance has fallen **below 70%** and it is clear that, even if the student attends every class until the end of the study period, 70% attendance will not be reached, AIA is required to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory-attendance. Before reporting the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance, AIA issues the student with an NIR (Notification of Intention to Report) letter advising the student to appeal the decision to report within 20 working days.

*\*Please refer to the policy - "Complaints and Appeals on AIA's website for more information.  
(<http://www.ashmark.edu.au/new1/complaints.htm> )*



### **How is attendance monitored?**

1) Attendance is monitored over the entire study period (18 weeks). A **study period** is usually one semester and is approximately 18 study weeks long. However, if the course is shorter than a semester, the study period is deemed to be the number of weeks required to complete the student's designated course. During the study period, students are required to attend 20 hours of classes each week. Hundred percent attendance is calculated on the number of academic weeks in the study period multiplied by 20 hours. Attendance is not monitored on any public holidays that fall during an academic week and are not included in the attendance calculation.

2) Trainers/Assessors are required to mark attendance at the beginning of **every** session. Trainers are advised to use the symbol "/" for Present and "A" for Absent on the attendance rolls. If a student is late by more than **15 minutes** for a session, he or she will be marked absent for the **whole session**. Please be advised that **session's duration** is considered in AIA's attendance-monitoring procedure; for example, if the student misses a 1.5 hour morning session, his/her attendance records indicate that he/she missed 1.5 hours of classes. Similarly, if he/she misses a 2 hour afternoon session, his/her attendance records indicate that he/she missed 2 hours of classes.

3) At the end of each academic week, students' attendance rolls are passed to the administration staff who updates the student's attendance percentage. Please note, **at any point in time**, attendance percentages are always calculated to indicate the student's **maximum possible attendance on the last day of semester**, should the student not miss any classes from the last day on which attendance was calculated until the last day of the study period.

Hence, if student's attendance percentage at the end of Week 5 is calculated to be 93 percent, this means that, if he/she do not miss any class between the last day on which attendance was monitored and the last day of semester, his/her attendance will be 93 percent on the last day of that semester. In other words, the attendance percentage remains the same if the student continues to attend his/her classes but never increases and it always decreases if the student misses any of his/her classes.

Should you have any queries about attendance monitoring policy and procedure, please do not hesitate to contact The Ashmark Institute of Australia.

### **Additional Notes:**

1. If a student commences his/her study after a semester has started, attendance is monitored from the first day on which the student was officially enrolled in the classes.
2. If a student disappears from the session without the trainer/assessor's permission after being marked present on the attendance roll, the trainer/assessor has the right to change the student's attendance status to absent for that session.
3. A student must be **physically present in the class** during the class hours in order to be marked 'present' on the attendance roll. Also, an absence supported by a medical certificate is counted towards the student's total absences when calculating attendance.

For ESL course, if a student extends his or her enrolment in the current course, thereby getting a new CoE, the student's attendance is monitored over each of the CoEs separately, rather than



over the entire period of the student's enrolment in ESL course with AIA. In addition, 80% attendance is calculated for the period of the CoE, not for the term.

## **PROCEDURE FOR WARNING STUDENTS IN DANGER OF BREACHING STUDENT VISA CONDITIONS BECAUSE OF UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE:**

### **If I am at risk of breaching my visa conditions because of unsatisfactory attendance, will the Institute notify me?**

Yes, the Institute will issue you with a **warning letter**, in accordance with the following policy:

1) **FIRST WARNING LETTER:** If a student's attendance is **above 80 percent and below 86 percent of scheduled classes within a study period**, the student is issued a **First Warning Letter** advising the student that he/she is at risk of breaching his/her visa conditions because of unsatisfactory attendance. The letter also advises the student to make an appointment with the Institute's Student Support Officer to discuss the reasons for the absence.

The warning letter is sent to the student's Australian residential address. It is, therefore, essential that the student should notify the Institute within 7 working days whenever he/she changes his/her address.

2) **SECOND WARNING LETTER:** If a student's attendance is **below 80 percent** of scheduled classes within a study period, the student is issued a **second warning letter** advising the student that he/she is at risk of breaching his/her visa conditions because of unsatisfactory attendance. The letter also advises the student to make an appointment with the Institute's Student Support Officer to discuss the reasons for the absence and to support the student, so that he/she does not breach his/her student visa conditions because of unsatisfactory attendance. The Student Support Officer is required to access the student's academic course progress report prior to the meeting with the student.

The second warning letter is issued to the student in the same manner as the first warning letter. (please see above FIRST WARNING LETTER).

**NIR LETTER:** If, at any point during the semester (or course, if the course is shorter than a semester), a student's attendance of scheduled classes falls **below 80% but remains at or above 70%**, The Ashmark Institute of Australia (AIA) may choose not to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance,

#### **Scenario 1:**

- a) The student's attendance is at least 70%; and
- b) The student is making satisfactory academic course progress

#### **Scenario 2:**

The student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating that compelling or compassionate circumstances apply.

*\*Please refer to the policy - Satisfactory Course Progress on AIA's website for more information.  
(<http://www.ashmark.edu.au>)*

- 2) At any point during a semester (or a course, if the course is shorter than a semester), if a student's attendance has fallen **below 70%** and it is clear that, even if the student attends every class until the end of the study period, 70% attendance will not be reached, AIA is required to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory-attendance. Before reporting the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance, AIA issues the student with an NIR (Notification of Intention to Report) letter advising the student to appeal the decision to report within 20 working days (refer to the NIR letter for the exact date the letter was sent).

*\*Please refer to the policy - "Complaints and Appeals on AIA's website for more information. (<http://www.ashmark.edu.au/new1/complaints.htm> )*

### **COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS:**

1. If student undertakes an internal appeal, processing starts within 10 working days of the appeal and student's course enrolment is maintained during the processing.
- 2 (a) If internal appeal is successful, the letter of the appeals outcome is sent to the student advising him/her to continue his/her course and the student's enrolment is maintained.
- 2 (b) If internal appeal is unsuccessful, the letter of the appeals outcome is sent to the student advising him/her to make an external appeal within 10 working days.
3. If the student undertakes an external appeal, the student has to provide the proof of appeal and his or her enrolment is maintained.

### **ISSUING SECTION 20 NOTICE TO THE STUDENT:**

Section 20 is issued to the student via the PRISMS by PRISMS Administrator and sent to the student by post and student's enrolment is cancelled in the following cases:

1. If the student does not appeal against the NIR letter within 20 working days.
2. If the student does not undertake any external appeal within 10 working days from the outcome of internal appeal if internal appeal is unsuccessful.
3. If the external appeal is unsuccessful.

### **Are there any other circumstances in which I will be issued a warning letter?**

Yes, if you are absent from the Institute for **5 consecutive class days**, the Institute will issue you a warning letter advising you to contact AIA immediately to discuss the reasons for your prolonged absence. The warning letter will be issued to the student in the same manner, as outlined above in the section relating to the First Warning letter.

### **If I am absent due to illness, should I bring in a medical certificate?**

Presentation of a medical certificate will not automatically result in your attendance not being monitored during the period covered by your medical certificate. Only in **compelling or compassionate circumstances**, a medical certificate will be taken into consideration on a case by case basis.

Also, please note that **back-dated** medical certificates are not accepted. It is, therefore, important that student should have a medical certificate **at the time that he/she is unwell**.



However, an absence supported by a medical certificate is counted towards the student's total absences when calculating attendance.

**Do I have to attend classes if I have Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL) for units being taught?**

Students are advised to apply for RPL before course commencement, so that a study schedule can be planned well in advance. Students must attend all scheduled classes until and unless advised in writing from AIA that they are allowed to be absent for a unit.

Students who have been **formally granted** course credits or RPL for particular units by AIA may be exempted from attending those units when those units are being run at The Ashmark Institute of Australia. (ref. section titled *Course Credit* on how to apply for course credits).