

International Student - Academics and Attendance Policy

[ESOS Act - National Code Standard 8]

- All of Brighton Grammar School's policies are intended to be up to date and be consistent with all relevant laws.
- Employees are expected to comply with all applicable policies.
- Various parts of the policies require managers and staff to exercise discretion, and the policies are not intended to be applied in a legalistic or prescriptive manner.
- These policies may be varied by Brighton Grammar School from time to time, at its absolute discretion.
- Brighton Grammar School is fully committed to the protection of children and young people during all School activities and environments both within and outside of School hours.
- This is a whole of school policy and there may, from time to time, be variations in different parts of the School. In such circumstances, advice will be issued by the relevant Head of School.

Introduction

The Education Services for Overseas Student (ESOS) Act sets out the legal framework governing delivery of education to overseas students studying in Australia on a Student Visa. Within the ESOS legislative framework are the standards to ensure quality with which Brighton Grammar School (BGS) must comply in order to retain registration as an educational provider for International Students – the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018).

This Policy outlines the principles and approach for international students, in line with Standard 8:

- Standard 8: Overseas student visa requirements. Supporting overseas students to complete their course within the required duration and fulfil their visa requirements for course attendance and course progress.

Purpose

Brighton Grammar School will ensure that all students make satisfactory progress in their course where applicable and meet required attendance levels to satisfy the conditions of their visa. Brighton Grammar School will:

- Monitor overseas students' course progress and attendance according to the requirements of their sector and to ensure that students are in position to complete the course within the expected time frame and within their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).
- Identify and offer support to those at risk of not meeting course progress or attendance requirements.
- Only extend the duration of an overseas student's enrolment in certain circumstances, and advise them of potential impacts on their student visa.
- Only deliver online learning in accordance with the online learning requirements for their sector or under direction from the Department of Education Victoria.

- Set out clear guidance on recognition of course credit.

Definition

Study Period means A discrete period of study within a course, namely term, semester, trimester, short course of similar or lesser duration, or as otherwise defined by the registered provider as long as that period does not exceed six months. In the case of Brighton Grammar School this means Semester.

Student means an overseas student (or intending overseas student) as the context requires.

Contact hours The hours for which Students enrolled in the course are scheduled to attend classes, course-related information sessions, supervised study sessions, mandatory and supervised work-based training and examinations.

Course Duration and Location

Students undertake studies in appropriate year levels suitable to their age group. The school program is divided into 4 terms; terms 1 and 2 represent Semester 1 and terms 3 and 4 represent Semester 2. Each year level is completed over the course of a calendar year, taking 40 weeks with approximately 10 weeks per term and approximately 34.5 Contact Hours per week.

Progression through each year level in the Junior School (Prep to Year 6) and lower year levels in Secondary School (Years 7 to 9) is usually automatic, however progression through some Secondary School subjects may be dependent on academic achievement in the relative subject in previous year.

Brighton Grammar School does not normally offer online or distance education unless exceptional circumstances require it. Redirecting any part of a Primary or Secondary School course to an online or remote format will only be considered in consultation with and with direction from the Victorian Department of Education and/or Independent Schools Victoria.

All programs studied within the curriculum framework are only offered on campus at Brighton Grammar School in Brighton, Victoria. However, Outdoor Education, school camps and other co-curricular activities often take place offsite at various and more appropriate locations.

In the event that a student wishes to undertake a subject not on offer at Brighton Grammar School, opportunities to study this elsewhere may be explored. Students must discuss this with the Head of House or Director of Students, as applicable.

Upon enrolment, the Compliance Coordinator will create the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) in PRISMs. The maximum period that the enrolment will be granted for is 5 years however students may receive additional CoE's in order to complete studies if they have not completed their course (Junior School or Secondary School) within this time frame.

Attendance Requirements and Monitoring

International Students must attend a minimum of 85% on campus studies per Study Period in order to meet visa requirements. Boys who are absent from more than 20% of School may be in breach of visa conditions. The school will work to assist the student and family proactively to address any non-attendance, however failure to attend may result in reporting a breach.

In accordance with ESOS Act – National Code 8.6.2 & 8.6.3 the Schools method for calculating and recording minimum attendance is as follows:

- At the start of each year (prior to the start of the academic year) the Schools timetabling software (Edval) is populated with every class a student is required to attend. This sets the base number of days/ classes a student can attend to achieve 100% attendance.
- At the beginning of each class, attendance is taken by the relevant teacher and marked in the Student Information System (Synergetic or through API).
 - Synergetic reporting calculates the number of days attended vs the total number of days possible to produce a minimum %
 - Attendance % (Study Period) = $(\text{Attended} \div \text{Scheduled}) \times 100$
 - **Scheduled** = total timetabled classes/contact hours for the Study Period (from Edval)
 - **Attended** = total classes/contact hours marked "present" in Synergetic

It should also be noted that the School has a Student Attendance Policy that applies to all students, including International Students.

All attendances are continually monitored and reviewed by the House Tutor, Head of House and Director of Students (Deputy Head of Junior School) to ensure that all students are in a position where they will meet the course requirements within the set timeframes and as specified on their CoE. Note, in accordance with National Code Standard 8.2, The expected duration of study specified in the overseas student's CoE must not exceed the CRICOS registered duration.

Arriving late or leaving early

The school understands that from time to time there may be situations where a student arrives late at school or needs to leave early. Proactive communication from parents advising the school of the reasons must be undertaken. All late arrivals and early departures will be recorded against the student records in the school's database.

Absence from school due to holidays

The school does not support absence due to family holidays during term time and requests that all arrangements made to holiday be within designated school breaks. If an exemption to not attend due to a family holiday is required the parent must contact the Director of Students (Deputy Head of Junior School) via the Head of House in writing, to formally request the exemption and detail the reason behind the request.

The Director of Students (Deputy Head of Junior School) will assess the situation and contact the family by phone to further explore the reasoning and decide whether to grant the approval. Students studying VCE subjects will not be granted extension of absence during term time under any circumstances other than those defined in the 'Compassionate and Compelling' guidelines.

Short term absence from school due to illness

Absence due to illness requires proactive communication from the primary carer to the school. Return to school should be accompanied by a medical certificate. Students who have been recorded as unexplained absences of more than 5 consecutive days will be contacted by the School and the situation immediately addressed with the parent or carer. Support and strategies whether medical, psychological or academic will be implemented where necessary.

Long term absence from school

Unless the school has deemed *Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances*, each student must physically attend school each day and, each class, to have their presence in class recorded. Attendance will be checked each day in each class and recorded in the school's database.

Compassionate and Compelling circumstances may include:

- Medical illness or injury to a student or a student's immediate family member that requires hospitalisation and/or impairs a student's ability to engage with their studies.
- This includes physical injury or serious illness, and episodes of mental illness or cognitive function impairment.
- Bereavement, as a result of the death of an immediate family member, close friend, partner or classmate.
- An adverse experience that has impacted on the student's physical or mental wellbeing, including but not limited to witnessing a serious accident, or being the victim of a serious crime.
- Instances where the student is unable, through no fault of their own, to participate in the learning experience, and for which no additional learning opportunity can be provided to make-up for the loss of learning.
- Instances where the student is unexpectedly required to care for a close family member.

Where possible the student should confirm the reason for non-attendance due to any of the above as soon as practicable.

Intervention strategies

The School will endeavour to work with the student and family to put immediate steps in place to support the student. The Director of Students and Head of House will review learning requirements and attendance where possible to suit the individual situation. Where an alternate learning structure, can be successfully implemented the school will work with the student to ensure both learning and attendance are not compromised. The student may be considered and recorded as attended if agreed upon structures are met and if once daily (minimum) communication with the Head of House is undertaken and all work is submitted within the timeframes agreed upon.

The Director of Students/Deputy Head of Junior School (SS/JS) will regularly review and ensure the School's database correctly reflects the attendance of the student learning under these circumstances and will work with the MIS team to adjust electronic records where needed. Under exceptional circumstances, manual records may be maintained which can then be uploaded to the student's profile in the database. These reviews will flag any student at risk of failing to meet satisfactory attendance levels.

Daily non-attendances that have not been proactively communicated by the parent or guardian are contacted by phone or text message by the school before midday of the non-attendance day in order to establish valid reasons for absence and offer support where needed.

Any concerns regarding continued regular non-attendance are addressed directly with the student and parent/guardian and support services put in place immediately to address the concern. This may be extra academic support or counselling by the school psychologist.

In accordance with Standard 8.16-8.17 The school cannot generally offer any extension to a course end date. However, if a student is identified as at risk of not finishing the course in the set timeframe due to *Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances* and all intervention strategies have not been successfully implemented or an approved deferral or suspension of the overseas student's enrolment has occurred under Standard 9 (Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment) the Director of Students (Deputy Head of Junior School) and relevant Head of House will meet with the family and discuss further appropriate action. This may include the offer to extend studies, in which case the school will formalise the requirement via a formal letter of extension. This letter will support the family and advise them to seek advice on visa extensions including the need to obtain a new visa (if required) from the Department of Immigration.

The school will provide opportunities for rectification where it is believed that the concerns can be resolved and the student can maintain attendance in the future. All situations will be assessed based on the individual circumstance surrounding non-attendance, the student's willingness to be proactive and open in communication, past attendance history and behaviours, and the students' academic ability to be able to catch

up for any time and learning lost. The school will engage with both the student and family openly and honestly to ensure the student is aware of obligations and requirements, understands the rectification process and knows the impacts on the conditions of his visa.

If the above assessments are made and it is determined by the school that the student will not meet the course attendance or course progression requirements, the school will meet with the student and parent to discuss the reasons behind the absence or lack of progression and the requirement to report. Any decision made, including the requirement to report, will be formalised in writing for the parent and student to read and if needed, respond to. The student will have 20 working days to respond to Brighton Grammar School's intention to report.

Course Progress Requirements and Monitoring

'Satisfactory progress' is the meeting of set targets and milestones as directed through the schools governing authorities and via set curriculum framework. Progress, particularly in the Secondary School, is assessed by monitoring and recording:

- Minimum attendance requirements as set by the school and its governing bodies, and attendance levels determined by visa requirements
- Achieving minimum set scores in set classroom tasks, assessment and tests, and exams as per the curriculum guidelines.

The school clearly sets out this expectation in pre-enrolment material such as the International Student Handbook and regularly monitors the academic progress of each student to ensure they will meet all the course requirements in the set timeframes. The Head of House, Director of Students (Deputy Head of Junior School), and specialist subject teachers will proactively communicate with the student and family regarding progress. Open dialogue via the specialist subject teacher, the student's House Tutor, Head of House and Director of Students/ Deputy Head of Junior School (SS/JS) is a continual and consultative process ensuring that students are always aware of expectations of the course and their current progress against these expectations.

It should also be noted that the School has an Academic Misconduct Policy that applies to all students, including International Students.

If a student is found to be falling behind and may not meet the set academic guidelines, additional academic support will be offered to assist the student to catch up to the required levels.

Additional academic support can be offered via:

- Extra subject support through after hours and weekend support classes and study groups
- Homework clubs
- Mentoring programs
- EAL support sessions
- Extended Library study times

All reporting of student progress is recorded in the school's database. Formal, written school reports are provided to parents twice per year and face to face interviews conducted with each subject teacher, the student and parent (or nominated support person) at the end of term 1 and during term 3. Interpreters are made available to assist in these interviews and, if needed and pre-arranged, these can also take place via an online format.

If a student is assessed as making unsatisfactory academic progress and is unlikely to meet course requirements within the expected duration and resolution can not be found and supported by the School, then this may be in breach of visa conditions. If this is the case, the School will formalise this decision in writing for the parent and student to read and if needed, respond to.

Reporting Unsatisfactory Progress or Attendance

In Accordance with Standard 8.13 – 8.15 Where the School has assessed the overseas student as not meeting course progress or attendance requirements, the School will give the overseas student a written notice as soon as practicable which:

- Notifies the overseas student that the School intends to report the overseas student for unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory course attendance
- Informs the overseas student of the reasons for the intention to report
- Advises the overseas student of their right to access the registered provider's complaints and appeals process, in accordance with Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals).

The student will have 20 working days to respond to Brighton Grammar's intention to report. Students must follow the complaints and appeals process (please note the International Students – Complaints and Appeals Policy) if they wish to challenge an unsatisfactory academic study result or notice of unsatisfactory attendance.

The School must only report unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory course attendance in PRISMS in accordance with section 19(2) of the ESOS Act if:

- The internal and external complaints processes have been completed and the decision or recommendation supports the registered provider, or
- The overseas student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20 working day period, or
- The overseas student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process, or
- The overseas student withdraws from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying the registered provider in writing.

Note: The School reserves the right not to report an overseas student for breaching attendance requirements if the student maintains attendance of at least 70% of scheduled course contact hours.* *For clarification,* *attendance falling below 85% will initiate intervention processes and may result in reporting; however, under specific circumstances and at the discretion of the School, reporting may be withheld when attendance remains at or above 70% and documented intervention strategies are implemented.

Record Keeping

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of International Student Safety and Wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with our Records Management Policy and Procedures which are aligned with the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards and the Records, Retention and Disposal Schedule for Non- Government Schools guidelines.

All records and prescribed information about the accepted enrolment of each International Students are kept as set out in section 21 of the ESOS Act. All written agreements as well as receipts of payments made by students' families under the written agreement will be kept for a minimum of 2 years after the person ceases to be an enrolled student. Brighton Grammar will review all records relating to accepted international students every 6 months to ensure accuracy. This includes written confirmation of:

- Students current Australian residential address
- Students contact phone number.
- Students email address.

PRISMS - (Provider Registration and International Student Management System)

To ensure compliance with Section 21 of the ESOS Act, CRICOS Brighton Grammar maintains an up-to-date and accurate student register that records details of all enrolled overseas students. This includes promptly updating enrolment information such as course commencement dates, changes to student details, and course completions or terminations. The school will report any variations through PRISMS within the required frames specified by the ESOS legislation. Maintaining the currency of this register is essential for meeting the provider's obligations under the Act, supporting visa integrity, and safeguarding the rights and welfare of international students.

Changes to Registration Status

In accordance with CRICOS Standard 11.2, any change to the ownership, directorship, or key management of the provider must be identified and reported without delay to the Department. Staff or Council members who become aware of such changes are required to notify the Principal immediately. The Principal will verify the details of the change, including the effective date and supporting documentation. Once verified, the Principal or delegate will notify the Department of Education through PRISMS or another prescribed channel within 10 working days of the change. Copies of all notifications, supporting evidence, and acknowledgement from the Department must be securely stored for a minimum of seven years.

The School will retain records as per the BGS Records and Data Management Policy, Records, Retention and Destruction Schedule, BGS Privacy Policy and ESOS Act. Records are kept on the student's file on the School database. Retention practices include:

Documentation	Criteria	Retention timeline
Attendance records, absence information, sign in and sign out registers	Homestay Students	Indefinitely
Attendance records, absence information, sign in and sign out registers	International students not in homestay	75 years from date of birth
Teaching and Learning – academic results, student reports	Homestay Students	Indefinitely
Teaching and Learning – academic results, student reports	International students not in homestay	75 years from date of birth
Co-curricular activities – participation, injury and accident records	Homestay Students	Indefinitely
Co-curricular activities – participation, injury and accident records	International students not in homestay	75 years from date of birth
Pastoral records, including orientation / transition checklists, critical incident records, behavioural reports	Homestay Students	Indefinitely
Pastoral records, including orientation / transition checklists, critical incident records, behavioural reports	International students not in homestay	75 years from date of birth
Details of any complaints or appeals	Homestay Students	Indefinitely
Details of any complaints or appeals	International students not in homestay	75 years from date of birth
Detailed records and copies of all original enrolment communication, which may include application records, Conditional Letters of Offer and Written Agreements, and payment receipts provided	All international students	At least 2 years after the student ceases to study at BGS (hard copies) Indefinitely (digital summary)
Records and communication related to changes to enrolment, which may include initial request documentation, decision making process and outcomes	All international students	At least 2 years after the student ceases to study at BGS (hard copies) Indefinitely (digital summary)
All departure/exit records	All international students	25 years from the student's date of birth (must be destroyed)

Supporting Documentation

- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
- International Students – Enrolment Policy
- International Students – Refund Policy
- International Students – Academics and Attendance Policy
- International Students – Student Support Services and Critical Incident Policy
- International Students – Homestay Accommodation Policy
- International Students – Transfer, Defer, Suspend or Cancel Enrolment Policy
- International Students – Complaints and Appeals Policy
- International Students – Conditional Letter of Offer and Written Agreement (Template)
- International Students Handbook
- International Students – Homestay Accommodation Request (Template)
- International Students – Formal Complaint form (Template). *NOTE: Also embedded in International Students – Complaints and Appeals Policy Appendix*
- International Students – Education Agent Agreement (Template)
- International Students – Student Safety Card (Template)
- Orientation Checklist for International Students
- BGS Business Notice and General Regulations
- BGS Records and Data Management Policy
- BGS Data Records, Retention and Destruction Schedule
- BGS Privacy Policy
- BGS Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- BGS Child Safety Code of Conduct
- BGS Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Obligations Policy
- BGS Child Safety and Wellbeing Complaints Process
- BGS Whistleblower Policy
- BGS Critical Incident Management Policy
- BGS Emergency Management Plan

This Policy is a controlled document. Any printing of this document is uncontrolled. Please refer to the school portal for the latest version of this policy	
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