



OVERSEAS STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. PURPOSE

Fintona Girls' School (the School) has the belief that regular attendance at School provides students with the greatest opportunity for maximising their learning and achieving the best possible outcome from their education. We also accept that from time to time, students are absent because of illness, necessary appointments and emergencies. Term dates are provided during the previous year and the School's annual calendar is published as early as is practical, so that families can make holiday and other arrangements during designated holiday periods.

The Victorian Government mandates all school age children must attend school, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) has an attendance rule regarding student attendance during their VCE and Overseas Student visa conditions require School's to report overseas student's unsatisfactory attendance at School.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all of the School's overseas students, their parents/legal guardian, and all school staff and any other persons supporting the School's overseas students.

3. POLICY

This policy set out the School's overseas student attendance requirements, procedures for monitoring, attendance and reporting of students who do not meet course attendance requirements and visa conditions.

The School's official attendance policy for all students has a requirement of a minimum attendance rate across all classes including Tutor Group and Assemblies of 80%. Attendance at classes is compulsory.

For overseas students, attendance under 80% of classes is considered a breach of their visa conditions. Students in jeopardy of this breach will receive a written warning from the Deputy Principal.

The School will assist overseas students through a support strategy if they are not meeting satisfactory course attendance requirements.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 ATTENDANCE

Overseas student attendance procedures are the same as the requirements for all students as detailed in the School's Attendance Policy which states;

- all students are required for roll call at 8.30am each day. Roll call will happen in both Tutor Group and Assemblies and be taken by teachers in every class during the day;
- all Assemblies, Tutor Groups and House meetings are compulsory. These begin at 8.30am each weekday.

4.2 VCE STUDENTS

A minimum 80% attendance at all scheduled lessons and activities is required to enable satisfactory completion of all VCE units at the School. The 20% allowance covers short term

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illness and other incidents which may arise during the course of the year. Students should aim for 100% attendance.

Students are required to attend all scheduled SACs and examinations.

Students are required to attend the practice examinations for unit 3/4 studies during the September school holidays.

Non-attendance should be covered by a Medical Certificate.

Only Year 12 students have leave privileges and these are explained in the Year 12 Leave Agreement. All Year 12 students utilising their leave privileges must personally sign in and out at Student Services.

4.3 ABSENCES

It is the overseas student's parents/legal guardian's responsibility to make sure all absences are explained. If a student is too ill to attend school, their parents/legal guardian must make contact with Student Services on the Senior Campus, or Junior Campus Administration on the Junior Campus prior to 8.30am.

Student Services
PH: 9880 4401
E: studentservices@fintona.vic.edu.au

Junior Campus Administration
PH: 9880 4444
E: jcadmin@fintona.vic.edu.au

If a student feels ill during school hours and is unable to attend class they must report to Student Services for treatment. If they are too ill to remain at school a parent/guardian will be contacted to collect them from Student Services. Students are required to sign out at Student Services when collected by their parents/legal guardian.

4.4 APPOINTMENTS

The School requests that appointments are made outside of school hours so class absence is minimised. From time to time the school understands that this may be difficult. Parents/legal guardians are requested to send a signed letter with the student, to Student Services to gain permission to leave school. Parents/guardians of students in all year levels, except Year 12, should sign the student out to attend an appointment. Students are requested to sign back in at Student Services or Junior Campus Administration upon their return.

4.5 MONITORING ATTENDANCE

If an overseas student is absent from school without an explanation the Student Services or Junior Campus Administrator will call the parents/legal guardian for an explanation. If they cannot obtain a suitable reason for the student absence from school, it will be marked as unexplained absence in the attendance register.

Any overseas student who has been absent for more than five consecutive days without explanation, or who is at risk of not meeting attendance requirements will be contacted by the School's Deputy Principal (or delegate) in writing before the overseas student's attendance drops below 80%.

The Deputy Principal (or delegate) in consultation with the overseas student, and their parents/legal guardian will endeavour find out why the student has been absent and discuss what

support the School is able to offer. Refer to the School's Overseas Student Welfare and Support Policy for more information.

The School will keep records of all contact, support and counselling made with the overseas student or their parents/legal guardian.

4.6 VISA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The School is required to report overseas students who do not meet course attendance requirements.

If the School assesses the overseas student is not meeting attendance requirements it will give the student (via their parents/legal guardian) written notice of its intention to report a breach of student visa conditions and that they have 20 working days in which to access the School's internal complaints and appeals process.

The School will report via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) as soon as practicable that the student has not meet course attendance requirements if one of the following occurs:

- the student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 working days;
- the student withdraws from the complaints and appeals process by notifying the School in writing; or
- the complaints and appeals process results in favour of the School's assessment.

The School may only decide not to report an overseas student for falling below 80 % attendance if the overseas student is still attending at least 70% of the scheduled course contact hours and provides genuine evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

AT PRINCIPAL LEVEL

To properly implement this policy, the Principal must ensure:

- that this policy is reviewed every two years;
- ensure the School Leadership Team implements this policy and its procedures.

AT OTHER LEVELS

To properly implement this policy, all the School's employees must ensure that they will abide by this policy and assist the Deputy Principal and School Registrar in the implementation of this policy.

6. RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

- SL01.00 Overseas Student Course Progress Policy and Procedures
- SW11.00 Overseas Student Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Overseas Student Welfare and Support Policy

7. REFERENCES

- ESOS Act (2000) – Obligations of registered providers
- ESOS National Code Standard 8: Overseas student visa requirements (Fact Sheet 14 July 2022)

8. DEFINITIONS

Compassionate or compelling circumstances – are circumstances beyond the control of the student that are having an impact on the student's progress through a course. These could include:

- serious illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
- bereavement of a close family member such as a parent or grandparent;
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel that has impacted on their studies;
- a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (these cases should be, where possible, supported by police or psychologist reports); and
- 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.

9. ACCESSIBILITY

This document is available on:

- Fintona Website>Overseas Students
- inFintona>Staff Services>Policies
- inFintona>Parent Service>Policies and Procedures