



International School of Creative Arts

Attendance Policy

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ISCA School Attendance Policy

Introduction

The ISCA attendance policy is intended to address the following points:

1. To protect the safety of students by ensuring that all boarding students are on campus, unless authorised to be absent
2. To support the students' academic progress by enforcing attendance at timetabled classes
3. To conform to Home Office, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) reporting requirements so that ISCA performs its Tier 4 sponsorship duties effectively.

Attendance Monitoring

Attendance is monitored in the morning before class through paper registers compliant to UKVI, and in the evening by electronic registration to safe guard students and ensure all are present. Additional registration is conducted by all subject tutors as a method of monitoring progress and ensuring students are accessing teaching contact hours in line with school attendance targets. Registers are held centrally in the school office for administrative access and monitoring. On a weekly basis, attendance data is entered into the school database, which automatically generates attendance statistics that enhance the schools monitoring capability.

Absence – definition and type

Authorised v. Unauthorised absence

If a student has a reason for being absent which the School decides is justified, the student will be marked as having an 'authorised' absence. If their reason for absence is unjustified, the absence will be marked as 'unauthorised'. Arriving late at the start of term, or leaving before the end of term, usually will be classified as an unauthorised absence.

Absence due to illness

If a student is unable to return to School after a holiday or weekend away due to illness, they or a parent/guardian must notify the School by email to exeat@isca.uk.com. Until they inform the School, their absence will be marked as 'unauthorised'.

The student should produce authorised medical evidence/a certificate for any extended period of absence (over 5 days).

Absence due to an appointment

If a student needs to leave School during timetabled classes because they have an appointment, they must inform the School Office 24 hours ahead of time and complete a Permission Form. As far as possible, appointments should be made outside School hours, so that their programme of study is not interrupted. (Refer to the list below for reasons considered as appropriate authorised absences)

Absence due to illness whilst in School

If students are too ill to attend morning registration, they must inform boarding staff before 8:30 am via WhatsApp using the boarding phone number. Until they do this, their absence will be marked as 'unauthorised'.

On receiving notification of illness from a student, the on-duty boarding member of staff will either ask the student to come to the Sick Bay or visit the student in her/his room, depending on how ill the student is deemed to be. After meeting the student, boarding staff will decide whether their absence can be Authorised and what action to take e.g. recommend student rests for the morning, send student to see a doctor etc.

If a student falls ill during the School day, they should report to either Sick Bay or the School Office. The School Secretary or the on-duty member of boarding staff will decide whether their absence can be authorised and what action to take.

Absence due to an accident whilst in School

If a student cannot attend classes following an accident necessitating medical intervention, then the matter should be reported to the School Office, and the absence will be authorised.

Criteria for Authorised Absence

The following would be considered suitable reasons for an authorised absence:

- Sickness (medical evidence required for any absence over 3 days).
- Medical appointments that could not be made outside School hours.
- Visits to therapists/counsellors that could not be made outside School hours.
- Visits to university/HE Open Days or career-related interviews - as discussed with and agreed by their tutors.
- Attendance at a funeral or wedding of a close family member.

- Severe travel disruption that leaves students with no method of travel.
- A driving test.
- Genuine family emergencies.
- Exceptional extra-curricular activities such as representative sport at national, regional or county level.
- Adverse weather conditions that lead to travel disruption.

The following would be considered unacceptable reasons for authorised absence:

- Holidays during term time.
- Part or full-time work that is not part of a programme of study.
- Leisure activities.
- Birthdays or family celebrations.
- Babysitting.
- Driving lessons.
- Dropping or picking up family members at/from airports.
- Caring for friends or family members.

The above lists are not exhaustive and each request should be considered on its merit.

Registration

Evening Registration

Evening registration takes place every evening from 21.30 (9.30 pm).

Attendance at Evening Registration must be 100%, unless a student has permission to be off campus (weekends only) or has authorised absence (see below for details). If a student does not attend Evening Registration, Boarding staff will make every effort to find the student. If a student is delayed and is unable to attend Evening Registration, they must contact the on-duty Boarding member of staff on the Boarding phone. Attendance for students on a School trip will be taken by the member(s) of staff supervising the trip.

If a student appears to be absent from campus without permission, this will be taken very seriously (see Student Withdrawal below).

Morning Registration

Morning Registration is carried out by Tutors before the start of morning classes. Students must attend Morning Registration even if they have no timetabled classes that day. Tutors will fill in the registers as follows:

1 - Present

0 – Absent

L – Late (Student arrived after the start of Registration)

A - Authorised absence (Student is absent for a known and approved reason)

Any student who arrives after the end of Registration must report to the School Office as soon as possible. If a valid reason is given for lateness, then the Absent mark (0) may be changed to L (Late).

If a student is absent, the School will only authorise their absence if an acceptable reason is given, together with proof if appropriate. Whenever an 'A' is entered on the Register, a reason must be given on the Authorised Absence sheet kept with the Register. Authorised absence will normally be entered by the School Office, who will have evidence to support the absence. Normally, Authorised Absence should only be entered by a Tutor if there is an academic reason for absence, e.g. an interview, IELTS test.

If a student is persistently late or regularly misses Registration, then sanctions will be put in place.

Registers must be returned to the School Office immediately after the end of Morning Registration. The Office will then alert the Boarding Staff to any students who have unauthorised absence to establish a reason for absence.

Class Registration

Subject tutors are responsible for maintaining registers for students attending their classes. A roll call should be taken within the first five minutes of the lesson and then a second time after students return from break. Tutors will fill in the registers as follows:

1 - Present

0 – Absent

L – Late (Student arrived after the start of Registration)

A - Authorised absence (Student is absent for a known and approved reason)

The following rules will be applied both at the start of the lesson AND again when students return from break:

- Any student who is not present for the rollcall will be marked Absent (0).
- If a valid reason is given for lateness, then the Absent mark (0) may be changed to L (Late).
- If a student reports arrives more than **10 minutes** after the start of the lesson then the Absent (0) mark will stand.
- Students who leave the classroom (to go to the toilet, for example) and do not return or return after an unduly long period of time, will be marked Absent (0) for the whole period.
- Every morning and every afternoon the boarding member of staff on chase-up duty will email all teachers with a list of those students with authorised absence from class. In these cases, teachers will change the Absent mark (0) to an Authorised Absence mark (A).

The member of boarding staff on chase-up duty will visit every classroom within the first 10 minutes of the morning and afternoon sessions to check on attendance and then chase up students who are absent. Teachers should send a message to the Boarding Phone if students disappear from class during the lesson or do not return after the break. In this way, boarding staff can chase up students and check out the reason for their absence.

If students persistently miss class, the tutor should fill in a Cause for Concern report and send it to the Head of School if the case is urgent, or raise the problem at the weekly Cause for Concern Meetings so that appropriate action will be decided.

Attendance and Requirements

Students are expected to maintain their attendance by being present in each subject for at least 80% of Class Registrations, taking all tests and submitting all assignments set by their tutors. The School believes that students whose attendance falls below this level will be jeopardising their chances of achieving their academic potential. 'Authorised Absences' will be counted as an absence in this calculation. Four 'Lates' will be counted as equivalent to one absence.

Failure to satisfy the above requirements will have serious implications for the successful completion of the student's course. In particular, students may not be permitted to enter for examinations and/or submit assignments if their attendance level is unsatisfactory.

The parents/guardians of students who do not maintain the required attendance levels will be informed, and in extreme cases, the student may be excluded from the School. However, this step would only be taken after full consultation with the student and after careful consideration by the Senior Management Team (SMT). Every effort will be made to support students whose absence is due to extenuating circumstances.

If a student's attendance is being affected by difficulties which they feel gives them extenuating circumstances, the student should discuss this with his or her Monitoring Tutor in the first instance, who may then refer the student to the Head of School.

International Students

As far as possible, attendance policies will be applied to all students, regardless of whether or not they are in the UK on a student visa. However, the attendance of students who are studying on a student visa is governed by UKVI regulations, which have to be taken into account at all times.

The UKVI requires that students studying at levels 5 and below be required to attend a minimum of 15 hours per week. In addition, attendance must be carefully monitored and students reported after 10 consecutive missed 'contacts'. However, every effort is made to work with students who have genuine health or other reasons for poor attendance.

'Contacts' are defined as Morning Registration. Class Registration is not considered a 'contact'.

Sanctions

Please see ISCA Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy for details.

Student Withdrawal

Because ISCA is a boarding school, any unauthorised absence of a student from the ISCA campus will be taken very seriously. If a student misses Morning, Evening or Class Registration and cannot be found on campus or reached by mobile phone or email, the student's parents

and/or UK guardian will be contacted in the first instance. If the student remains out of contact then the police will be informed and, if necessary, a missing person's report will be filed.

Apart from any police activity which may be underway in relation to a student's absence, if a student fails to respond to all efforts to contact him/her then a final letter/email will be sent informing the student that if we do not hear from them within 5 working days, we will assume that the student has withdrawn from the course. If the student does not contact us within that period, the student will be deemed to have withdrawn from the course.

If the student contacts the School but is still not attending then extenuating circumstances will be considered and if appropriate, the student will be given the opportunity to defer his or her studies to a future intake. In the absence of acceptable extenuating circumstances, a student who has missed more than 10 consecutive contacts will normally be deemed to have withdrawn from the course.

International students

If an international (Tier 4 visa) student reaches 10 consecutive missed 'contacts' then a final attempt will be made to contact the student (via parents/guardians as necessary). If the School is unable to establish contact with the student, then UK Visas and Immigration will be notified within 10 days of the last recorded contact.

It is important to note that if a student on a Tier 4 visa leaves the school for whatever reason, prior to the end of their course, this must be reported to UKVI within 10 working days. Failure to do this puts the School's Tier 4 Sponsor Status at serious risk.

Appendix A: Sample email – Informing parents of poor attendance

Dear

Re: Attendance for

I am writing to inform you of your son/daughter's poor attendance figures at ISCA. He/she has failed to attend classes and has not provided the School with a satisfactory reason for his/her absence.

Please inform the School if there are any personal, family or health issues which may affect his/her continued attendance. We are and will continue to be a caring educational establishment, but the care has to operate both ways with effective communication required from student and parent/guardian and the School.

Your son/daughter may now be required to attend additional weekend study sessions to make up for the classes he/she has missed. If his/her attendance does not improve then the School will have no choice but to impose further sanctions.

Our primary concern is for the welfare of our students and to help them succeed in achieving their academic and creative potential. We would greatly appreciate your support in encouraging your son/daughter to improve their attendance so that their time at ISCA is not wasted.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix B: Sample email – Curtailment of permission to leave campus

To be sent to parent/guardian and copied to student

Dear

Re: Attendance for

We regret to inform you that despite having received several warnings, your son/daughter's attendance at classes has not been satisfactory.

We expect high levels of co-operation between students and the School and as a highly respected institution we are not prepared to compromise our standards with students who fail to attend or make satisfactory academic commitment.

If there are any extenuating circumstances which you feel should be taken into account, please contact our Head of School, as a matter of great urgency.

In the case of extenuating circumstances, we will make every effort to put the necessary pastoral care in place. However in all other cases, your son/daughter will be required to undertake additional classes during the weekends and to abide by further sanctions to be determined by the Head of School, but which could include loss of permission to leave the site, and commitment to community service within the School grounds.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix C: Sample email – Final Warning

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Attendance for

It is with great regret that we are informing you that your son/daughter's attendance has not improved.

We have made every effort to support the student from our side by requiring him/her to attend additional study sessions at weekends to make up for missed classes. We have also imposed sanctions including loss of permission to leave the site, and community service within the School grounds in an effort to impress on him/her the seriousness of the situation.

Please make your son/daughter aware that continued poor attendance is likely to put his/her chances of achieving success on the course in serious doubt. If we do not see an immediate improvement in his/her attendance the Head of School will be forced to consider whether he/she can be entered for examinations and ultimately whether he/she will be permitted to continue the course.

Yours sincerely,