COURSE PROGRESS AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Course Progress

   a) The College will monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.

   b) The course progress of all students will be assessed at the end of each study period (semester) of enrolment.

   c) Students who have begun part way through a semester will be assessed after one full study period.

   d) To demonstrate satisfactory course progress –
      - **Primary students** will need to demonstrate a commitment to their studies and ongoing integration into the College community, attend all timetabled ESL classes, and demonstrate a willingness to participate in non-academic activities.
      - **Junior Secondary students** will need to achieve a minimum 'C' grade in at least 50% of subjects studied or have achieved a 'satisfactory' or higher for 'Effort' and 'Conduct' in subjects studied.
      - **Senior Secondary students** will need to achieve a minimum 'C' grade in at least 50% of subjects studied (excluding ESL) OR meet academic standards agreed upon by student’s parents.

   e) If a student does not achieve satisfactory course progress as stated in (d) above for the study period the Director - International Student Department will formally contact the parent(s) to advise there will be a meeting with the student and the Year Level Coordinator to develop an intervention strategy for academic improvement. This may include –
      - i. Intensive after hours tutorial support in ISS classes
      - ii. Subject tutorial support in class time
      - iii. Mentoring
      - iv. Additional ESL support
      - v. Change of subject selection, or reducing course load (without affecting course duration)
      - vi. Counselling – time management
      - vii. Counselling - academic skills
      - viii. Counselling - personal
      - ix. Other intervention strategies as deemed necessary

   f) A copy of the student’s individual strategy and progress reports in achieving improvement will be forwarded to parents.
g) The student’s individual strategy for academic improvement will be monitored over the following study period by Director-International Student Department and records of student response to the strategy will be kept.

h) If the student does not improve sufficiently academically and achieve satisfactory course progress by the end of the next study period, Hillcrest Christian College will advise the student in writing of its intention to report the student for breach of visa condition 8202, and that he/she has 20 working days in which to access the College’s internal complaints and appeals process. Following the outcome of the internal process, if the student wishes to complain or lodge an external appeal about a decision made or action taken by Hillcrest Christian College, he/she may contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman at no cost. This must be done within 10 days. Please see hillcrest Christian College’s Complaints and Appeals Policy for further details.

i) The College will notify the National ESOS Authority via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress as soon as practicable where:

   i. the student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 days, or
   ii. withdraws from the complaints and appeals process, or
   iii. the complaints and appeals process results in favour of the College

2. Completion within expected duration of study

   a) As noted in 1a, the College will monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.

   b) Part of the assessment of course progress at the end of each semester will include an assessment of whether the student’s progress is such that they are expected to complete their course within the expected duration of the course.

   c) The College will only extend the duration of the student’s
   i. compassionate or compelling circumstances (see definition below)
   ii. student participation in an intervention strategy as outlined in 1.e.
   iii. an approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted in accordance with Hillcrest Christian College’s Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.

   d) Where the College decides to extend the duration of the student’s study, the College will report this change via PRISMS within 14 days and/or issue a new COE if required.

3. Monitoring Course Attendance

   a) Student visa conditions state that satisfactory course attendance is attendance of 80% of scheduled course contact hours. Hillcrest Christian College has a minimum of 95% course attendance.

   b) Student attendance is:
   i. checked and recorded daily
   ii. assessed regularly
   iii. recorded and calculated over each study period

   c) Late arrival at school will be recorded and will be included in attendance calculations.
d) All absences from school will be included in absentee calculations and should be accompanied by a medical certificate, an explanatory communication from the student’s carer or evidence that leave has been approved by the Principal/Head of School/Director-International Student Department.

e) Any absences longer than 2 consecutive days without approval will be investigated.

f) Student attendance will be monitored by the International Administration Assistant every school day over a study period to assess student attendance using the following method –

i. Calculating the number of hours the student would have to be absent to fall below the attendance threshold for a semester – in a 20 week study period the student can be absent for 20 days and meet the 80% course attendance as a condition of their visa. To meet the College attendance minimum students can be absent for 5 days.

ii. Any period of exclusion from class will be included in student attendance calculations dependent on the circumstances.

Secondary Students

- Attendance and absences for Secondary students are recorded by the Pastoral Care (PC) teacher on an electronic class roll each morning during the PC class. It is compulsory for all Secondary students enrolled at Hillcrest Christian College to attend the PC class.
- An Absentee List is generated by the Secondary Receptionist each day by 11.00am. If the student is registered as absent but no communication has been received from the parent/homestay the International Administration Assistant will contact the family by telephone to confirm the student’s absence.
- Individual classroom teachers mark class rolls each lesson to monitor student attendance throughout the day.
- The International Department’s Administration Assistant records attendance and absences on a separate International Student Database and records reasons for absence – explained or unexplained

Primary Students

- Attendance and absentes for Primary students are recorded by the Core classroom teacher on an electronic class roll each morning.
- The Primary Receptionist checks the attendance record and an SMS is sent out to parents of absent students if the College has not been advised of the student’s absence.

h) If the calculation at 3.f. indicates that the student has passed the attendance threshold for the study period, Hillcrest Christian College will advise the student of its intention to report the student for breach of visa condition 8202, and that he/she has 20 working days in which to access the school’s internal complaints and appeals process except in the circumstances outlined in 3.j.
i) The College will notify the National ESOS Authority via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance as soon as practicable where:
   i. the student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 days
   ii. withdraws from the complaints and appeals process
   iii. the complaints and appeals process results in a decision for the College.

j) Students will not be reported for failing to meet the 80% threshold where:
   i. the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances e.g., medical illness supported by a medical certificate or as per Definition, below, and
   ii. the student’s attendance has not fallen below 70% attendance for the study period.

k) The method for calculating 70% attendance is the same as that outlined in 3.f. with the following change; number of study days x 30%.

l) If a student is assessed as having nearly reached the threshold for 70% attendance for a study period, the Director-International Student Department will assess whether a suspension of studies is in the interests of the student as per Hillcrest Christian College’s Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.

m) If the student does not obtain a suspension of studies under the Hillcrest Christian College’s Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy, and falls below the 70% threshold for attendance for the study period, the process for reporting the student for unsatisfactory attendance (breach of visa condition 8202) will occur as outlined in 3.h – 3.i.

4. Definitions

a) Compassionate or compelling circumstances - circumstances beyond the control of the student that are having an impact on the student’s progress through a course. These could include:
   i. serious illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
   ii. bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents with evidence of a death certificate if possible.
   iii. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel that has impacted on their studies
   iv. a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (these cases should be where possible supported by police or psychologists’ reports)
   v. where the school was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
   vi. inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

   For other circumstances to be considered as compassionate or compelling, evidence would need to be provided to show that these were having an impact on the student’s progress through a course

b) Expected duration – the length of time it takes to complete the course studying full-time. This is the same as the registered course duration on CRICOS.
c) School day – any day for which the College has scheduled course contact hours.

d) Study period – a discrete period of study within a course which cannot exceed 24 weeks. Hillcrest Christian College defines a “study period” for the purposes of monitoring course attendance and progress as one semester.