

Procedures & Principles

Part B: International Students' Attendance
Number: AC-06/10

Policy Manager:	International Director	Date Approved:	November 2006
Category:	Academic	Date Last Revised:	February 2022
Authorised by	Academic Approvals Committee	Next Review Date:	February 2023

International Students' Attendance

1. Definitions

Approved absence	Bereavement, Family and Health Reasons are the Immigration New Zealand approved reasons for students to be absent from class.
Attendance monitoring system	The system, process, monitoring and following up of attendance or non-attendance as described in this policy.
The Code	The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Students) Code of Practice 2021.
IC	International Centre.
INZ	Immigration New Zealand
OAR	Online Attendance Register. Used to record attendance of all students.
SEIC	Student Enrolment and Information Centre.

2. Expectations

Wintec is a signatory to the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Students) Code of Practice, and as such takes all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of international students and ensures as far as reasonably possible that international students have a positive experience in New Zealand; one that supports their educational achievement. The Code also requires Wintec to report to Immigration New Zealand known or suspected breaches of visa conditions by international students.

Attendance is linked to both academic success, and health and wellbeing and accordingly, proactive action enables early intervention to help students get back on track.

General

2.1. Students attend 100% of scheduled classes. This includes, attending physically; attending online through Zoom or similar; or known to be well and completing an assignment outside of class environment.

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- 2.2.** Staff accurately record attendance on the OAR for each student and lock each session.
- 2.3.** Schools/Centres provide training on OAR and any additional attendance guidelines related to their Centre/School to all academic staff.
- 2.4.** IC and Schools/Centres work collaboratively to inform and support students.
- 2.5.** IC designated under-18 advisor notifies and provides regular updates to parents or guardians of students' under-18, if they are absent or if there are any concerns at all, regarding health, wellbeing or academic progress.
- 2.6.** A Medical Certificate or evidence of being required to self-isolate is required for student to be marked Absent-Health. Reasonable evidence is required for student to be marked Absent-Family or Absent-Bereavement.
- 2.7.** Attendance for visa renewal purposes, is calculated by adding together the following information from the OAR: Present, Bereavement, Family, Health, Assignment.
- 2.8.** Schools/Centres update students' attendance record on receipt of a Medical Certificate (or suitable evidence to indicate the need to self-isolate if online learning is not an option) to Health.

Weekly OAR reports

- 2.9.** IC receives 2 weekly reports listing absences the previous week:
 - Students marked Absent – No Reason Recorded on the OAR.
 - Students marked other than Present on the OAR.
- 2.10.** For students marked Absent – No Reason Recorded, IC contact students via email and text. See Appendix 3 for process. See Appendix 1, Communication 1, for example email.

If student does not respond within 48 hrs, IC use whatever means necessary to establish student health and wellbeing. They connect with learner and put in place support.
- 2.11.** For students marked other than Present on the OAR, IC contact students to establish safety and wellbeing, and to put in place support as appropriate. See Appendix 2 for process.
- 2.12.** IC meet with students, who have 2 or more occurrences of 'Absent no reason recorded'. Information is sought, advice given, and support put in place. Student is asked to sign an attendance reminder, confirming they have received advice, know how to access support and understand their visa requirements. The connection between regular attendance and student success is explained and students are reminded that low attendance will likely negatively impact their visa renewal. See Appendix 1, Communication 2.

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The purpose of the meeting is to build a meaningful, professional relationship with the learner to identify where support may be needed and to be open and transparent about the attendance monitoring purpose and process.

2.13. If attendance drops to below 90%, IC hold a face to face meeting with student to seek information and provide support. The first warning letter is issued. See Appendix 1, Communication 3.

2.14. If attendance drops to below 80%, IC again meet with student and issue second warning letter. See Appendix 1, Communication 4. Again, steps are taken to support the student.

IC advise SEIC, who accordingly notify INZ of the students' attendance.

Note: 2.13 and 2.14 do not apply to students who have low attendance as the result of commencing their studies late due to visa delays, for example. Similarly, students will not receive a warning letter in the first few weeks of their programme when one or two absences causes the overall attendance to appear artificially low. The purpose of the actions 2.13. and 2.14., is to effectively manage students who have repeated and unexplained or unapproved absences, to provide ongoing support and to be open and transparent about visa requirements and obligations.

2.15. All IC communications with students relating to absence, including summaries of meetings, are documented on the Daily Contact list, International Centre Teams site. Electronic copies of warning letters are uploaded to the student's file in the Student Management System (Arion).

Other actions – Centres/tutors

IC take responsibility for monitoring and officially following up on attendance for international students. The Wintec wide approach to learner safety and wellbeing required by the Code, requires safety and wellbeing to be deeply embedded within the systems and day to day practices of tertiary organisations.

2.16. When a student is absent, tutor sends a brief email or text to the student. For example, see Appendix 1, Communication 5.

The purpose of this action/communication is to help build a meaningful, professional relationship with the student, and in turn maintain appropriate oversight of learner achievement and engagement. It also provides the opportunity for learners to discuss, in confidence, any issues that are affecting their ability to study.

2.17. If a student notifies the tutor they will be absent/were absent for some reason, the tutor replies and copies in internationalattendance@wintec.ac.nz.

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2.18. If at any stage, the tutor has concerns about a students' wellbeing or their non-attendance, IC are notified.

2.19. If a student under-18 is absent for 1 day, tutor/Centre notifies IC immediately. IC meet with the student to better understand their situation, put in place support and notifies parents/caregiver. For information on this process, see Appendix 2.

Arrives late/Leaves early

2.20. School/Centre defines and determines acceptable time of attendance; arriving late or leaving early, (as per Clause 2.3.) and inform students upon commencement of the programme. This acceptable time is consistent across all programmes in the School/Centre.

2.21. Tutor talks to student the first time they arrive late or leave early, to understand their situation and guides student accordingly. Student is marked Late Arrival or Left Early, respectively. This counts as Absent for the entire session and has an impact on the overall attendance level. Tutor notifies student of this.

Tutor maintains discretion to mark late arrivals and left early as Present if the situation is a one-off, for an apparently genuine situation, or where there was a low negative impact on learning for arriving late that session.

For a list of OAR attendance options/statuses, see Appendix 4.

3. Responsibilities

Council

- Be assured that the institute is compliant with the Code.

CE / Executive

- Ensure there is an effective framework for implementing the Code.

Student Enrolment & Information Centre (SEIC)

- Scan the relevant warning letters against individual student files in Arion
- Advise Immigration New Zealand of students whose attendance falls below 80%.

International Centre

- Ensure all staff who interact with International Students are aware of and understand the attendance processes and requirements
- Comply with the code and INZ requirements
- Follow up with students who have repeated absences and put in place appropriate support

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- Send first warning letter when attendance drops below 90% due to unexplained absence
 - Send second warning letter when attendance drops below 80%
 - Inform SEIC of students with attendance 80% or below
 - Add note to Contacts tab, Arion that attendance reminders and warning letters have been sent
 - Maintain notes and summaries of interactions and communications with student
 - Liaise with Centres.
- Centre or Group Directors**
- Monitor and review the effectiveness and compliance of student attendance monitoring in schools to ensure staff are meeting Wintec's obligations under the Code
 - Schools/Centres to define and determine acceptable time of attendance for a particular class and provide this information clearly to students upon commencing the programme. This information must also be provided in the Centre/School induction.
- Team Managers**
- Ensure staff accurately and promptly record attendances using OAR
 - Appoint an OAR monitor and notify IC
 - Ensure staff proactively follow up with and meet with students who are marked other than Present
 - Communicate with the International Student Services team regarding non-attendance and 'at risk' international students
 - Ensure all academic staff receive OAR training
 - Ensure all academic staff complete relevant training on Evolve, including Code of Practice training.
- Tutors or Administration Staff/Support staff as agreed within the Centre**
- Record attendance using OAR
 - Lock each OAR session.
 - Contact students who do not attend.
 - Notify IC if an under-18 student is absent 1 day for students under 18), and repeat late arrives/early departers
 - Notify IC of at-risk students

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4. Measurements of success

- The process is accepted, approved and implemented by Schools/Centres, SEIC and International Student Services team.
- Identification and reporting of attendance is undertaken as required.
- Process meets the requirements of internal and external auditing.
- International students 'at risk' are identified early and assistance provided as appropriate.
- International students 'at risk' attendance improves.
- Students whose attendance falls below 80% are reported to Immigration New Zealand.

5. Records Management

Record	Minimum retention period	Disposal Action	GDA reference #
The International Students' Attendance Policy This policy document	Until superseded and administratively no longer required for reference purposes.	Retain as a public archive	5.1.1
Student record administration and maintenance Records relating to addition/amendments to the student record between the period of admission and graduation, including student warning letters	7 years after completion or discontinuation of course or programme of study by student	Destroy	2.3.1
International Pastoral Care Records related to the monitoring of international students	7 years from date of last action	Destroy	3.1.3

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Appendix 1 – Communication 1-4

Communication 1

Example email to all students who were absent 'No Reason Recorded', one or more times the previous week.

Kia ora *name*,

Your attendance record shows you missed 1 or more classes last week (*date range*). We are contacting you to find out what happened and see how we can help you. Please reply and let us know what stopped you coming to class. 😊

Absences				1
Programme	Date	Class Code	Tutor	Absence Reason
Bachelor of Nursing	26/01/2022	HLBN621B/2101	Wintec tutor name	No Reason Recorded

As you know, as an international student, you are required by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) to attend all your classes. We become concerned when you are absent because it puts you at risk of not completing the programme successfully. It also makes us think you might need help or advice.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

1. **Reply** - Please reply and let us know what stopped you coming to class and let us know how we can help. 😊
2. **Health** - If you were absent due to health reasons, please hand a Medical Certificate from your doctor, to your tutors. They will change your attendance to 'Absent - Health Reason' and this will count toward your overall attendance.
3. **I attended!** - If you attended all your classes, please chat with your tutors. They will be able to update your attendance if you were there.
4. **I need help!** - If you are struggling with your study or dealing with a personal issue, please come and see us. We are here to help – your health, wellbeing and academic success are important to us. You can find us (the International Student Services team):
 - ✓ Daily at City campus, Student Enrolment, A Block – look for the bright yellow flag
 - ✓ Daily at Rotokauri campus, 10am-2pm, Hinau Study Room, behind Student Information, Hub – look for the bright yellow flag, and at G Block reception, outside these hours
 - ✓ Email us at internationalhelp@wintec.ac.nz
 - ✓ Call 021 703 730, anytime day or night for urgent issues
5. **My attendance level** - It's a good idea to check your attendance level from time to time, so you don't get any surprises at the end of the semester. You can do this at the Student Enrolment and Information Centre (SEIC), in A Block, City campus, or at the Information Centre, in the Hub at Rotokauri Campus.

We're here to help so please reply as soon as you read this. If you would prefer us to ring you, let us know and we'll be pleased to give you a call!

Ngā mihi,

International Student Services Team
Wintec

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Communication 2

Example information sheet that students sign if they have regular absences.



Waikato Institute of Technology
Tristram Street, Private Bag 3036
Waikato Mail Centre
Hamilton 3240, New Zealand

Telephone +64 7 838 6399
Freephone 0800 2 Wintec (0800 2 946 832)
www.wintec.ac.nz

IMPORTANT ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

Attendance, participation and study skills are important factors in successful academic study. Students and staff work together to create a good learning environment. By signing this document you confirm you understand the programme requirements, your student visa conditions and the support available to you.

I, **full name (common name)**, (ID No. **xxxxxxxxxx**), understand that I have been offered a place on this programme because Wintec believes I am able to complete the programme successfully.

- I understand that the final responsibility to attend and to make progress is mine
- I understand that I am required to meet the requirements of their programme of study to progress through the programme
- I understand I may not be able to re-enrol, or my enrolment may be cancelled if I have irregular attendance or if I am not meeting specific attendance requirements
- I understand that when I am absent for a non-approved reason, I am breaching the conditions of my student visa
- If my attendance drops to 80% or lower, Immigration New Zealand will be notified. INZ could choose to terminate my visa
- I have been given a copy of the Academic Regulations, 2021

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I am required to:

- 1 attend all classes
- 2 arrive in class on time, including after breaks
- 3 complete all class work and self-study on time and to the best of my ability

The International Centre, my tutors, the Programme Co-ordinator, and the Team Manager have the right to discuss these issues with me to ensure I am fully informed.

As a student, I have the right to:

- be supported as an international student in NZ, under the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Students) Code of Practice
- request support from the International Centre
- request academic support to help me with my studies
- discuss with my tutor(s) any difficulties I am having with my learning
- expect voice mail or written messages to be responded to by phone or in writing
- provide feedback on my experience as a student through Student Voice

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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Name: _____

Communication 3

Example letter, sent by email to all students whose attendance has fallen to 90%.

Kia ora *name*,

Attendance Warning Letter – attendance level *xx%*

We contacted you on *xxx* and *xxx* about your poor attendance. We met with you on *xxx* to better understand your situation and provided information and advice to help you get back on track.

You explained you missed classes due to *reasons*. We explained these are not approved reasons for missing class.

With your ongoing absences, your attendance is now *xx%*. You are putting yourself at risk of not completing your programme successfully. You are also breaching the conditions of your student visa.

If you attend classes regularly from now on, your attendance level will increase and nothing further will happen.

If you continue to miss classes and your attendance drops to 80%, we are required to notify Immigration New Zealand.

Your health, wellbeing and academic success are important to us. You have made a substantial commitment to come to New Zealand and study and we want to see you progress and achieve your goals. There are a team of people here to help, guide and support you. We will continue to check-in with you and provide support.

To contact the International Centre support team, come to:

- ✓ Student Enrolment, City campus, daily (look for the bright yellow flag!)
- ✓ Hinau Study Room, behind Student Information in the Hub, Rotokauri campus, 10am-2pm daily. Outside these hours, come to G Block reception (before 10am and after 2pm)
- ✓ Email us at internationalhelp@wintec.ac.nz
- ✓ For urgent issues call 021 703 730, anytime day or night

We're here to help and keen to help you get back on track.

Ngā mihi,

International Student Services Team
Wintec

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Communication 4

Example letter, sent by email to students whose attendance has fallen to 80% or below.

Kia ora *name*,

Attendance Warning Letter – attendance level *xx%*

We contacted you on *xxx* and *xxx* about your poor attendance. We met with you on *xxx* to better understand your situation and have communicated with you regularly since then. You were given an attendance warning letter on *date*.

You have continued to miss classes with unapproved reasons. Your attendance is now *xx%*, and we are required to notify Immigration New Zealand. They could contact you to advise they intend to terminate your visa, though it is more likely they will record your attendance level on your file, remind you of your visa conditions and of the requirement to attend classes.

If you attend all classes from now on, your attendance will recover and this will help when you need to renew your visa.

Your health, wellbeing and academic success are important to us. You have made a substantial commitment to come to New Zealand and study and we want to see you progress and achieve your goals. There are a team of people here to help, guide and support you. We will continue to check-in with you and provide support.

To contact the International Centre support team, come to:

- ✓ Student Enrolment, City campus, daily (look for the bright yellow flag!)
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- ✓ Email us at internationalhelp@wintec.ac.nz
- ✓ For urgent issues call 021 703 730, anytime day or night

Ngā mihi,

International Student Services team
Wintec

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Communication 5

Example (only) email for tutor to send to absent students.

Kia ora xxx,

I notice you were not in class today, is everything ok?

The notes/recording/class content is on Moodle. I suggest you read/watch these to help you catch up, or check-in with your study buddy.

If you have any question about your study, please let me know.

If you need support of advice, remember the International Student Support Team are available to help. You can contact them at internationalhelp@wintec.ac.nz, or drop in to Student Enrolment and look for the bright yellow 'student support' flag.

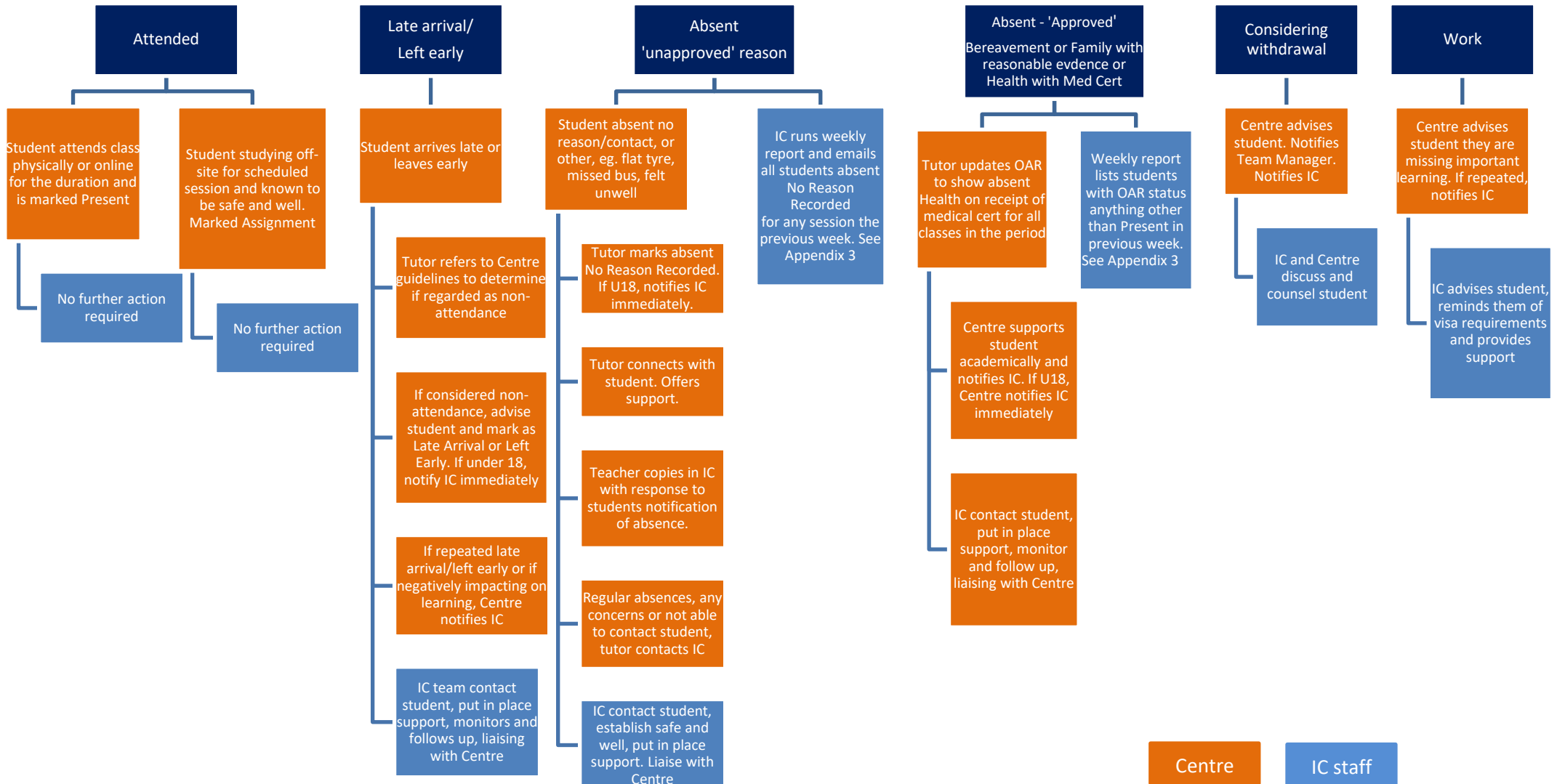
See you on xxx,

Ngā mihi,

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Appendix 2 – OAR statuses and follow up actions - IC and Centre/School



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Appendix 3 – International Student Attendance Monitoring and Follow up Process – International Centre



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Appendix 4 – Online Attendance Register (OAR) options/statuses

OAR options/status	Attendance calculation purposes	Notes	Action
Present	Present	Physically present or present online for duration of class.	N/A
Absent 1 hr	Absent 1 hr, Present for remaining no. hours in session	Option available to Centre for Languages only.	Discuss with student. Notify IC if ongoing or negatively impacting study.
Absent 2 hr	Absent 2 hr, Present for remaining no. hours in session	Option available to Centre for Languages only.	Discuss with student. Notify IC if ongoing or negatively impacting study.
Assignment	Present	Working outside of classroom on tasks set by tutor. Known to be safe and well.	N/A
Bereavement	Appears as Absent with an approved reason, overall attendance unaffected	INZ 'approved' reason absence.	Reasonable evidence required. Provide support. Notify IC.
Considering withdrawal	Absent	Not attending and thought to be considering withdrawing.	Discuss with student. Notify Team Manager and IC.
Course related work	Excluded from all calculations	Student attending placement or similar	Maintain contact with student to ensure safe and well
Exempt	Excluded from all calculations	Does not disadvantage student's attendance. No class due to Public Holiday Graduation or similar.	N/A
Family	Appears as Absent with an approved reason, overall attendance unaffected	Does not disadvantage students' attendance.	Reasonable evidence required. Provide support. Notify IC.
Health reasons	Counts toward attendance	Does not disadvantage student's attendance.	Medical Certificate required. Provide support. Notify IC.
Late Arrival	Absent for entire session	Refer to Centre/School guidelines on acceptable period of attendance to any session.	Discuss with student. Notify IC if ongoing or impacting study.
Left Early	Absent for entire session	Refer to Centre/School guidelines on acceptable period of attendance to any session.	Discuss with student. Notify IC if ongoing or impacting study.
No Reason Recorded	Absent for entire session	Used for any reason other than those listed whether or not reason provided.	Discuss with student. Notify IC if absent 2 consecutive sessions (1 session for under 18s), or repeated absence.
Session Cancelled	Excluded from all calculations	Does not disadvantage student's attendance. Class cancelled as a one-off, due to illness or similar.	N/A
Unlocked	Nothing recorded	Does not disadvantage students' overall attendance.	Record attendance for the class and lock the session.
Work	Absent for entire session	Not an approved INZ reason for absence.	Discuss with student. Notify IC if absent 2 consecutive sessions (1 session for under 18s), or repeated absence.