



**ST PATRICK'S**  
Technical College



SACE ■ TRAINING ■ APPRENTICESHIPS

Policies & Procedures 5.14

# Student Attendance / Absenteeism

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## **AIM**

- Ensure, as far as possible, that students understand their responsibility to attend St Patrick's Technical College and to arrive on time.
- Maintain strong communication between the College and home in relation to parents / guardians advising the College when students will be absent from the College.
- Follow up with all students who are absent without notification.
- Establish a clear process for dealing with students who are absent without permission or notification to the College.

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## **POLICY**

Students are required to attend St Patrick's Technical College on every day that it is open except in certain cases. The College must account for every absence of every student and record the reason in the roll book. Unexplained student absence adversely affects our teacher allocation. All students who are absent from College must provide a letter / note from their parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence.

Students need to account for their absences in a manner acceptable to the Principal. Certificate of illness may be required. In the case of unexplained absence of more than ten days (cumulative) the student will be sent a letter from the College indicating an intention to terminate enrolment.

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## **GUIDELINES**

### **Student Responsibilities**

Students, as part of their induction, will be informed of their obligation to attend College and the expectation of the College to be properly notified should a student be absent or late.

A student's responsibility to attend College and the expectation to be notified about absence and/or lateness extends not only to the College, but also to on-the-job work placement with employers and Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) training with Registered Training Organisations.

### **Parent Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of parents to:

- Ensure that students arrive at College between 8:15am and 8:40am;
- Ensure that students attend College, on-the-job work locations and/or VTE training venues on every day that instruction is offered, unless the College receives a valid reason for being absent (e.g. illness);
- Provide the College with an appropriate explanation for any student non-attendance. Usually this will comprise a letter or telephone call from the parent/guardian or a medical certificate. After three days absence a written explanation is required;
- Explain the reason for any late arrival at College, on-the-job work location or VTE training venue;



- Inform the College if any extended absence is likely.

#### **Pastoral Care Teacher Responsibility**

- Monitor each student's attendance;
- Record absences and the reason for them in the class roll. Note the time of arrival for students who arrive late;
- Send the roll book to the Administration Centre by 10:30am each day - parents of students who are marked absent without approval will be contacted by administration staff;
- Contact parents on the third day of absence. Record in roll book or refer to Principal;
- Document intervention strategies, letters and phone calls and record these in the student's file;
- Co-ordinate the collection of work for students who are unable to attend College for acceptable reasons and for whom work is required.

#### **Leadership Team Responsibilities**

- Ensure that the Student Management System (MAZE) is accurately completed;
- Complete letters regarding the absence of students;
- Document interventions, strategies, home visits and phone calls, and record these in the student's file;
- The Principal has designated authority to approve temporary absences from the College for extended periods of time. The Principal will provide parents with written approval or non-approval on College letterhead paper and keep a record of these in the College files, together with applications.

Students are required to seek the Principal's approval prior to taking extended leave to ensure holding their place on the College enrolment.

#### **Acceptable reasons for student absences are:**

- Sickness
- Danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease
- Temporary or permanent infirmity
- Unavoidable and sufficient cause, e.g. bereavement within the family or of a close friend or family trauma
- Attending a College organised activity, e.g. on-the-job work training with an employer, VTE training, excursion, camp
- Approved sporting / cultural event

#### **Examples of unacceptable reasons for absence are:**

- Truancy
- Shopping expeditions with or without parent/guardian
- Haircuts
- Helping at home or at parent/guardians place of work
- Part-time or casual work (including travel to and from such work)
- Appointments which could be made out of College hours (including driving lessons / tests)



- Excessive time for appointments which are avoidable

### **Very long term absences**

Occasionally requests are made by parent/guardians for students to be absent for very long periods, e.g. to accompany parent/guardians on an overseas trip. Parent/guardians are asked to discuss with the Principal/Deputy Principal the implications of long term absences from the College, before firm plans are made. Approval needs to be sought from the Principal. When students are unavoidably absent for a long period of time, where possible the College will provide details of work for students to go on with, if requested to do so.

Please note that neither the College nor parent/guardians have authority to vary the attendance requirements.

### **College Procedures for Following up Unacceptable Student Absences**

Where an absence is proposed, or has occurred, and the reason is not acceptable, these fall into two categories:

#### *Common Practice*

(e.g. accompanying parent/guardian on holidays, participation in recognised, non-College organised sporting and cultural activities, etc.).

In every case a standard College letter will be mailed home by the Principal. The letter does not approve or disapprove of the absence. It places the responsibility for students' lack of progress on parent/guardians.

#### *Unacceptable Practice*

In every case, the incident will be referred to the Principal/Deputy Principal who will administer the College and/or Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) attendance procedures. These will involve:-

- Parent / guardian contact and conference as deemed necessary, issue of letter re possible enrolment termination as per DETE Policy "Suspension, Exclusion & Expulsion". Lesson attendance records, detentions, will be issued to individual students as deemed appropriate.

### **Students Who Are Late To College**

- Students who are late to College or to the first scheduled lesson are required to report directly to the Administration Centre on arrival.
- The student's late attendance will be marked on the student's record on the appropriate day (indicating arrival times) and the student's name will be entered on a list.
- One warning will be given for the term. On the second and subsequent occasions that a student is late without a satisfactory written reason, a detention will be given.
- Persistently late students will be referred to the Principal/Deputy Principal, or have such other consequences applied as are deemed appropriate by the Principal.



- Teachers give detention to students who are persistently late for lessons and have not an appropriate reason indicated in a written note.

**Examples of acceptable reasons for lateness are:-**

- Accident on way to College
- Transport breakdown on way to College
- Public transport late
- Other unavoidable and sufficient reasons

Parents / guardians are asked to provide a written note giving an explanation for the lateness. If no note is written on the day of lateness, then a written note must be shown to the Pastoral Care teacher on the next day.

**Examples of unacceptable reasons for lateness are:**

- Truancy
- Sleeping in
- Just late (no reason given)
- Hair cut
- Shopping
- Appointments which could have been made out of College hours (including driving lesson / test)
- Other avoidable and insufficient reasons

**College Action for Unacceptable Lateness**

- Detention for second and third offences administered by Pastoral Care Teachers
- Referral to Principal for third and subsequent offence for more serious consequences

**NOTE:** Lateness on compassionate grounds, e.g. family trauma, will be followed up by Pastoral Care teachers for the sake of the welfare of students. In these cases detention will not be given.

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**RELATED POLICIES**

- *5.1 – Pastoral Care*
- *5.3 - Case Management*
- *5.4 - Duty of Care / Health, Safety and Welfare*
- *5.11 - Student Code of Conduct*



*APPENDIX 1*

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**STUDENT AGREEMENT**

I have read and understood the *Student Attendance / Absenteeism* policy. I agree to uphold the reputation of St Patrick's Technical College by abiding by the conditions relating to attendance / absenteeism as defined in the policy.

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Acknowledged by parent / guardian:**

Parent / Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_