

## POL-TRA-07 Overseas Student Course Progress, Completion and Attendance Policy

### GOVERNANCE

National Code 2018 – Standard 8: Overseas Student Visa Requirements

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Ironwood Institute has a structured process in place to track the performance of each student throughout the course. This procedure describes how Ironwood Institute will:

- Systematically monitor, record, and assess the course progression of each student for each unit of the course they are enrolled in.
- Be proactive in notifying, supporting, and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet course progression requirements.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff of Ironwood Institute that is responsible for recording, monitoring, and reporting student academic progress of overseas students. The CEO is responsible for implementing this and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its implications and implement its requirements

### DEFINITIONS

**Course** – Program of study for the attainment of a testamur or certificate.

**Course Progression/Progress** – The measure of advancement through academic merit or skill-based competencies towards the completion of a course as per unit/module guidelines.

**At Risk** – An 'At Risk' student is a student who for any reason, is considered as not, or potentially not, meeting course progression requirements. For instance, when a student fails a pre-requisite unit of competency or does not achieve satisfactory results or competence in 50% or more units in a study period.

**Compassionate or compelling** – Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and they have an impact on the student's capacity and/or ability to progress through a course. These could include:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel and this has impacted their studies
- a traumatic experience which could include but is not limited to: o involvement in or witnessing of an accident or o a crime committed against the student or o the student has been a witness to a crime and this has impacted the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)

**Intervention Strategy** – Systematic plan of action consciously adapted to address and reduce the causes of academic failure to complete studies within the course duration

**Intervention Management Tool** – A method, tool or process that allows the following processes:

- Recording of submission of assessment tasks and the grade awarded,
- Identifies if the student is above or below the designated 'At Risk' level, Recording of communication with student

**Date of result** – The date in which the trainer/assessor provides the final results of a unit of competency to the Administration staff.

**Learning Contract** – A contract signed between overseas student and Ironwood Institute for the provision of delivering a course

**Satisfactory course progress** – Attending scheduled classes and successfully completing all assessments and obtaining a Competency (C) in all the units in the prescribed study period.

**Unsatisfactory course progress** – Where the student is deemed Not Yet Competent (NYC) in 50% or more of the units attempted in any study period

**VET** – Vocational Education and Training

**SSO** – Student Support Officer(s)

**Unit** – Unit of Competency

**Study Period** – A study period is the regular scheduled term of study between study breaks, ten to twelve weeks duration

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Ironwood Institute recognizes the significance of monitoring course progress and attendance which is vital for achieving qualification outcomes for the student and to complete the course within the duration of CoE.

Ironwood Institute achieve this by:

1. Monitoring the student's course progress and attendance according to the requirements of VET sector.

Ironwood Institute will systematically monitor, record, and assess the course progress and attendance of each student for each unit of the course for which the student is enrolled within compulsory study period (10 -12 weeks term).

2. Identifying and offer support to those at risk of not meeting course progress or attendance requirements

Ironwood Institute engages proactive approach in notifying students who are at risk of failing to meet course progress requirements. The intent of contacting these students is to find out why the students are not achieving competency and to see what support Ironwood Institute may be able to offer the student.

Ironwood Institute will provide early counselling, student support and implement effective intervention strategy to assist students who are at risk of failing to meet course progress requirements.

## **Attendance**

The attendance of each student enrolled with the Ironwood will be monitored closely to ensure there is full-time study activity. However, the Course Progress, Completion and Attendance Policy does not require Ironwood to report unsatisfactory attendance. However, as part of our academic support and monitoring, our internal policy is that students should attend all scheduled classes.

Ironwood Institute record attendance for all scheduled classes delivered by the Ironwood Institute trainers and assessors. These attendance records are also helpful to determine last point of contact with students.

### **Course Completion Within the Expected Duration of Study**

Ironwood Institute is required to manage student's course progress and workload to ensure they complete within the specified timeframe.

### **Monitoring and Tracking Course Progress and Completion**

- a) Ironwood maintains and tracks academic progress via the Cumulative Result Sheets, which in turn allows the Director of Academics to monitor any resulting against the proposed course duration and any students that are deemed to be at risk of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress. This can also be used to monitor resulting against the Student Management System.
- b) Each course is setup within the Student Management System, with the required units, timeframes, delivery methods and sessions for delivery.
- c) Students are then enrolled into the course and a timetable is printed and provided to the student prior to enrolment, at enrolment and on their student portal. This includes all term breaks, and each term is a study period.
- d) The timetable will be provided to the student on their orientation day and the timetables are also available on the campus timetable board.
  - The cumulative result sheets for each study period are then monitored to ensure that students are meeting the minimum 50% competency requirement and are achieving satisfactory academic course progress.
  - In any week of any unit, Ironwood Institute trainers and assessors send out communications by email to all students who are at risk of not meeting course progress. Assessors update the attendance and resulting spreadsheet of any communication.
  - This process enables Ironwood Institute to identify any students at risk of not completing within the expected duration on their CoE, and promptly reminds them to hand in assessments and attend classes, helping to minimise any adverse effects to the student.
  - At the immediate end of unit, the process is repeated and students who are failing to achieve a minimum of 50% competency are sent a warning letter with an intervention strategy. The warning letter notifies the student a face-to-face meeting with the Student Support Officer to plan an effective intervention strategy for the student to progress to a positive academic outcome that enables the student to complete their studies.
  - Every student that receives a warning letter is recorded on a register and the Student Support Officer monitors their progress in a systematic way.
  - Students who fail to achieve satisfactory academic progress in two consecutive study periods after the implementation of intervention strategy will be issued with a notice of intention to report letter as soon as practicable, notifying them of:
    - their right to access our complaints and appeals process, in accordance with Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals), within 20 working days.

### **Intervention strategy**

The Intervention Strategy is used for students who are at risk of not achieving competency in a minimum of 50% of the units in a study term. Students may be accompanied by a support person at this face-to-face meeting.

The intervention strategy must be explained to the student by the Student Support Office. Once finalised all participants, including the student must sign the intervention strategy, and copy of it is placed in the student's file. At the time of finalising of intervention strategy, the student will be further advised that unless student adheres to its terms and improves course progress during the current study period, he/she may be at risk of

breach of student visa condition leading to reporting him/her which may result in cancellation of the student visa.

A record of all intervention measures implemented, and all relevant documentation will be kept in the student's file. The Student Support Office will continue to monitor the course progress of the student following an intervention strategy. Ironwood Institute's student counselling, student support services and intervention are free of cost to the student. However, any external support services may or may not have fees and it's the students' responsibility to confirm before availing external service.

***Some of the strategies to assist students to achieve satisfactory course progress:***

- a) Academic skills support: Additional Academic skills support provided by the trainer to the student at-risk. The number and timing of sessions will be determined by the Director of Academics in consultation with the trainer as per the student need.
- b) Reassessment. Student will be given the opportunity for reassessment if he or she is not satisfied with the assessment outcome.
- c) Increased monitoring. Director of Academics in consultation with the trainer as per the student need will closely monitor the course progress of identified students on a weekly basis.
- d) Personal counselling. Students with non-academic issues will be referred to qualified counsellor for assistance. They will be offered help and advice on accommodation, relationships, financial, course and personal advice as needed.
- e) A reduction in course load. Student who could not cope up with the course load be offered a reduction in course load. If course load is reduced the student may need to 'catch up' by studying subjects in a non-compulsory study period OR by overloading in some compulsory study periods to compensate for those periods in which the course load was reduced to complete the course within the duration of study
- f) Study during term break. Student may be allowed to study during term break. Besides, such action must be in the best interest of the student regarding successful completion of the course as per CoE/timetable. Study during term break may be granted under the following circumstances:
  - To attend literacy classes to improve communication (both written and verbal).
  - To attend extra classes to cope up with course load and catch up with the timetable.
  - Sickness more than a week – Doctors certificate may be required.
  - For pregnancy.
  - Compelling circumstances; and
  - Unsatisfactory course progress

**Compassionate or compelling circumstances**

Circumstances that are generally beyond the control of the overseas student and which have an impact upon the overseas student's course progress or wellbeing could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
- a traumatic experience, which could include:
  - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
  - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)
- Where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or the overseas student has failed a prerequisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol.

Ironwood Institute will use their professional judgement to assess each case on its individual merits. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, Ironwood Institute would require documentary evidence to support the claim and will keep copies of these documents in the student's file.

## Appeals

A student can appeal the Ironwood Institute's decision to report on the following grounds:

- Ironwood's failure to record or calculate a student's assessments accurately,
- Compassionate or compelling circumstances, or
- An Intervention Strategy was not implemented according to this policy and procedure document

If the internal appeal process is completed and results in a decision that support Ironwood Institute, then student is advised in writing to seek external appeal within 20 working days. Student may institute external appeal process with Commonwealth ombudsman <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/overseas-students>. Please refer to Ironwood Institute's complaints and appeals policy for complete information.

## Extension to Course Duration

Ironwood Institute will only extend the duration of the student's study where the student is assessed as not being able to complete the course within the expected duration, as the result of:

- Compassionate or compelling circumstances as assessed based on demonstrable evidence, or.
- Implementing or being in the process of implementing, an Intervention Strategy for students who are at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress, or.
- Approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted in accordance with Standard 9 (see Deferral Suspension Cancellation Policy)
- All Intervention Strategies or Extensions will be assessed individually, considering the circumstances of the student.

If an extension to the duration of the student's enrolment is granted, Ironwood Institute will advise the student in writing of this decision.

## Publishing and dissemination of course progress monitoring

Course progress information will be published in all student information so that students and/or future students will be notified of:

- The requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress
- The process for assessing satisfactory course progress
- The intervention strategies that will be implemented for students at risk of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress
- The process for determining the point at which the student has failed to meet satisfactory course progress
- Procedure for notifying students that they have failed to meet satisfactory course progress requirements

Ironwood Institute will also make this policy and intervention strategy readily available to staff and will instruct trainers and student service staff appropriately.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

CEO/Delegate – for approval authority

Deputy Director – Development/Review

Trainer and Assessor – Monitoring and Evaluation, including:

- Reminding students of their requirement to maintain satisfactory academic progress
- informing students of the availability of counselling and support services should they be experiencing study and/or personal problems; and to
- informing students that further action will be taken should they make unsatisfactory academic progress

The Training Coordinator – for monitoring the progress of the students and filling in the appropriate cumulative result sheet. As soon as the Training Coordinator becomes aware of any student who fails to meet the intervention strategy the trainer and assessor must inform the Training Coordinator refers the student to the Student Support Officer to trigger the communications.

Student Support Officer – for correspondence which is sent to the student and the trainer and assessor, for the intervention meeting with students at risk, and in conjunction with the management team, for final decisions about students at risk and those who have been deemed to have made unsatisfactory academic progress.