

AIMS COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND IT  
(PVT) LTD

# **ABSENT AND MISSING STUDENTS POLICY**



## **Absent and Missing Students Policy & Procedure**

AIMS campus acknowledges its obligation to ensure students' health, safety, and well-being. It strives to provide a safe, secure, and supportive environment for students to study and, in some cases, reside. This support includes taking appropriate action to address any cause for concern regarding the absence of individuals, when necessary.

### **The purpose of the policy**

- Define how AIMS determines if a student is absent or missing and, if so, what action should be taken.
- Define administrative responsibilities in the event of an absent or missing student
- Ensure that the response to such an event is appropriate, timely, and effective
- Ensure that AIMS communicates effectively with the student's family and all public authorities involved in the incident
- Ensure that AIMS acts in a supportive manner towards all parties involved.

### **Definitions**

**Absent** – "A person who is not present at a place where they are expected or required to be and where there is no apparent risk."

**Missing** - "Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be determined and whose circumstances are out of character or whose context suggests they may be a victim of crime or a threat to themselves or others."

### **Scope**

This policy and procedure will only apply to students who are currently enrolled and studying at AIMS property. Partners in collaboration will need their own local policies and procedures.

This policy does not address AIMS' response to emergencies, which is addressed by the procedures for Incident Management.

## **Duties and Accountabilities**

### **Student accountability**

All students should be aware that they are expected to abide by the Engagement and Attendance Policy's attendance requirements. In accordance with the Engagement and Attendance policy, students whose attendance declines below 75% will be routinely monitored.

### **Responsibilities for observing student attendance**

Lecturers, Student Coordinators and Academic Staff should play an active role in monitoring the attendance and well-being of students entrusted to their care and promptly communicate any concerns to the Student Support. Student Support monitors student attendance, and staff should communicate with the team as needed.

### **The policy**

AIMS is committed to responding in a responsible and considerate manner to allegations of absent or missing students. AIMS will respond to such incidents in accordance with the following principles:

- a. AIMS will respond promptly and with sensitivity to reports of absent or missing students. It will analyze attendance records and contact schools and relevant student support teams in order to gather information about prior engagement and academic advancement. When appropriate, additional information sources will be investigated.
- b. Student Support will be responsible for determining the level of risk posed to ensure that decisions regarding "missing" and "absent" are firmly based on risk.
- c. AIMS will collaborate and cooperate with external agencies to facilitate any investigations or administrative activities related to the reporting of a missing or absent student and will endeavor to establish with them a decision regarding a reasonable response.

d. Care will be extended to those intimately associated with the student, such as the student's family or next of kin, friends, and staff members who may have initiated the inquiry, as appropriate.

e. AIMS will act discreetly when handling information regarding the student and the incident and will always adhere to the Data Protection Act's restrictions. Any public statements made for or on behalf of AIMS will only be disseminated after the Communications Office has verified their accuracy. Any personnel responding to the incident will always exercise discretion.

## **1. Procedure for reporting and responding to a student's absence or disappearance**

### **1.1 Initial investigation and report**

Concerns regarding a student's absence or disappearance may be raised in the following ways:

- a student speaking to a member of AIMS' staff
- a member of staff reporting their concern to another member of staff, particularly to those staff members who have a designated responsibility for student support
- the student's family expressing their concern
- an individual from outside AIMS reporting their concern to a member of AIMS community.

The member of staff who is concerned or who has received a report of concern should promptly notify the student's academic department. The reporting staff members should also report their concern to Student Support, who will conduct an initial investigation by analyzing the student's engagement activity and attempting to make contact with them. This may involve approaching the student via email and telephone, as well as contacting the student's peers, housemates, and fellow students, reviewing social media activity, etc. The Student Support may, as necessary, communicate with counterparts to obtain additional information that may aid in the initial investigation. This should not include contacting parents, emergency contacts, or other external third parties at this time. Every investigation must be conducted discreetly and without causing unnecessary alarm.

There may be instances in which a family member contacts AIMS out of concern that they have not heard from a family member. In most instances, it is sufficient to contact the pupil and

inform them of their relative's concern with the suggestion that they contact them. For reasons of confidentiality, you should not disclose any information about the student to the relative. However, if the student cannot be reached, the initial investigation described above should be conducted, and depending on the results, escalation to the Academic Council as indicated in section 1.2 may be necessary.

## **1.2 Escalation to the Academic Council**

If these initial inquiries are unsuccessful or if concerns remain, the Student Retention team will escalate the situation to Academic Council, who will coordinate the response of AIMS. The Academic Council (or a delegate) will consult with the Head of Security and make additional attempts to locate the student while evaluating the potential risk involved.

- Searching the campus for hints as to their whereabouts, e.g., classroom check / inquiries with residents, campus investigations / CCTV, incident reports
- Examining student records to determine whether the student is already known to AIMS support services
- Requesting any additional proof of the student's whereabouts from the School, Security, IT Services, and Library.
- Establishing last known contacts and determining if the student exhibited any unusual behavioral patterns

If the Student Support has cause for concern about a student's well-being, s/he will contact the student's family/friends using the student's emergency contact number.

## **1.3 Declare the student missing.**

If, as a result of these inquiries, the student's location and well-being cannot be confirmed, the Head of Student Support (or designee) will report the student as missing to the Police and other external agencies as required and become AIMS campus point of contact for the Police.

The Head of Student Support will notify the Board of Governance, the relevant Head of Faculty, and the Academic Registrar so that any subsequent inquiries can be appropriately addressed.

#### **1.4 Assist the identified learner**

After locating the student and ensuring their safety and general well-being, the Head of Student Support will notify the members of staff listed in section 1.3. The academic department will remind the students that according to the Engagement and Attendance Policy, they are expected to be present in class. Support for addressing any underlying difficulties will also be provided via referrals to pertinent support services.

If a deceased student is discovered, the Policy and Procedure for Responding to Student Death will be implemented.