

POLICY & PROCEDURAL STATEMENTS

Topic: RTO-Attendance, Suspended Training, and Withdrawal

Policy: Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley Inc. (ANH@E) is committed to ensuring the best educational outcomes for students to complete their training and successfully achieve the desired qualification/Statement of Attainment, whilst adhering to the requirements of funding bodies regarding student attendance and withdrawal from government funded classes.

This policy is designed to provide students with clear information about attendance requirements and the process for a student to suspend their training or withdraw/exit prior to course completion. This policy includes the procedures ANH@E has in place to monitor student attendance and progress.

Definitions:

Attendance: the number of hours or percentage of time present in class to successfully complete the course and/or unit of competency, inclusive of all theory and/or practical components required. In order to complete the course work an 80 per cent attendance rate is required for all accredited and funded training courses. Students are also required to arrive on time as late arrivals disrupt classes. Regular lateness and absences will affect satisfactory completion of class requirements and may lead to a failure to achieve the necessary competencies of the course. These recommendations are included in the Student Handbook.

Suspended enrolment status: a student or ANH@E may agree (verbally or in writing and noted on file) that the student's engagement in their current course will pause for a specified period of time and then recommence under the same or similar terms and conditions. This enrolment status can also sometimes be referred to as a *deferral*.

Withdrawal: to cease participation in a course of study due to illness or other compassionate or compelling circumstances that is negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Punctuality: to arrive to class on time and be prepared to commence learning within designated class times.

Discontinuation of enrolment: the immediate release/removal of a student from a course including, but not limited to, when a student has:

- Demonstrated a continued disregard for course minimum requirements or the Student Code of Conduct; and/or
- Improper or inappropriate behaviour (refer to Student Code of Conduct and Harassment and Bullying Policy).

Discontinuation of enrolment is a consequence of last resort.

Attendance and progress monitoring:

1. Tutors are responsible for checking and marking attendance rolls for each class. If the reason is known for the absence (for example, the student has called in) the reason must be recorded on the attendance roll.
2. For late arrivals and early departures, tutors are responsible for recording the class arrival or departure time on the attendance roll.
3. If the absence is unexplained, the Further Education Coordinator must be notified. The Further Education Coordinator (or other RTO team member) will attempt to contact the student or agency to determine the reason for the absence/s. All such discussions and follow ups will be documented and filed in the student's admin folder.
4. In the ReFresh/Renew Program follow up of absences will be undertaken by the Youth Worker and communicated to the tutors and Further Education Coordinator.
5. If the Further Education Coordinator is unable to contact the student, the emergency contact person listed in the student admin file will be telephoned.
6. Students with an unexplained absence will be reminded of attendance requirements and the need to inform Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley Inc. if they are unable to attend class.
7. The Further Education Coordinator or Youth worker in all instances will keep tutors and RTO Compliance Coordinator informed of developments related to student absences.
8. Students who fail to attend class after 4 weeks unexplained absence will be withdrawn from the course.

Suspending training:

1. Where possible, students seeking to suspend their training must either meet or discuss with their tutor or the Further Education Coordinator reasons for needing to defer their studies.
2. Students may be able to temporarily defer the commencement of their studies or temporarily suspend their enrolment after commencement where they have a good reason to do so. ANH@E is only able to temporarily defer or suspend the enrolment of the student on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. These circumstances could include but are not limited to:
 - Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes.
 - Bereavement of close family members.
 - 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 student.

The above are only some of examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. The Further Education Coordinator and Manager will use their professional judgment to assess each case on its individual merits.

3. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, the RTO will consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim and will keep copies of these documents in the student's file.
4. A student wishing to suspend their enrolment must complete a 'Suspended Training Form' and submit to the Further Education Coordinator. This form must include the 'compassionate or compelling circumstances' to support the temporary deferral of their studies.
5. If possible, a date the student intends on returning to studies will be recorded on the Suspended Training Form. This will be done in consultation with the student.
6. To suspend the student from the course, the Suspended Training Form will be forwarded to the RTO Compliance Coordinator.
7. The student will be entered as suspended in VETtrak and funded claims suspended during the period of absence. This is done to avoid paying back of funds to Skills Victoria on the off chance the student is unable to return. If the student does return, funds are claimed for the period they are engaged in their training.

Withdrawal:

1. Where possible, students exiting a course prior to completion must either meet or discuss with their tutor or the Further Education Coordinator reasons for not continuing/withdrawing. If a student does not want to meet with the tutor and/or Further Education Coordinator, the RTO Manager can nominate either themselves or another ANH@E representative to be present.
2. Prior to withdrawal and if the student agrees, the course tutor/Further Education Coordinator and/or RTO Manager will identify if the student is able to continue their training with appropriate support. If this is possible and support services are deemed appropriate internal support services will be arranged. Where external support services are deemed appropriate, the student will be provided with service details and a referral letter.
3. Following withdrawal from a course, the student will not be enrolled in any subsequent courses or units of competency without clear written instructions from the student that they wish to enrol/re-enrol. The student must select, initiate and/or request a new enrolment in subsequent units of study.
4. Students who withdraw from a course will be issued with a Statement of Attainment for those units in which they have been assessed as being competent, subject to payment of all outstanding fees.
5. To withdraw a student the 'Withdrawal Form for RTO Classes' and 'Withdrawal Evidence of Participation Form' must be completed and forwarded to the RTO Compliance Coordinator for processing.

6. In order to make a claim for hours attended, the following is required by Skills Victoria to meet VET Funding Contract requirements:
 - If the student has attended 30 days or fewer, 1 form of evidence of participation is required.
 - If the student has attended more than 30 days, 2 forms of evidence of participation (both in a *different form, for example class attendance roll and completed student work*) is required.
 - the first form of evidence is no later than 30 days after the actual start date (and no earlier than it)
 - the second is no earlier than 30 days before the actual end date (and no later than it)
 - the student work must include the student’s name, the unit name and code and the date it was completed. A piece of completed work is required from the student for each unit being studied.
7. If evidence meets the VET funding contract requirements, the RTO Compliance Coordinator will calculate how many hours to claim and record in VETtrak funded hours claiming.
8. If there is not the required evidence of participation, then “0” hours must be reported to Skills Victoria.
9. If the student has been withdrawn in VETtrak after the monthly upload has occurred and Skills Victoria have not yet paid, the RTO Compliance Coordinator must go into to the Skills Victoria funding portal (SVTS) and “unconfirm claim” to avoid paying back funding for that student for that month.
10. All withdrawals need to be reported to Skills Victoria no later than two (2) months from the point of withdrawal.

This policy has been re-named from RTO-Student Attendance and withdrawal to RTO-Attendance, Suspended Training, and Withdrawal. The policy was reviewed in May 2021 and will be reviewed again in May 2023.

Signed..... CoM Meeting Date.....