

Overseas Student Visa Requirements Policy and Procedures

For monitoring attendance and course progress

Definitions:

German School Johannes Gutenberg is the name of school provider; **CRICOS Provider ID:** 02379D

German International School Sydney is the trading name of the school

The **written agreement** consists of the completed Enrolment Form, including the acceptance of the general Terms and Conditions and an additional Overseas Students Acceptance Agreement.

The Principal Executive Officer (PEO) is the **Principal**. The PEO may delegate responsibility to an appropriate staff member.

Policy

German School Johannes Gutenberg is approved by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs) to deliver courses to overseas students and is registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is developed in accordance with the:

- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth);
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 8 and Standard 10);
- NSW Education Act 1990; and
- NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs) Guidelines for Approved NSW School Providers Delivering Courses to Overseas Students.

Attendance and Course Progress definitions

German School Johannes Gutenberg supports overseas students to complete their course within the required duration and to fulfil their visa requirements related to course progress and attendance.

German School Johannes Gutenberg monitors overseas students' course progress and attendance rates regularly.

Students are informed if they are at risk of not meeting the requirements for course progress or attendance. German School Johannes Gutenberg will implement interventions to support students who have been identified as 'at risk' of not meeting requirements, always attempting to support them to improve their course progress and attendance rates.

If required, German School Johannes Gutenberg will report overseas students for not meeting attendance or course progress visa requirements.

Attendance requirement:

- Overseas students must maintain at least 80% attendance. A rate below 80% will be reported to the Australian Government via PRISMS unless compassionate or compelling circumstances exist.
- Any overseas student whose attendance drops to 70% or below will be reported for breach of visa conditions.

Course progress requirement:

- **K-10 Students:** Must demonstrate satisfactory progress by meeting advancement criteria to the next year level.
- **Years 11 and 12 (IBDP):** Must either:
 - Have no failing conditions; or
 - Be actively addressing failing conditions through agreed interventions.

Failing conditions and unsatisfactory course progress are defined in the Assessment and Reporting Policy. Students failing to meet course progress will be reported via PRISMS.

Modes of delivery

German School Johannes Gutenberg does not provide distance learning to enrolled students.

German School Johannes Gutenberg does not use online learning as a format for course delivery but from time to time may implement aspects of online learning to benefit learning outcomes for overseas students. If online learning is required, it will not disadvantage overseas students.

Duration of study

The expected duration of study specified in an overseas student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will not exceed the CRICOS registered duration of a course.

Welfare arrangements for overseas students under 18 years of age

German School Johannes Gutenberg will ensure appropriate accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements are in place for overseas students under 18, including issuing and maintaining Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) records and reporting any changes through PRISMS in accordance with the National Code.

Document Management

All records relating to attendance monitoring, course progress, intervention plans, welfare arrangements, PRISMS reporting, and complaints and appeals will be retained in accordance with ESOS Act requirements and NESA CRICOS audit expectations.

Procedure

Communication of visa requirements for course progress and attendance to overseas students

The Registrar provides overseas students with information about visa requirements for course progress and attendance before they commence their course via the Overseas Student Handbook and website.

Monitoring course attendance

1. Daily attendance for each student is recorded in the daily attendance register of the German International School Sydney (GISS) (see *GISS Attendance Procedures* for processes).
2. If an overseas student is absent for 5 consecutive days or more without prior approval the Principal will be notified by the Registrar. This absence would be identified by the Receptionist or Class Teacher.
3. Attendance rates are determined each semester during the formal reporting period and the amount of absences are noted on the overseas student's school report.

Increased absenteeism is identified through the following mechanisms:

- Receptionist's becomes aware of repeated or ongoing absences during Compass data entry and review of absence notifications made by parents. Any concerns are then raised with the Registrar and class teachers.
 - Class or subject teacher observe repeated or ongoing absences during roll marking for every lesson and raise concerns with Registrar.
 - Registrar's regular term-based analysis and reporting
4. The attendance rates of overseas students are reviewed each term by the Registrar. This is done by calculating the cumulative attendance rate over the academic year, or for a selected reporting period, using data from Compass (the School's database for student records), which includes the attendance register, academic reports, teachers notes about course progress and intervention strategies.
 5. An overseas student is defined as 'at risk' of not meeting attendance requirements if their attendance rate is 85% or less in any one Term.

Triggering interventions

1. If the Registrar or class teacher identifies that an overseas student is at 'at risk', that is, their attendance rate is 85% in any one Semester, the *Interventions to improve course progress and attendance* will apply.
2. If an overseas student is absent for 5 consecutive days or more without prior approval the Registrar will contact the overseas student and parent/legal guardian. This absence will immediately trigger a meeting to implement an attendance intervention plan.

Monitoring of satisfactory course progress

1. Overseas student's course progress will be monitored, assessed and reported by Subject Teachers every Semester, according to the Assessment and Reporting Policy.
2. Overseas student course progress will be monitored by one or more of the following methods:
 - Diagnostic, Formative and Summative Assessments
 - Reviewing academic reports
 - Communication with and feedback from the overseas student's teachers
 - Reviewing assignments and test results
 - Reviewing homework and class work
 - Self-Evaluation of class participation
3. The Subject Teacher will identify if an overseas student is 'at risk' of not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements as defined in this policy using the methods identified in detail within the Assessment and Reporting Policy.
4. Students are "at risk" of not meeting satisfactory course progress:
 - In Years K-2: when the Semester 1 progress report indicates several key areas where the student is working at a basic or limited capacity, particularly across main subjects including German, Mathematics and English*.
 - In Years 3-4: when the Semester 1 report grade achieved or the predicted report grade for Semester 2 is 4.0 or higher, in average.*
 - In Years 5 to 10: when the Semester 1 report grade achieved or the predicted report grade for Semester 2 is 4.0 or higher, in average.
 - In Years 11 and 12 (IB): when a student achieved less than 4 points in two or more subjects.

*EAL/D students graded according to the Language Progression Phases.

Interventions to improve course progress and attendance

1. If an overseas student is identified as being 'at risk' of not meeting course progress and/or attendance requirements the Class or Subject Teacher in liaison with the Diverse Learning Coordinator will contact the parents/legal guardian and the overseas student to arrange a meeting.
2. If required, an interpreter will be available at the meeting.
3. Other relevant people may also be invited to the meeting such as any local guardian or other key adult to support the student and/or relevant school support services staff, such as the School Counsellor, other Members of the Learning Diversity Team or the Head of Primary/Secondary School.
4. At the meeting, the Diverse Learning Coordinator will coordinate the development of an intervention plan with relevant staff, the student and their parent/legal guardian, including a timeframe for review and assessment, to support the overseas student.
5. A record of the meeting and a copy of the intervention plan will be stored in the overseas student's file by the Diverse Learning Coordinator. The student and their parent/legal guardian will be provided a copy. It will be translated if required.

6. The Diverse Learning Coordinator will monitor implementation of the intervention plan.
7. If the student's attendance/course progress improves, the Diverse Learning Coordinator will determine next steps. Any continuing intervention will be recorded, communicated to the parent/legal guardian (including translation if required) and records will be stored in the overseas student's file by Diverse Learning Coordinator.
8. If there is no or minimal improvement the Diverse Learning Coordinator will determine if the overseas student remains 'at risk' of not achieving satisfactory course progress and/or attendance requirements.
9. A second intervention plan may be implemented. Parents/legal guardians will be provided all communication (including translation if required) and all records placed in the overseas student's file by the Diverse Learning Coordinator.
10. The Diverse Learning Coordinator will determine if the intervention plan is still required, OR if the student is determined as not meeting satisfactory course progress/attendance requirements. Timeframes for this decision will vary according to the individual intervention plan.
11. If the Diverse Learning Coordinator has determined that the student has not met course progress/attendance requirements and makes a recommendation to the Principal to implement procedures for *Reporting unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory course attendance*.

Intervention strategies

1. The German International School Sydney implements a range of attendance monitoring and improvement strategies to increase engagement in school and learning.
2. Strategies included in an intervention plan to improve attendance/course progress may include:
 - Participation in tuition activities
 - English or German language support
 - Planning for homework and assessment tasks
 - Study skills support
 - Developing organisational and time management skills
 - Counselling
 - Other strategies negotiated with the student
 - Attendance improvement plan as described in GISS Attendance Procedure.
3. German School Johannes Gutenberg will implement the German International School Sydney's policies and procedures for attendance (developed in compliance with the *NSW Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools Manual*) for all overseas students as students enrolled in the school.

Reporting unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory course attendance

1. The Principal will provide written notice to a student and their parent/legal guardian of an intention to report unsatisfactory progress and/or attendance in PRISMS **before** making a report and only **after** the above *Interventions to improve course progress and attendance* procedures have been implemented.
2. The written notice will include:
 - a statement that German School Johannes Gutenberg intends to report the overseas student for unsatisfactory course progress and/or unsatisfactory course attendance
 - the reasons for the intention to report

- advice that the overseas student and the parent/legal guardian can access German School Johannes Gutenberg's complaints and appeals process, in accordance with National Code Standard 10, within 20 working days.
3. If required, communications to the parent/legal guardian will be translated.
4. A record of the written notice will be filed in the overseas student's file by the Registrar.
5. The Principal will only make the decision to the report unsatisfactory course progress and/or attendance in PRISMS if:
 - any internal and external complaints process is complete, and the decision or recommendation supports German School Johannes Gutenberg, 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 formally withdraws from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying the Registrar in writing.
6. If the above conditions (point 5) have been met, the Registrar will make the unsatisfactory course progress/attendance report in PRISMS.
7. Appeals: students and/or their parents/guardians can appeal any decisions made in accordance with the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure for Overseas Students*, which applies to overseas students and meets the requirements of the National Code Standard 10.

Compassionate or compelling circumstances

1. If a student has an attendance rate of at least 70%, and compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, German School Johannes Gutenberg may decide not to report an overseas student for breaching the visa attendance requirement.
2. The Principal will make the decision about whether circumstances are compassionate and compelling for German School Johannes Gutenberg not to report the student.
3. The Principal may require documentation when deciding if a circumstance is compassionate or compelling.
4. Compassionate or compelling circumstances could include, but are not limited to:
 - serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas student was unable to attend classes
 - bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible, a death certificate should be provided)
 - major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the overseas student's studies; or
 - a traumatic experience, which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)
5. The Principal's decision is final.
6. Records related to reporting attendance rates will be maintained in the overseas student's file by the Registrar.

Course duration

1. The Registrar reviews all CoEs during Term 1 each calendar year to confirm alignment of CoE end date and expected completion of course date for students.
2. The Registrar completes reviews by checking CoE dates in PRISMS.
3. German School Johannes Gutenberg does not generally use a pathways or repeated Years of study program for overseas students.

Allowable extensions of course duration

1. German School Johannes Gutenberg will not extend the duration of the overseas student's enrolment if a student is unable to complete the course within the expected duration, unless:
 - there are compassionate or compelling circumstances, as assessed by the Diverse Learning Coordinator based on demonstratable evidence, or
 - the Diverse Learning Coordinator has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, an intervention strategy for the overseas student because the overseas student is 'at risk' of not meeting course progress requirements, or
 - an approved deferral or suspension of the overseas student's enrolment has occurred under National Code Standard 9 (Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment).
2. If German School Johannes Gutenberg extends the duration of an overseas student's enrolment, the Registrar will advise the overseas student and parent/legal guardian in writing. The written notice will include a statement that the student and parent/legal guardian should contact Immigration to seek advice on any impact on the student's visa, including the possible need to obtain a new visa.
3. All correspondence will be provided in English and translated if required. A copy of correspondence will be stored in the overseas student's file by the Registrar.

Document Management

Policy name	Overseas Student Visa Requirement Policy and Procedures
Version	1.1
School responsible	Principal
Board portfolio	Governance and Strategy
Related documents	GISS Attendance Policy, GISS Attendance Procedure, Assessment and Reporting Policy Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure: Overseas Students
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