



Blackheath & Thornburgh College

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www.btc.qld.edu.au
ABN 57 107 444 011
CRICOS No.: 00488D

Overseas Student Progress, Attendance and Course Duration 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 school 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 according to Blackheath & Thornburgh College's course assessment requirements.
- c) Students who have begun part way through a study period / semester will be assessed according to Blackheath & Thornburgh College's course assessment requirements after completing [one full study period/semester].
- d) To demonstrate satisfactory course progress, students will need to achieve at least a 'C' grade in 60% of their subjects studied in a study period for the registered course – e.g., primary/junior secondary / senior secondary in any study period / semester.
- e) If at the end of a study period a student does not achieve satisfactory course progress as described above, the Principal will formally contact the parent(s) to advise that the student is at risk of breaching the course progress requirement and that there will be a meeting with the student to develop an intervention strategy for academic improvement. This may include;
 - i. After hours tutorial support
 - ii. Subject tutorial support in class time
 - iii. Mentoring
 - iv. Change of subject selection, or reducing course load (without affecting course duration)
 - v. Counselling – time management
 - vi. Counselling -academic skills
 - vii. Counselling - personal
 - viii. other intervention strategies as deemed necessary



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- f) A copy of the student's individual strategy for academic improvement and any relevant progress reports will be forwarded to parents.
- g) The student's individual strategy for academic improvement will be monitored over the following study period by Dean of Studies and records of student response to the strategy will be kept. Parents will be kept informed of the student's academic progress while the student is receiving formal intervention.
- h) If the student does not achieve satisfactory course progress by the end of the next study period, Blackheath & Thornburgh College will advise the student in writing 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 school's internal complaints and appeals process. 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 Blackheath & Thornburgh College, he/she may contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman at no cost. Please see Blackheath & Thornburgh College's Complaints and Appeals Policy for further details.
- i) The school 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 the student withdraws from the complaints and appeals process by notifying the Principal of Blackheath & Thornburgh College in writing, or
 - ii. the complaints and appeals process results in a decision in favour of the school.

2. Completion within expected duration of study

- a. As noted in 1.a., the school 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 school 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:



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- 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 Blackheath & Thornburgh College 's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.
- d. Where the school decides to extend the duration of the student's study, the school 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 school will be recorded and will be included in attendance calculations.
- d) All absences from school 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 Principal/Head of School.
- e) Any absences longer than five (5) consecutive days without approval will be investigated.
- f) Student attendance will be monitored by Dean Studies every 2 weeks over a study period to assess student attendance using the following method:
 - i. Calculating the number of hours the student would have to be absent to fall below the attendance threshold for a study period e.g. number of study days x contact hours x 20%. [For example, a 20 week study



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period with 5 contact hours a day would equal 500 contact hours. 20% of this is 100 hours.

- ii. Attendance for any period of exclusion from class will be assessed under Blackheath & Thornburgh College's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.
 - g) Parents of students at risk of breaching Blackheath & Thornburgh College's attendance requirements will be contacted by [email / 'phone] and students will be counselled and offered any necessary support when they have absences totalling 10 % in any study period. [Schools will need to judge at what point they think intervention and counselling is necessary]
 - h) If the calculation at 3.f. indicates that the student has passed the attendance threshold for the study period, Blackheath & Thornburgh 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 school's internal complaints and appeals process
 - i) The school 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 Principal of Blackheath & Thornburgh College in writing,
 - iii. the complaints and appeals process results in a decision in favour of the school.
- [If allowing a 70% attendance threshold for compelling or compassionate circumstances under NC St 8.15, include the following:]
- j) Students will not be reported for failing to meet the 80% attendance threshold for a study period 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. the student's attendance has not fallen below 70% 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%, or number of study days x number of days per week x 30%.



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- l) If a student is assessed as having nearly reached the threshold of 70% attendance for a study period, the Principal will assess whether a suspension of studies is in the interests of the student as per Blackheath & Thornburgh College's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.
- m) If the student does not obtain a suspension of studies under the Blackheath & Thornburgh 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 death a 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 school 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) School day – any day for which the school has scheduled course contact hours.
- d) Study period - Blackheath & Thornburgh College defines a "study period" for the purposes of monitoring course attendance and progress as a semester.

Policy updated 11/12/2017

Nigel Fairbairn