

Overseas Student Attendance Policy

Alphington Grammar School is governed by the regulations and guidelines of The Education Services for Overseas Students Act (2000) (The 'ESOS Act') and the National Code 2018. Standard 8 of the National Code 2018 requires that where the School has assessed Overseas Students as not meeting attendance requirements, the School must follow through with the procedures and protocols listed in this policy. Records will be maintained in accordance with our Overseas Students Records Management and Retention Policy.

1. Student Attendance:

- 1.1. Alphington Grammar School's policy requires all students to attend a minimum of 90% of their classes, and 93% of their classes in Year 12. This ensures students maintain satisfactory levels of attendance to progress in their course.
- 1.2. Attendance is checked and recorded daily. In senior years, attendance is taken at the beginning of each period. In primary years, attendance is recorded at the beginning and middle of each school day.
- 1.3. Late arrival to the School is recorded by the Front Office and will be included in attendance calculations. Students arriving late to school must sign in late at the Front Office or they will be marked absent for the day.
- 1.4. The School clearly outlines the attendance requirements to Overseas Students before they commence their studies at the School, by providing a copy of this Policy and also including attendance requirements in the Conditions of Enrolment, in the Letter of Offer.
- 1.5. Alphington Grammar School supports all Overseas Students to achieve attendance requirements.
- 1.6. Alphington Grammar School implements an Intervention Strategy for students not meeting attendance requirements.

2. Student Absences:

- 2.1. All absences from School must be satisfactorily explained, and there are circumstances under which the School may decide not to report Overseas Students for breaching attendance requirements.
- 2.2. Short absences (less than two days) should be explained via email or phone call from the student's Parent/Parent Liaison.
- 2.3. For absences longer than two (2) consecutive days, a medical certificate is required, or evidence that the leave has been approved by the Overseas Student Coordinator or the appropriate Head of House/Head of School.
- 2.4. Any absences longer than five (5) consecutive days without approval will be investigated by the School.
- 2.5. Students are strongly discouraged from leaving early for holidays or returning late, and should note that such missed time from classes will be counted as an Unexplained Absence, except in special compassionate circumstances (as outlined in Section 3 of this Policy) where a written letter of explanation is required from the Parent/Parent Liaison.
- 2.6. Students are advised to book airline flights early, so as to work their travel arrangements around their school commitments.
- 2.7. The School will commence an intervention strategy should the following events occur:
 - student is absent for five (5) consecutive days without approval;
 - student is at risk of not meeting attendance requirements before an Overseas Student's attendance drops to below 90%;
 - student develops a pattern of absenteeism.

3. **Compassionate circumstances:**

- 3.1. Alphington Grammar School may decide not to report an Overseas Student for breaching attendance requirements if the Overseas Student is still attending at least 70% of scheduled hours for the course and provides genuine evidence demonstrating compelling or compassionate circumstances. Students not meeting our attendance requirements will be assessed under the School's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation requirements.
- 3.2. Compassionate and compelling circumstances comprise the following circumstances:
- mental illness or the injury of the student or student's close relative which requires hospitalisation or impedes activities of daily living;
 - a mental health condition of the student or student's close relative that results in hospitalisation or functional impairment;
 - death/bereavement of a close relative such as parents or grandparents (with evidence of a death certificate if possible);
 - serious illness (where a medical certificate has been granted stating that a student has been unable to attend class);
 - adverse experience that has impacted on the Overseas Student which could include being witness to or victim of a serious accident or being a witness to, or victim of, a crime, natural disaster, or terrorism event;
 - major political upheaval or natural disaster in the student's home country which requires immediate emergency travel;
 - a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (cases should be supported by Police/Psychologist reports);
 - inability to begin study in a program on the agreed starting date due to a delay in the student receiving their visa; and
 - other compassionate/compelling circumstances at the discretion of the School.

4. **Intervention:**

- 4.1. Parent/Parent Liaisons of students at risk of breaching Alphington Grammar School attendance requirements will be contacted via email, and students will be offered counselling through an interview with the Head of House/Head of School, to provide the student support to increase their attendance and assistance with any circumstances influencing their absenteeism.
- 4.2. Where a student has failed to meet attendance requirements, Alphington Grammar School will promptly advise the student of its intention to report the matter for Breach of Visa (Condition 8202), and inform that the student has twenty (20) working days in which to access the School's Complaints and Appeals process. Refer to *Complaints and Appeals Policy* for more information.
- 4.3. Alphington Grammar School will proceed to notify the ESOS Agency via PRISMS that the student is not achieving satisfactory course attendance in cases where:
- the student does not utilise the Complaints and Appeals process within twenty (20) days;
 - the student withdraws from the Complaints and Appeals process via notifying the Principal in writing; and
 - the Complaints and Appeals process results in a decision that favours Alphington Grammar School.