

## Why document Last Date of Attendance (LDA)?

The Department of Education has established rules to preserve the integrity of federal financial aid programs. Compliance in these regulations provides financial aid support for Title IV programs and students. In order to remain in compliance, Valencia College is required to document attendance to certify that a student is actively attending an online or mixed-mode course that does not meet face-to-face within the no-show period.

While attendance in face-to-face and mixed-mode courses is easily documented, attendance in online courses has more specific documentation required. In order to certify that a student is actively attending an online, or mixed-mode course that does not meet within the no-show period, the Department of Education requires that attendance is documented by an academically-related activity.

Beyond verification within the no-show period, recording a student's last day of attendance is also important in cases of withdrawn students who withdraw from a course after the first week. Accurately documenting the last date of attendance is critical for the purpose of calculating the financial aid a student has earned.

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According to the Federal Student Aid Handbook, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. A school must demonstrate that a student participated in class or was otherwise engaged in an academically-related activity, such as by contributing to an online discussion or initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question.

Examples of acceptable evidence of academic attendance and attendance for an academically-related activity in an online course include:

- student submission of an academic assignment,
- student submission of an online assessment,
- documented student participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction,
- a posting by the student showing the student's participation in an online study group that is assigned by the institution,
- a posting by the student in a discussion forum showing the student's participation in an online discussion about academic matters, and
- an e-mail from the student or other documentation showing that the student-initiated contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.