DE Attendance Policy

The College has a policy for recording and monitoring DE student attendance during the course of their enrolment, including attendance in the residential school program. The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures that the College has in place.

Principles

1. By definition, Distance education means the delivery of courses of study during which teachers and students enrolled in the school are not regularly in the presence of each other but communicate with each other in writing, by print or by electronic or other means.
2. Attendance across distance education providers is commonly measured through the submission of work and assessment tasks.
3. At the College, DE students commit to a daily load of classes and school work equitable to that taught on campus.
4. The College will appoint a DE Admin Officer to use a class roll system to take attendance that is supported by information from the Onsite Supervisor and digital systems that monitor student work by electronic means.
5. The College will appoint a DE Admin Officer to take the roll during the residential programs and to inform students and Onsite Supervisors in relation to compliance and non-compliance with the residential program.

Roles & Responsibilities

Head of Distance Education	Responsible for the implementation of the DE Attendance Policy.
DE Systems Manager	Responsible for the development and maintenance of software systems and processes involved in attendance monitoring and reporting.
DE Admin Officer (Attendance) DE Residential Coordinator	Responsible for assigning students to class rolls and marking the formal class roll as per the common code for attendance registers in NSW schools. Responsible for processing information from Onsite Supervisors relating to a student's inability to attend Distance Education. Responsible for communication with all stakeholders with matters arising from the procedures in this policy.
Onsite Supervisor	Responsible for communicating with the College in the event that a student is unable to attend Distance

	Education. Responsible for logistics relating to going to & from the residential programs. Responsible for working with the College in the event that the electronic systems detect that a student is not engaging with the course work.
DE Teacher	Responsible for the care of the students in their class including communication during course work. Responsible for working with the DE Admin Officer and Onsite Supervisors to resolve attendance issues.

Procedures

The Maintenance of the DE Register of Enrolments

The College has a DE Register of Enrolments that includes the following information:

1. name, age and address
2. the name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
3. date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
4. for students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation
5. where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, evidence that the Department of Education (attendance@det.nsw.edu.au) has been notified of the student's full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parents' names and contact details, an indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student, and any known work health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student

Please refer to the DE Enrolments Policy which contains the procedures relating to the ongoing maintenance of the DE Register of Enrolments.

The Maintenance of DE Class Lists for the Purpose of Roll Marking

1. The DE Admin Officer (Attendance) is responsible for assigning DE students into class lists in consultation with the Head of Distance Education within the College's Student Information System.
2. The DE Residential Coordinator is responsible for providing accurate class lists for residential programs in consultation with all stakeholders and for recording that information into the College systems after the event takes place.

3. The College's Student Information System will archive student attendance records in the event that a student withdraws from the College.

The Maintenance of the Register of Daily Attendance for DE Students

1. The register of daily attendance will be maintained at a point in time each week, as explained to families in the Orientation course. See Appendix 2: Roll marking for DE Attendance (engagement)
2. The CAMS software will generate a report for each student indicating the degree of their engagement with courses and submission of work. Where this shows a student's degree of engagement and submission over the week has met the expected minimum threshold, the student will be taken to have been in full attendance. Where the degree of engagement has not met the minimum threshold the student will be taken to have been absent for that proportion of the week.
3. The DE Admin Officer (Attendance) is responsible for marking the class roll for DE students. The procedure is as follows:
    a. Go to https://sentral.acc.edu.au
    b. Navigate to the "School Attendance Module"
    c. Click "Roll Status"
    d. Navigate to the Class List
    e. Refer to the following three procedural steps to identify DE absences:
        i. information received by the Onsite Supervisor in relation to student absence via mpde.attendance@acc.edu.au
        ii. information received from the College's electronic systems (See Appendix 1 - CAMS).
        iii. Information received from the Head of Distance Education, Distance Education Teachers, and other DE Admin Officers in relation to student attendance issues
    f. Mark the class roll and click "Submit Roll."

Recording Explained Absences & The Follow Up of Unexplained Absences

1. If a reason for absence has been provided, the DE Admin Officer (Attendance) will note the reason on the Class Roll as per the NSW Common Code.
2. The DE Admin Officer (Attendance) will keep a record that substantiates the reason for the student absence.
3. If a reason for absence has not been provided (due to information received from the College's electronic systems or other means), the DE Admin Officer (Attendance will request a reason from the Onsite Supervisor and record it in the class roll.

The Monitoring of the Register of Daily Attendance for DE Students

The DE Admin Officer (Attendance) will monitor patterns in the Register of Daily Attendance by completing the following procedures

1. Review DE Students who have been flagged as "Attendance Concern" (Refer to the Procedure below: *Notification to Onsite Supervisors Regarding Poor Attendance*)
    a. Go to https://sentral.acc.edu.au
    b. Navigate to the "School Attendance Module"
    c. Click "Attendance Registers"
    d. Click "Attendance Concern" to review DE students.
2. Review patterns of attendance by using the "Official Record of Attendance" report:
    a. Go to https://sentral.acc.edu.au
    b. Navigate to the "School Attendance Module"
    c. Click "Reports"
    d. Navigate to the "Official Record of Attendance"
    e. Filter for DE Class Lists
    f. Print
    g. Review the relevant data looking for patterns
3. Review information provided by other means such as CAMS (see appendix 1) and information provided by Onsite Supervisors and DE Teachers.
4. Report to the Head of DE for matters arising from the monitoring of the Register of Daily Attendance for DE Students.

Recording & Monitoring Attendance of DE Students at the Residential Program

The DE Mandatory & Additional Residential Schools Policy is the comprehensive document for procedures relevant to the residential schools. The information relevant to taking attendance at the Residential schools is provided here in summary form.

Digital rolls are created and maintained by the Residential Coordinator. Residential attendance records are maintained in Sentral Attendance, along with all attendance records.

The following criteria has been established as acceptable absences for not attending the program and therefore needing to attend a make up day(s):

- Instructions against attending from a treating medical practitioner
- Transport Problems
- Immediate Medical Issues requiring treatment
- Bereavement

Tracking DE Students' Meeting Mandatory Residential Requirements

At the point of enrolment families of all students are issued a notification of the number and nature of the face-to-face days that will be needed to be completed, including the additional days and formal assessment days.

The CAMS software will reconcile this calculated requirement with the data gathered through the attendance records of Residential and Additional days. This will be monitored by the DE Admin Officer after each cycle of Stage based residentials.

Following each cycle of Residentials the DE Admin Officer will communicate with the family of each student the accumulated number of days attended at residentials and the progress toward meeting the total required number of days attendance.

The DE Admin Officer will alert the Head of DE where concerns are identified as to students likelihood of meeting their calculated requirement or if the student may be in jeopardy of receiving an N Determination for not having completed an essential curriculum requirement or assessment.

Notification to Onsite Supervisors Regarding Poor Attendance

1. The DE Admin Officer (Attendance) who identities a DE Student with poor attendance should flag the student by:
    a. Going to https://sentral.acc.edu.au
    b. Navigate to the "School Attendance Module"
    c. Navigate to the Student Record
    d. Trigger the Button "Set Attendance Concern."
2. Students identified with unacceptable patterns of attendance, reflected through engagement, have an attendance compliance notice issued to the Onsite Supervisor, where explanation is required. The family is presented with the choice to re-establish their commitment to DE or to voluntarily withdraw enrolment.
3. In the event of a pattern of non-attendance, the Head of Distance Education will request a meeting with the DE Student & Onsite Supervisor to discuss strategies for improving student attendance. Either an on-campus interview OR Welfare Officer visit may need to be initiated 'for cause'.
4. DE Students & Onsite Supervisors who wish to continue enrolment but fail to demonstrate adequate change, over the following term, raise concerns for educational neglect and are referred to the Principal for review and recommendation.
5. In persistent/serious cases where strategies for improving student attendance are not adhered to, this is grounds for a student's withdrawal from the Distance Education Program.

6. When issues relating to poor attendance have been escalated to the Head of Distance Education, all records relating to unsatisfactory attendance should be recorded and transferred to the student file in Sentral.

Procedure to Prevent the Automatic Present Status Error

The College has put in place a procedure in response to an identified software error in 2021 that led to some students being reported as absent when they were present in the distance education program OR reported as present prior to enrolment.

When the error was identified, the College contacted the software provider and a software patch was applied to the system. The College has put in place an additional procedure to verify the attendance report for DE students.

1. Every five term weeks, the DE Admin Officer (Attendance) will run an attendance report for all DE students by:
    a. Go to https://sentral.acc.edu.au
    b. Navigate to the “School Attendance Module”
    c. Click “Reports”
    d. Navigate to the “Official Record of Attendance”
    e. Filter for DE Class Lists
    f. Print
2. The DE Admin Officer (Attendance) will look for two issues:
    a. DE students being reported as absent when they were present in the distance education program (identified by block periods of absence).
    b. DE students reported as present prior to enrolment (identified by correlating the attendance record with the student enrolment date in the DE Register of Enrolments).
3. In the event that an issue is found, the DE Admin Officer (Attendance) will:
    a. Report the matter to the Head of Distance Education
    b. Report the matter to the software provider (Sentral)
    c. Modify the information in the class roll with notes in the student file

The Minister's Delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act

The Principal has the authority to grant a Certificate of Exemption (as per Section 25 of the Education Act 1990) for the following:

1. sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness.
2. an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student
3. full-time apprenticeship or traineeship before completing Year 10. Approval will mean exemption from attendance at school totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student

4. part-time apprenticeship or traineeship before completing Year 10 totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student.

Certificates of Exemption will be copied and maintained in the student's file.

Certificates of Exemption can be granted after an absence has occurred.

Applications for Extended Leave - Including Due to Travel

Travel, either local or international, is no longer considered eligible for consideration as an exemption under the Exemptions from Attendance and Enrolment. Parents or applicants are required to complete an Application for Extended Leave and it is at the Principal's discretion to accept the reason provided by the parent or applicant relating to the travel request.

The Principal can request travel documentation from the parent, including a travel itinerary or e-ticket, as the school needs evidence of the travel which must be attached to the application. There is no minimum or maximum period of time that a parent may request leave for the student, however, if the leave request exceeds a school term, enrolment in distance education or another school may be considered.

If the Principal accepts the reason and agrees to grant a period of leave to the student then the principal will complete a Certificate of Extended Leave and record 'L' for the given period on the school's attendance register. The parent should be issued with the original Certificate of Extended Leave (as they may be required to produce the Certificate on demand from the Department of Immigration) and a copy of the Certificate and the application should be kept on the student's file.

Archiving of Attendance Records for DE Students

In the event that a student leaves the school, the Administration Officer will change the status of the student from active to archived in Sentral.

Sentral retains all student records and attendance records while they are enrolled in school and after they have left the college.

The school acknowledges the requirement to:

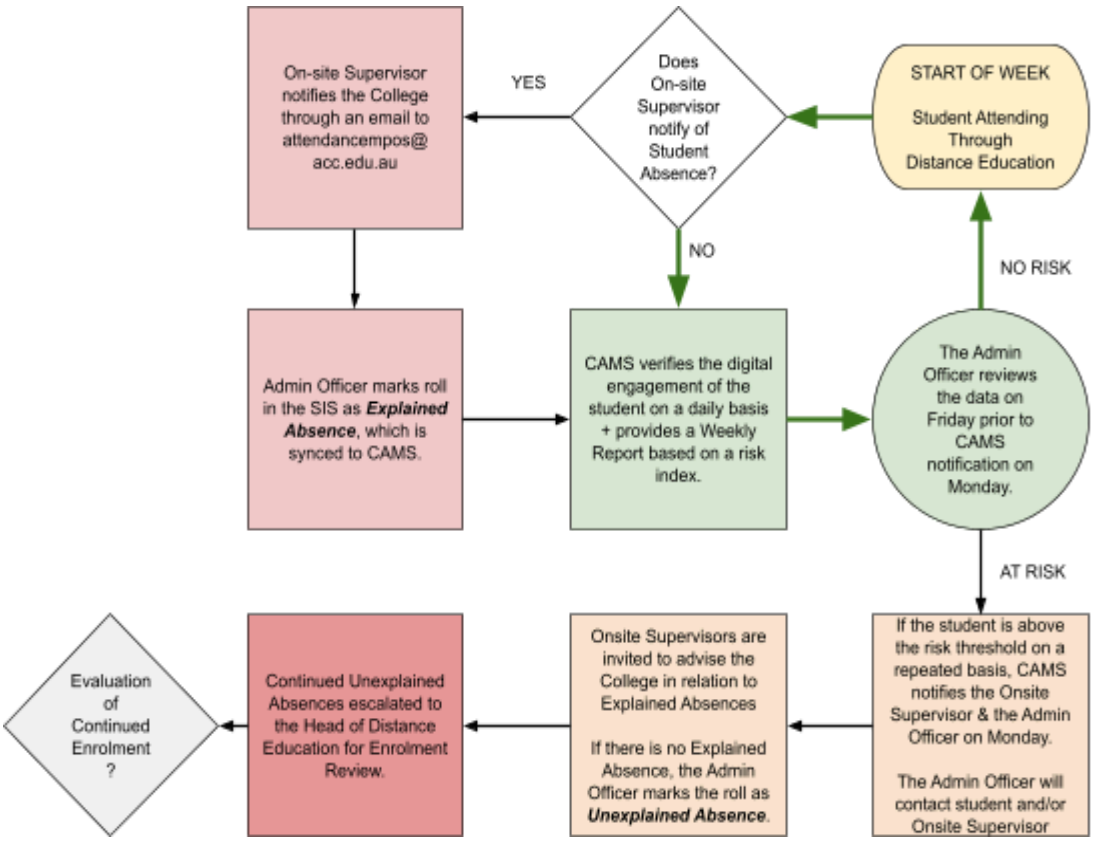
1. Retain the Register of Enrolments for five years after a student leaves the school
2. Retain the daily attendance record for seven years after the student leaves the school
3. The data in Sentral is backed up across two web servers and the data is also backed up through a data snapshot process on a nightly basis.

Appendix 1

CAMS System

The College uses the term “CAMS” (College Attendance Monitoring System) to refer to the internal system that captures student work that can be tracked using digital means.

The purpose of this system is to assist in the verification of student attendance in Distance Education through digital means. Data is automatically compiled on a daily basis and audited on a weekly basis through a manual process of verification.



CAMS verifies the digital engagement of the student on a daily basis. On the Monday of the following week, a report is compiled for students with low engagement, providing a risk index for each of these students that is sent to the DE Teacher responsible for the student.

If the student is identified as above the risk threshold on a repeated basis. CAMS notifies the Onsite Supervisor & the DE Admin Officer (Attendance).

A user-friendly explanation of the CAMS Algorithm is available on request but specific coding elements have been redacted to protect the integrity of the system.

How are students at risk are identified with CAMS?

1. Based on the course participation difference between the start and end of week. (Prioritises - Progress made, does not necessarily consider outstanding/late tasks -> Grade guardian)
2. Each course is firstly determined if it is of "concern"/"not a concern" (Hence important for students with 'reduced load' to be deactivated from course)
3. Course participation threshold based on an average.
4. Students on a "reduced pace" have their threshold set as half the threshold of regular-paced students.
5. If more than 50% of courses are identified as "of concern", the student will be identified as "@ risk"

When are students notified?

1. On Monday, for the week past: "Students @ Risk" summary email will be generated at 9AM and sent to key DE teachers for manual review and feedback.
2. Parents will be sent a notification at 4PM if their child's name appears on this list.

What to do MONDAY: 9AM-4PM

1. Teachers check the "Students @ Risk" list for any suspected anomalies AND identify any students who should not be sent notification emails. Notify the DE Systems Manager, by replying to email before 4PM.
2. Attendance officer will collate and notify the DE Systems Manager (to update CAMS):
3. Notices of future absence (Student "white listed", so as not to be notified in future)
4. Notices of past absence (Student risk level de-escalated, once absence has been changed from "un-explained" to "explained").

What to do during week:

1. Forward any notices of absences to mpde.attendance@acc.edu.au
2. Reply to the DE Systems Manager's "Students @ Risk" email if not working on Monday & identify students who should not be notified (Attendance fixed in retrospect)

Appendix 2

Roll marking for DE Attendance (engagement)

This is published to families as part of the Orientation course:

While we appreciate that families in Distance Education have chosen it for the flexibility it offers, both the family and school have a responsibility to ensure that students are active in their efforts and learning. If you are absent or plan to be absent for a period of time from your distance education courses, and this may be for valid reasons such as illness or misadventure, please follow directions below to indicate which dates you will be away. This will ensure that appropriate provisions can be made to accommodate your learning and participation and that your absence, will not affect your successful completion of those course requirements.

- Keep on top of all subjects, not just your favourites. The regular Lesson Quizzes/Check-ins are evidence of engagement, so don't miss them!
- If you get sick or expect an interruption to study that impacts your formal Assessment task due dates, please submit an 'Illness & Misadventure' form in the Parent Portal
- We mark Distance Education students 'PRESENT' each day that we believe they are actively engaged and will be recorded each day as one of these:
  - ‘Present’ (default) - Learning at home
  - ‘Explained’ - “B” (school business) - Attending Residential/Carnival
  - Families should expect a typical school commitment of 6hrs/day (with breaks), 30hrs/week within each week (Asynchronous flexibility: It could be Saturday instead of Wednesday, etc). If "a day's work" is taking significantly less or more time, please discuss this with the Mentor teacher for your grade/year.
- We mark Distance Education students 'ABSENT' when:
  - Send an email explaining the reason to mpde.attendance@acc.edu.au which includes these vital points:
    - Student's name and grade *(e.g. Sam Smith, Yr.6)*
    - date or dates of affected
    - reason for the absence
    - attached copy of evidence if available (medical/clinical certificate)
    - name of parent submitting it
    - *Please also contact the student's Homeroom teacher if your absent notice included a question, otherwise they may not be aware of this.*
  - Recurring patterns of poor engagement with no explanation provided will be marked as:
    - ‘Unexplained’ - (AWOL / MIA) - No acceptable reason given
    - Poor engagement can be identified by the College and are typically raised with families on Mondays, after a full week has passed (Monday morning through to Sunday evening). Five days worth of engagement should be completed within each seven day week.

- We hear from the Supervisor that they did not attend for whatever reason and will be recorded each day as:
  - ‘Explained’ - “S” absent (sick, appointments) - Justified reason given
  - ‘Explained’ - “L” absent (approved leave, authorised event) - Justified reason given
- If we don't hear from the Supervisor, but we have noticed very little or no engagement in a student's Canvas account over a week, Supervisors will initially be contacted and asked to provide an explanation.
- Students who expect to be absent for more than 10 consecutive school days must have their Supervisor complete an Extended Leave Application form to attach and email to mpde.attendance@acc.edu.au

Policy Implementation Information	
Author	Jeremy Kwok Brendan Corr Luke Reifler
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