



Attendance – Senior Classes

Related Policies

Assessment
Appeals – Senior Assessment
Absences
Absences - Senior Illness and Misadventure

Rationale/Purpose

- To clarify the expectations of attendance during senior years: Year 11 and 12.
- To provide consistency in decision-making around the classification of absences as explained and unexplained.
- To ensure that appropriate documentation is provided to meet BSSS requirements.

Definitions

Explained absence

Explained Absences appear on a student's attendance record, but do not count towards a Void grade. Examples of a 'reasonable excuse' to explain a student's absence might include:

- illness, including recovery from major illness, injury or medical condition
- medical or dental treatment
- bereavement
- religious or cultural observation
- attendance at court or other legal hearings or meetings associated with hearings
- participation in sanctioned debates, eisteddfods, sports, musical or theatrical productions not directly arranged by the College
- participation in territory, interstate, national, or international sporting event, or equivalent
- alternative lesson arranged by the College

Appropriate documentation

- Handwritten or emailed note, within FIVE (5) school days of returning to College, detailing the reason for the absence and signed by a parent/guardian for absences of THREE (3) consecutive days or less. The Merici Absentee note is the preferred mode of communication.
- Medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner, psychologist, psychiatrist or other recognised health professional treating the student for absences of more than three consecutive days.

Unexplained absence

Absences that appear on a student's attendance record and count towards a Void grade.

Examples of unacceptable excuses to explain a student's absence might include:

- Failing to provide documentation of an absence within 5 school days of the return to school
- Deliberately avoiding a lesson, which may be seen as a pattern of repeatedly missing lessons in one subject while attending all other lessons of the day
- Choosing to work on assessment rather than attending class
- Sleeping in
- Traffic congestion
- Driving lessons

- Preparation for formals
- Failure to notify the College before leaving the premises for any reason
- Family holidays or extended visits overseas **without Principal approval**

Void grade

A Void grade is awarded when a student does not satisfy either the assessment and/or attendance requirements of a unit. When a unit is voided, the student is not awarded the value of the unit (1.0 for a semester unit; 0.5 for a term unit) and it does not contribute to the minimum 17 points for a Year 12 certificate or 20 points for a Tertiary package. The loss of a unit can break a Major and have potentially significant impact on a student's package.

Policy

This policy outlines the responsibilities of students regarding student attendance in scheduled classes.

It is expected that students will attend all scheduled classes / contact time / structured learning activities for the units in which they are enrolled, unless there is due cause and adequate documentary evidence is provided. It is the student's responsibility to provide this documentation in a timely manner. Any student whose attendance falls below 90% of scheduled classes / contact time / structured learning activities in a unit, without due cause and adequate documentary evidence, will be deemed to have voided the unit. The Principal has the right to exercise discretion in special circumstances, if satisfactory documentation is supplied.

Due to the impact on learning, any student who accumulates **6 absences**, irrespective of whether they are classed as explained or unexplained, from any one class will be asked to attend an interview with either the Head of Senior School or the Head of Senior School. Students are responsible for managing their time and may need to curtail co-curricular and extra-curricular activities if the total number of absences results in them missing more than 10% of classes in any subject.

Patterns of non-attendance will be monitored.

The Principal has the right to exercise discretion in special circumstances, if satisfactory documentation is supplied.

Procedures

- A written note, from a parent/guardian must explain all explained absences **within 5 school days of returning to the College**.
- A **medical certificate** needs to be produced for absences **exceeding 3 consecutive days**.
- It **will not** be acceptable to bring in a note at the end of a semester with explanations going back to absences accrued through that semester unless they fall within the previous 5 school day period. In other words, these absences will remain as "unexplained" and accumulate towards a Void grade.
- A summary of all absences will be provided to students and parents weekly. It is the student's responsibility to notify the College of any apparent errors in their attendance record, which will require verification from the classroom teacher. Absences (apart from data

errors) can only be cleared if they still fall within the 5 day explanation period, regardless of the timing of the receipt of the attendance record.

- Excuses will not be accepted for absences during a school day, where the student has already attended classes, unless the student has provided Student Services **with a note** detailing the reason (evidence of appointments or a note from parents detailing due cause) for departure prior to leaving the College. These absences will remain as “unexplained” and accumulate towards a Void grade.
- Excuses will not be accepted if the student arrives late to the College without documentation of due cause provided to Student Services. Absence excuses, such as “sleeping in” and “traffic”, advise the College of absences for recording keeping purposes, however, any missed classes will remain as “unexplained” and accumulate towards a Void.
- Driving lessons/tests are not to be made during a student’s scheduled classes and will remain as unexplained absences.
- All students leaving the College due to illness must report to Student Services for signing out.
- A holiday scheduled during semester time is **not a valid reason** for being absent from class. Absences in such cases will contribute to unexplained absences and could lead to students receiving a Void grade. Applications for approved leave must be made in writing to the Principal, through the Head of Senior School, prior to the leave being taken. Approval will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

The College will advise parents when a student appears to have voided a subject and an interview will be arranged to discuss the situation.

References

Board of Senior Secondary Studies: Policy and Procedures Manual 2012. Section 4.3.8
Attendance/Participation

http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/224514/01_PandPManual_2013_-_Amended_01_-_2013_V2.pdf

Forms

Student absence form: [Absentee Note.pdf](#)

Approved by: Merici Executive

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