# ISP Attendance Procedure

## Purpose

To ensure that schools are proactive in identifying, notifying and assisting students who are at risk of not meeting International School Program (ISP) attendance requirements. To outline the intervention thresholds and the steps to follow where a student:

* is at risk of not meeting attendance requirements
* has breached the minimum 80% attendance requirement for a school term.

This procedure aims to ensure that DE (IED) is notified of any student that is not satisfying their attendance requirements in order to assist DE (IED) to meet reporting requirements.

This procedure outlines the roles and responsibilities of DE (IED) and schools and the steps to be followed to:

* record, calculate and monitor school attendance
* identify and notify students who are at risk of not meeting attendance requirements
* assist students who are at risk of not meeting attendance requirements
* report a student to the Commonwealth Government for breaching school attendance requirements.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the [ISP Attendance Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Attendance_Policy.docx).

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Executive Director, IED

* Decide whether or not to report student for unsatisfactory attendance to the Commonwealth Government.

### DE (IED) staff

* Report unsatisfactory attendance to the Commonwealth Government, as directed by the Executive Director, IED.
* Ensure safe and appropriate arrangements are in place for a student in homestay, in accordance with the [ISP Accommodation and Welfare Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Accommodation_and_Welfare_Policy.docx) where a student’s enrolment is cancelled.
* Provide advice and support to school principal and school staff implementing this procedure, such as with intervention strategies.

### School staff

* Inform students and their parents about school attendance requirements, through orientation, including:
	+ school start and finish times
	+ late arrivals process
	+ school absence phone number and notification procedure
	+ serious illness, injury or critical incident process
	+ student visa conditions relating to attendance.
* Regularly monitor attendance and liaise with relevant school staff.
* Develop and implement intervention strategies to assist students who are at risk of not meeting school attendance requirements.
* Liaise with parent, and if appropriate, approved relative or homestay provider.
* Escalate issues and concerns to school principal.
* Maintain accurate and up to date records (for example, adding a record of contact in CASES21 for each contact with student).
* Maintain accurate and up to date records in VISIT.

### School principal (or delegate)

* Appoint sufficient and suitably qualified staff (school staff), such as an International Student Coordinator (ISC), to monitor course progress and implement appropriate early intervention strategies.
* Reinforce school processes [ISP Attendance Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Attendance_Policy.docx), and DE (IED) terms and conditions with the student and their parents highlighting the consequences for non-compliance.
* Issue compliance contracts to students and parents.
* Inform DE (IED) staff (i.e. school support officer) and homestay provider (if applicable) regarding student attendance issues.
* Escalate unsatisfactory attendance to the Executive Director, IED, (through DE (IED) staff) if students are at risk of not achieving satisfactory attendance.
* Inform (and provide supporting evidence) DE (IED) staff if the student has achieved unsatisfactory attendance.

## Process

### Monitoring attendance and implementing intervention strategies

**School staff**

1. Inform students of the course attendance requirements as outlined in the [ISP Attendance Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Attendance_Policy.docx).
2. Inform students how their attendance will be calculated (including highlighting to them that some approved absences, such as absences due to illness, are still counted as an absence for attendance calculation purposes).
3. Record student attendance as detailed in the [PAL - Attendance Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/policy)
4. Calculate student attendance percentages using CASES21.
5. Please refer to the [CASES21 [Attendance and Absence Recording Guide](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/website/PAL/attendance-and-absence-recording-guide.docx)](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/website/PAL/attendance-and-absence-recording-guide.docx) for further information on what counts towards a student absence (PLEASE NOTE: most school-approved absences – such as absences due to illness – are counted as an absence in CASES21, including for international students).
6. Review student attendance records regularly, including liaising with class teachers during term as necessary.
7. Identify, investigate and resolve unexplained absences by talking to student, their parent, or homestay provider, as required.
8. Identify patterns of absence for example, regular late arrivals, early departures and/or absences from a particular class, absences for three or more consecutive days.
9. ***At any time*** implement appropriate strategies to support student attendance at school. These may include:
	* counselling student to determine reason for absence and providing support (depending on the circumstances, suggest a temporary suspension of enrolment)
	* engaging the parent or homestay provider
	* re-engagement program for the student
	* support group for attendance
	* individualised attendance improvement plan.
10. Where there are unapproved absences, contact the student and parent, and if appropriate, homestay provider to discuss the reasons for student’s absence.
11. Where the student is, or is likely to be, absent for an extended period of time due to an illness, injury or other serious event, consider whether a temporary suspension of studies on compassionate or compelling grounds is appropriate. Please refer to the [ISP Department Initiated Suspension and Cancellation Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Department_Initiated_Suspension_and_Cancellation_Policy.docx) for further information.
12. Assist the student to complete an [Application for a Temporary Suspension of Enrolment](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Temporary_Enrolment_Suspension_Application.docx) form, ensuring that appropriate evidence (for example, a medical certificate) is attached.
	* The period of the temporary suspension will **not** be included in attendance monitoring calculations.
13. ***‘Early intervention’ – if attendance falls to 90%*** in the term (generally where a student is absent five full days, or equivalent, in any school term. If school staff form a concern that the student requires early intervention this can be initiated earlier):
	* inform the student and their parent, and if appropriate, homestay provider that they must attend a meeting and bring any evidence supporting the reasons for absence (for example, a medical certificate). Schools must complete the [ISP Course Progress, Attendance, and Behaviour – meeting template](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Course_Progress_and_Attendance_Meeting_Template.docx) for these meetings. The ISC and/or school year level coordinator should host this meeting
	* discuss student’s reasons for absence at the meeting, referring to the [ISP Attendance Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Attendance_Policy.docx) and potential consequences for non-compliance (for example, student may be reported to the Commonwealth Government and the student’s visa may be cancelled)
	* develop and implement a school intervention strategy collaboratively with the student to assist with the improvement of their school attendance; this document should be translated, if necessary
	* record the agreed intervention strategy, any supporting evidence provided by the student, and details of the meeting in the student file in accordance to the [ISP Record Keeping Procedural Guidelines](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Record_Keeping_Procedural_Guidelines.docx)
	* continue to monitor student attendance.
14. Escalate to school principal when attendance falls to 85% or below.

**School principal**

1. **ACTIVE DE (IED) INVOLVEMENT *– ‘At-risk’ – if attendance falls to 85%*** in the term (generally where a student is absent for 7.5 days, or equivalent, in any school term) or if the student is ***absent for five consecutive days without approval***:
	* meet with student and their parent (over the phone if the parent is overseas), and if appropriate, homestay provider, to discuss student’s reasons for deteriorating attendance, and to reinforce the [ISP Attendance Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Attendance_Policy.docx) and potential consequences for non-compliance (for example, student may be reported to the Commonwealth government and student’s visa may be cancelled)
	* Issue a Compliance Contract (please use the [ISP Compliance Contract Template](https://study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Compliance_Contract_Template.docx)) and develop and implement an intervention strategy to assist the student, outlining what actions the student needs to take to improve by the end of the compliance contract review date; this document should be translated, if necessary
	* record the compliance contract and supporting evidence in the school’s student file
	* **inform DE (IED) staff** such as a School Support Officer (or email international.school.support@education.vic.gov.au) who, if required, will provide assistance so that appropriate intervention strategies are in place to support the student. The email to DE (IED) staff must include the evidence of all support provided to the student to date, including the compliance contract and documented intervention strategies.
2. ***If attendance falls below 80%*** in the school term (generally where student is absent for 10 full days, or equivalent, in any school term):
	* notify the Executive Director, IED by sending an email to DE (IED) staff such as your nominated School Support Officer (or email international.school.support@education.vic.gov.au), including:
		+ a list of all relevant documents, in chronological order, in the body of email – for example, school report/s, student file records of contact, meeting notes, evidence of intervention strategies, compliance contracts, evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances (please see the [ISP Course Progress, Attendance and Behaviour - checklist template](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Course_Progress_Attendance_and_Behaviour_Checklist_Template.docx) for the evidence required to be maintained by schools). Evidence provided to DE (IED) previously (for example, when the student entered the compliance contract) is not required to be resupplied in this email, but may be included for completeness
		+ confirmation of attendance percentage as at the date the email is sent
		+ assurance the school has complied with this procedure.
	* email any new, relevant, and credible information to DE (IED) staff (or email international.school.support@education.vic.gov.au ), if required.
	* continue to monitor and provide support to the student whilst DE (IED) initiates the reporting process.

**DE (IED) staff**

1. **ACTIVE DE (IED) INVOLVEMENT*:*** through attendance data monitoring**DE (IED) staff will provide** **ongoing monitoring and, if required, support** to school staff throughout the school term. This will include regular reviews of the attendance dashboard to see if any new students are at risk of unsatisfactory attendance. DE (IED) will liaise with schools so that appropriate intervention strategies are in place to support the student.
* As part of the attendance data monitoring,DE (IED) staff will mark student “at risk” in VISIT when student’s attendance falls below 85%.

### Reporting unsatisfactory attendance

#### DE (IED) staff

1. Assess and compile information provided by schools (or identified by DE (IED)).
2. Consult with the Principal (or delegate), as required.
3. If evidence provided by the Principal (or delegate) is sufficient, prepare a recommendation to the Executive Director, IED.

#### Executive Director, IED

1. Initiate process to cancel the student’s enrolment, issue a Notice of Intention to Report letter to the student and parent for cancellation of the student’s enrolment. This letter includes a statement of findings and reasons for the decision, gives notice of intention to report the decision to the Commonwealth Government, information about their right to appeal, and the need to seek advice from DHA on the potential impact of cancellation of enrolment on the student’s visa. Inform Principal (or delegate), school staff and other relevant DE (IED) staff.

#### Parent and student

1. Decide whether to appeal.

#### Executive Director, IED

1. If an appeal is lodged, adhere to the [ISP Complaints and Appeals Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/ISP_Complaints_and_Appeals_Policy.pdf) (which includes assessment of appeals submission on compassionate or compelling circumstances and attendance above 70%). The cancellation of enrolment only takes effect when one of the following conditions is met:
	1. the student’s health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk
	2. the student does not appeal and the internal appeals period lapses (20 working days from the date of issue of the Notice of Intention to Report letter)
	3. the student notifies DE (IED) that they have withdrawn their appeal, in writing, or
	4. the internal appeal is unsuccessful and the external appeal period ceases.
2. As supported by DE (IED) staff, lodge notification in PRISMS as soon as possible (and no longer than 14 days) that the student’s enrolment is cancelled.

#### DE (IED) staff

1. Cancel the student’s enrolment records in VISIT.
2. Ask the student/parent to complete the [ISP Refund Request Form](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/Refund-Request-Form.pdf), if eligible for a refund.
3. Review and assess the refund request in line with the [ISP Refund Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Refund_Policy.docx).

#### School staff

1. Ensure the student is appropriately accommodated following cancellation and to facilitate the student’s departure, if the student is living in a homestay, consistent with the [ISP Homestay Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Homestay_Policy.docx).
2. Liaise with DE (IED) staff, if necessary.

#### DE (IED) staff

1. Continue to check the suitability of care arrangements until the student has approved welfare arrangements in place, or the student leaves Australia.
2. Liaise with school staff to provide advice.

**Executive Director, IED**

1. If student’s unsatisfactory attendance is reported but their visa is not cancelled, discuss situation with the school principal and ensure appropriate arrangements are in place until the student’s visa is cancelled.

## Legislation

* *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cth)
* *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Student 2018* (Cth)
* *Migration Regulations 1994* (Cth)

## Related Documents

* [ISP Course Progress, Attendance and Behaviour - checklist template](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Course_Progress_Attendance_and_Behaviour_Checklist_Template.docx)
* [ISP Course Progress, Attendance, and Behaviour – meeting template](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Course_Progress_and_Attendance_Meeting_Template.docx)
* [ISP Compliance Contract Template](https://study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Compliance_Contract_Template.docx)
* [ISP Attendance Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Attendance_Policy.docx)
* [ISP Refund Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Refund_Policy.docx)
* [ISP Homestay Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Homestay_Policy.docx)
* [ISP Complaints and Appeals Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/ISP_Complaints_and_Appeals_Policy.pdf)
* [ISP Student-Initiated Deferrals, Suspensions and Cancellations Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Student_Initiated_Deferral_Suspension_and_Cancellation_Policy.docx)
* [ISP Department-Initiated Suspension and Cancellation Policy](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Department_Initiated_Suspension_and_Cancellation_Policy.docx)
* [ISP Record Keeping Procedural Guidelines](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Record_Keeping_Procedural_Guidelines.docx)
* [ISP Community Language School Policy](https://study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_CLS_Policy.docx)
* [Withdrawal Form](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/Withdrawal-Application-Form.pdf)
* [ISP Refund Request Form](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/Refund-Request-Form.pdf)
* [Application for Temporary Suspension of Enrolment form](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Temporary_Enrolment_Suspension_Application.docx)
* [PAL - Attendance Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/policy)
* [PAL - Exemption from School Attendance and Enrolment](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/exemption-school-attendance-and-enrolment/policy) Policy [PAL - Re-engagement Programs](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/re-engagement-programs/policy)
* [School Enrolment Guidelines](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/participation/nonenrolmentguide.pdf)
* [CASES 21 Portal](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-administration-systems/resources)
* [Complaints and Appeals Process Guide](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/Complaints-Appeals-Process.pdf)
* [ISP Department Initiated Suspension and Cancellation Procedure](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Department_Initiated_Suspension_and_Cancellation_Procedure.docx)
* [ISP Student-Initiated Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Procedure](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Student_Initiated_Deferral_Suspension_and_Cancellation_Procedure.docx)

## Definitions

* **Compassionate circumstances** refers to circumstances that are not in the student’s control or created by the student and adversely impact on student welfare or course progress (for example, illness, bereavement or traumatic events may qualify).
* **Compelling circumstances** are circumstances which in the opinion of DE (IED) are in the student’s best interests.
* **CASES21** is an online platform used by all Victorian government schools to record and manage student data (including attendance data). Please refer to Appendix 1 in the [ISP Record Keeping Procedural Guidelines](https://www.study.vic.gov.au/Shared%20Documents/en/School_Toolkit/ISP_Record_Keeping_Procedural_Guidelines.docx) for further information.
* **Parent** refers to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of an international student.
* **International students (students)** for the purpose of this document are defined as students participating in the ISP who hold a subclass 500 Student – Schools sector visa.
* **Scheduled contact hours** refers to course hours that the student has been scheduled to attend, which may or may not equate to the total school hours. For example, if a school has 6 periods in a day but the student only has 4 periods of course contact per day then the student will have attended all scheduled course hours if they attend the 4 periods (the 2 remaining school periods will not count towards the student’s absences).

## Procedure Maintenance Officer

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## Authorised

Executive Director, International Education Division

**Date of authorisation**: 29/11/2019

**Review frequency**: This procedure will be reviewed at minimum every 24 months or when any changes arise impacting its currency, including legislative or regulation change.

## Appendix 1 – Flowchart of ISP Attendance procedure (including reporting)



 