



**AUSTRALIAN
TRADE
SKILLS**

COMPLETION WITHIN EXPECTED DURATION

Standards for RTOs 2015 and ESOS Act

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PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Compliance to Standard 11 of the National Code - Registered providers monitor the workload of students to ensure they complete the course within the duration specified in their COE and do not exceed the allowable portion of online or distance learning. Registered providers only enable students to extend the expected duration of study for the course through the issuing of a new COE in limited circumstances.

This standard allows students to study up to 25 per cent of their total course through online or distance learning. It also gives providers and students greater flexibility in managing students' study loads over the duration of the course.

POLICY

AUSTRALIAN TRADE SKILLS Management and staff are committed to ensuring that all enrolling students are monitored within their study loads to ensure that they are able to complete their training within their enrolment period.

THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ENSURE THAT THE STUDY LOADS OF EACH STUDENT IS CAREFULLY MONITORED.

LOAD MONITORING PROCEDURE

During the period of enrolment AUSTRALIAN TRADE SKILLS staff shall:

1. ensure that the enrolments of students and their study loads are in keeping with their enrolment durations as stipulated by their COE
 - a. Course Design and Strategy to reflect full time study
 - b. Students are to be scheduled in classes as per the time table
 - c. Teachers to be provided with class lists to monitor students attendance and progress
 - d. Teachers and other staff to provide students with support for students to achieve their course progress - in order to complete study within their allocated time.
2. ensure that in each compulsory study period for a course, the student is studying at least one unit that is not by distance or online learning.
 - a. In any study period students are compelled to attend classes
3. only extend the students study where the student is unable to complete their study or training within the expected duration where advice is provided that the following reason prevail:
 - a) compassionate or compelling circumstances (e.g. illness where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes or where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit)
 - b) the registered provider implementing its intervention strategy for students who were at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress, or
 - c) an approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted
4. record this variation and the reasons for it on the students file.

5. report all variations to a student's expected enrolment duration via PRISMS when the study variation extends past expected enrolment duration stipulated by their COE.
6. not allow a study load for any student to contain more than 25% distance education or any study period to contain distance only units of study.
7. not allow the expected duration of study specified in the student's COE to exceed the CRICOS registered course duration except in the case of:
 - a. compassionate or compelling circumstances (e.g. illness where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes or where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit)
 - b. the registered provider implementing its intervention strategy for students who were at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress, or
 - c. an approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted
8. Where there is a variation in the student's enrolment load, which may affect the student's expected duration of study Australian Trade Skills will record this variation and the reasons for it on the student file. Australian Trade Skills will also correctly report the student via PRISMS and/or issue a new COE when the student can only account for the variation/s by extending his or her expected duration of study.
9. Where the student has completed their study earlier Australian Trade Skills will report that via PRISMS and cancel the student's COE for the course completed

PROCEDURE

1. Issue COE for the course durations only
2. Where student credit given - reduce the time on COE
3. Course Timetables for individual students
4. Course Attendance Monitoring
5. Course Progress Monitoring
6. Student Support Mechanisms

CRICOS UPDATE

All student communication will be held on file.

Where there are adjustments to be made on the CRICOS register then Australian Trade Skills will make such adjustments and keep records on file.

STUDY LOAD AND AMENDMENTS TO ENROLMENT

In many cases, the requirement that students complete within their original program duration will mean that students should be enrolled full-time. This applies in all cases to the students first teaching period. Students can be enrolled in a part-time load where:

- an early intervention strategy has been implemented under the Australian Trade Skills 's progress review policies; or
- the student has compassionate or compelling circumstances; or
- the student can make up the courses during the original duration of their program, e.g. by studying during winter or summer term; or
- the student has obtained extra credit/RPL such that they can still complete within the same duration even with a part-time load.

In all cases, the college and student must agree to the part-time enrolment. Any international student seeking to study a part-time load at any stage during their program, must have their study load approved.

This is so that Australian Trade Skills can ensure that the student will be able to complete their program within its original duration or that their reasons for needing to study part-time will allow for their program to be extended later. Admin officers will also record the reason for the variation in study load on the amendment to enrolment form, thus meeting the requirements of Standard 11 that any variations in study load and the reasons for it are recorded on the student file. Australian Trade Skills admin officers will review the individual student's Study Plan.

Australian Trade Skills will:

- write the details of the compassionate or compelling circumstances, early intervention strategy, make up strategy, or note that the student has received credit/RPL such that they can still complete on time, on the Amendment to Enrolment form;
- ensure that there is documentary evidence of any compassionate or compelling circumstances where appropriate;
- ensure that where a student is agreeing to make up courses in another study period, that the student signs an agreement to do which acknowledges that if they do not make up the courses they may not be able to extend their program duration, and that copy of this agreement is held in student's file.
- enter details of the reasons for the under load in the Notes section of the student administration system, and
- advise the student of the fact that extending their program duration is not automatic and can only be done on limited grounds.

UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE (STANDARDS 8.13)

Where Australian Trade Skills has assessed the overseas student as not meeting attendance requirements, Australian Trade Skills will give the overseas student a written notice as soon as practicable which:

- notifies the overseas student that the registered provider intends to report the overseas student for unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory course attendance
- informs the overseas student of the reasons for the intention to report
- advises the overseas student of their right to access the registered provider's complaints and appeals process, in accordance with Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals), within 20 working days.

Australian Trade Skills may decide not to report the overseas student for breaching the attendance requirements if the overseas student is still attending at least 70% of the scheduled course contact hours and:

- for school, ELICOS and Foundation Program courses, the overseas student provides genuine evidence demonstrating that compassionate or compelling circumstances apply; or
- for VET courses, the student is maintaining satisfactory course progress.

COMPASSIONATE OR COMPELLING CIRCUMSTANCES

DET has provided the following guidance in determining what are to be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances:

- 'Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those **beyond the control of the student** and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:
 - serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
 - bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents;
 - major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel when this has impacted on the student's studies; or
 - a traumatic experience which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident;
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime.
- when this has impacted on the student. (Note these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports);
- where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or
- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

These are only examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. Providers may use their professional judgement to assess each case on its individual merits. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, it is important to consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim, and copies of these documents should be stored in student file.

EXTENSIONS TO PROGRAM DURATION

Extending a student's program duration is not automatic. Australian Trade Skills can only grant an extension to the duration of a student's study in limited circumstances specified in Standard 8. That is, where a student has to extend due to compassionate or compelling circumstances; where Australian Trade Skills has implemented an early intervention strategy; or the student has had an approved break in their studies.

DET's Explanatory Guide to this standard states:

'Students may study entirely on-line/distance subjects in a **non-compulsory study period** if they want to. However, the provider will need to ensure students do not study more than 25 per cent of the total enrolment load by on-line or distance learning.

No student can study entirely on-line or by distance in any **compulsory study period**. This means each student must study at least one 'face-to-face' subject in every compulsory study period.

If Australian Trade Skills extends the duration of the student's enrolment, Australian Trade Skills will advise the student to contact Immigration to seek advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.