# Educational Resource: Attendance

## FAQs

## *\*sourced from AEI National Code Implementation Guide*

### Monitoring and calculating attendance

**Q Is attendance calculated term by term or each semester?**

A Attendance is calculated each term and is based on a countdown model through Cases21. At the beginning of each new term, the student’s attendance reverts back to 100% until an absence is recorded.

**Q When do schools provide support to students for non-attendance at school?**

A Schools should implement early intervention strategies when the student’s attendance falls below 90% (generally 5 days of absences in a standard school term) and final intervention strategies, formalised through a compliance contract (DET (IED) has a template which schools can use located on the ISP School Toolkit) when the student’s attendance falls below 85% for the term.

**Q When is a student ‘at-risk’ of unsatisfactory attendance?**

A When a student has been absent for more than 5 consecutive days without approval, or

 the student’s attendance for the term falls before 85% (generally 7.5 days of absences in a standard school term).

**Q How do schools calculate attendance where absences are supported by medical certificates?**

A An absence supported by a medical certificate is counted towards the student’s total absences when calculating attendance. This is consistent with current Department policy for domestic students.

**Q Schools can take compassionate or compelling circumstances into account for not reporting students whose attendance falls to between 70 and 80 per cent. Doesn’t illness count?**

A DET (IED) is responsible for assessing if compassionate or compelling circumstances actually exist before reporting a student for unsatisfactory attendance. Schools do not decide whether a student should or should not be reported to DHA for unsatisfactory attendance. Schools must provide DET (IED) with evidence of support provided to the student when the student’s attendance reaches 85 per cent and 80 per cent, as described in the ISP Attendance Policy.

 Schools are asked to liaise with DET (IED) about students at risk of not meeting attendance requirements. Where there is evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances (e.g. recurring illness), DET (IED) will work with schools to ensure a suitable and just outcome is arranged for the student that complies with ESOS requirements.

Where a student’s attendance falls below 70 per cent, DET (IED) has no option but to report the student to DHA. Following this, evidence of compelling circumstances, such as medical certificates, may be separately considered by DHA when deciding the outcome of the student visa.

## CASE STUDY

*Nylai has been enrolled in Sunny Primary School and her attendance has fallen to 90 per cent at week six of the term. The school implements appropriate early stage intervention strategies to rectify the non-attendance. Nylai’s attendance then drops to 85 per cent. The school then issues the compliance contract which includes additional intervention strategies to support Nylai including a recommendation for Nylai to temporarily suspend their enrolment if they believe their attendance is likely to drop below 80 per cent. The school sends the compliance contract and evidence of intervention strategies implemented to DET (IED) to assist DET (IED) to fulfil its responsibility to monitor and identify students who are at-risk of unsatisfactory attendance. Nylai then falls ill and is expected to miss a week of school; this would result in the student’s attendance falling below 80 per cent which would result in the student breaching their visa conditions. The student, with the school’s help, decides to temporarily suspend their enrolment for a week in order to recover from the illness; this is achieved by completing the relevant form and sending to DET (IED) who assess and approve the application.*

*The student returns to school after the week of their enrolment being temporarily suspended and completes the remainder of the school term without any further absences; the student’s attendance remains above 80 per cent and avoids DET (IED) having to issue a Notice of Intention to report for achieving unsatisfactory attendance.*

*The student’s attendance reverts back to 100 per cent at the start of the next school term.*