

**Julia Gillard Community College
Policy and Procedure**

Policy name	School Attendance Policy and Procedure
Responsible person	Principal
Staff involved	Assistant Principal/Student Wellbeing, Teachers, School Admin Officers
Approved dates	Approved: 13 Sept 2024 Review date: Semester 2, 2025

1. Context

Julia Gillard Community College (JGCC or the School) believes that student attendance and student achievement are closely connected. Students who develop patterns of good attendance are more likely to successfully achieve their certification in the student's enrolled program: the Victorian Certificate of Education Vocational Major (VCE VM) or the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC).

2. Policy

Students enrolled in foundation secondary or senior secondary programs at the School are required to attend all scheduled, time-tabled classes, activities and excursions in order to maximise their learning opportunities and ensure satisfactory completion of all assessment within their program. Students will attend full-time for a minimum of 25 hours per week.

The School acknowledges that young people it enrolls will have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and as a consequence, in most cases, have developed poor attendance patterns over a period of time. In acknowledgement of this, the School expects a minimum 80% attendance rate from students but is committed to working with students, families and support workers towards increasing attendance rates to 90%-100% during their enrolment.

Students who do not attend at least 80% of timetabled classes for a unit, may receive an 'N' (Not Yet Complete) result for the VPC, and an 'N' (Not Satisfactory) result for the VCE VM. A delay of satisfactory completion can occur if a student misses too many classes because of poor attendance.

Attendance includes all approved activities such as excursions, industry placements, and Structured Workplace Learning (SWL).

Explained absences will not be considered as non-attendance.

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Student attendance and conduct will be monitored throughout their program. Attendance expectations are clearly communicated to enrolling students and their parents/guardians through the enrolment interview, Enrolment Acceptance and Agreement, the Student Code of Conduct and the Student & Parent Handbook.

The School will:

- support student attendance by liaising with and utilising the expertise of School staff including the Student Wellbeing Officer;
- develop and implement individualised strategies to support students and their families to arrive on time each day and to remain at School for the day;
- clearly communicate with Parents/Guardians about their obligation to inform the School of the reason for a student's absence and of the processes that will be followed where an absence occurs; and,
- ensure that accurate data is collected in relation to attendance and participation so that follow-up of non-attendance can be undertaken promptly and recorded daily.

The following procedures outline the steps and strategies for monitoring attendance and dealing with student absences and lateness.

3. Procedures

3.1 Student attendance procedures

- Attendance rolls will be taken electronically by teachers twice daily for morning and afternoon classes. The teachers will complete the attendance rolls located on Sentral, the School's student management system.
- This information will be submitted electronically by 10:00am for a morning class and by 1:00pm for an afternoon class.
- The following attendance codes are used:
 - P (Present), PR (Present-remote learning) E (Explained), I (Illness), MC (Medical Certificate), NR (Not Required) and PS (Private Study) do not impact attendance.
 - LE (Left Early) and L (Late) may lower attendance, depending on the reason for the lateness or for the student leaving early. If the late arrival or early leaving is approved, then attendance rate is not impacted.
 - U (Unexplained) lowers a student's recorded attendance rate.
 - CC (Completed Course), EX (Exit), NS (No Start) and NE (Not Enrolled at this Date) result in N/A (Not Applicable) on the electronic roll and do not affect attendance rates.
 - VET (attendance in a VET program delivered).

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- School Admin Officers will follow up non-attendance and record the information onto the weekly Communication and Non-attendance Log. This includes details of medical certificates, notes, and any telephone contact.
- School Admin Officer will notify Parents/Carer of students of any unexplained absences or lateness.
- It is the responsibility of any student who is absent to find out what course work or assessment was covered in their missed classes and complete or arrange a separate time to complete the work.
- At the end of each week, the student attendance roll is printed and then filed in the Assistant Principal's Attendance Rolls folder, located in the Assistant Principal's office.

3.2 Student absences procedures

- All student absences require an explanation and/or a medical certificate.
- For students under-18, phone confirmation, email, text or a note from a Parent/Carer is required.
- For students over-18, phone confirmation, email, text or a note from the student or parent/carer is required.
- If a student is going to be absent, their Parent/Carer or themselves can ring or text the School mobile: 0444 520 390; or alternatively they can ring on 8372 000. A message can be left if out of hours or if no-one answers either phone.
- A medical certificate should be provided for any single absence, if possible.
- An absence with a medical certificate is considered an explained absence. Explained absences do not affect a student's attendance rate and include illness with a medical certificate, bereavement, a statutory declaration regarding illness, approved excursions and activities as outlined in the attendance codes above.

Unexplained absence procedures

- For absences of two or more consecutive days a medical certificate is required.
- If a student is absent for a third consecutive day without making contact with the School, the Principal or their delegate, will make contact with the student using the phone details or email address/es provided to the School. A message will be left if no contact is made.
- A letter will be sent to the student or parent/carer if no contact or explanation has been received after a school week.
- If a student does not make any contact within two weeks (a period of 10 school days after the letter is sent), the student will be exited from the program according to the School's Enrolment Policy. Every attempt to engage with the student or their family

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will be made, including attempts to engage and transition the student in another program.

3.3 Monitoring and reporting issues with attendance

- Student attendances and absences are analysed for each student on a weekly basis. Weekly attendance rates are used to follow up on student absences and to improve attendance rates.
- Students and their Parents/Carer (if required) will be counselled for ongoing absences.
- Attendance and absences are reported on student reports: mid-year and end of year.
- Any attendance issues are followed up by the Assistant Principal and/or the School Admin Officers, as delegated by the Assistant Principal.
- Attendance is discussed with students and their parents/carer if required according to the following guidelines:
 - 80-100% attendance – the student is meeting the attendance requirements
 - 71-80% attendance – the student is reminded of the attendance requirements and continues to be monitored
 - 50-70% attendance:
 - the student is required to attend a meeting about their poor attendance.
 - the Parent/Carer is notified. In some instances, a Parent/Carer of a student 18 or older, may be notified depending on the circumstances.
 - the student is counselled on attendance requirements. If the Assistant Principal has concerns about the student’s safety or well-being, appropriate follow up/referral will occur.
 - if there is no improvement in the following week, a further meeting will be held.
 - if no improvement occurs following the second meeting, a warning letter will be issued.
 - if there is no improvement following the warning letter, a second warning letter will be sent after two weeks.
 - on receipt of a third warning letter, the student will be expelled from the program.
 - at all times during the process, any concerns about the student’s safety or well-being will be acted upon.
 - in some cases, there may be valid reasons for the student to have a staggered attendance because of social, emotional, or behavioural difficulties. In these cases, the Assistant Principal will work with the student, the family and any support or health services engaged with the student.

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- Under 50% attendance:
 - the student is required to attend a meeting about their poor attendance with a Parent/Carer and/or caseworker (if applicable).
 - the student is counselled on poor attendance and strategies to improve attendance are agreed upon by all. If the Assistant Principal has concerns about the student's safety or well-being, follow up will occur.
 - a follow up meeting will be held after two weeks to report back on the success of the strategies or otherwise.
 - if no improvement has occurred, an agreed process of intervention is developed.
 - a first warning letter is issued at this stage.
 - if there is no improvement following implementation of the intervention strategies and the warning letter, a second warning letter will be sent after two weeks.
 - on receipt of a third warning letter, the student will be expelled from the program.
 - at all times during the process, any concerns about the student's safety or well-being will be acted upon.
 - in some cases, there may be valid reasons for the student to have a staggered attendance because of social, emotional, or behavioural difficulties. In these cases, the Assistant Principal will work with the student, the family and any support or medical services engaged with the student. In these cases, warning letters will not be issued while ongoing strategies and willingness of the student to co-operate are undertaken.

- The Principal will receive all attendance rolls weekly and will liaise closely with the Assistant Principal. Any serious student concerns, particularly in relation to any duty of care or legal issues identified, must be reported to the Principal as they arise.

3.4 Student lateness procedures

- If a student is going to be late, their Parent/Carer or themselves can ring or text the School mobile: 0444 520 390; or alternative they can ring on 8372 000. A message can be left if out of hours or if no-one answers either phone.
- If a student arrives more than 10 minutes late, the student must record their arrival in the Late Arrival / Early Leaving Book at Reception.
- The reason for lateness is discussed and recorded.
- Students are given an Attendance Slip to present to their teacher on entering the classroom.

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- Late attendance is monitored daily, and teachers record the time of arrival on their daily roll.
- Students will be counselled for ongoing lateness.
- A Parent/Carer will be contacted for unexplained lateness of students.
- If a student receives ten (10) late attendance slips, a meeting about their ongoing lateness will occur. The Parent/Carer will be notified and invited to attend. If applicable, a student's caseworker will also be invited to attend.
- The student's lateness will be discussed and strategies to improve it will be developed and agreed upon. If the Assistant Principal has concerns about the student's safety or well-being at any stage, follow up will occur in response.
- If there is no improvement in the following week, a further meeting will be held.
- If no improvement occurs following the second meeting, a warning letter will be issued.
- If there is no improvement following the warning letter and the meetings, a second warning letter will be sent after two weeks.
- On receipt of a third warning letter, the student will be expelled from the program.
- At all times during the process, any concerns about the student's safety or well-being will be acted upon.
- In some cases, there may be extenuating circumstances that explain the student's ongoing lateness such as social, emotional, or behavioural difficulties. In these cases, the Assistant Principal will work with the student, the family and any support or health services engaged with the student to improve lateness. In these cases, warning letters will not be issued while ongoing strategies and willingness of the student to improve are undertaken.

3.5 Leaving early procedures

- Students are required to bring a note signed by a Parent/Carer with an explanation if leaving early for the day.
- All students are required to explain a request to leave early with the Assistant Principal or School Admin Officers.
- If it is to attend an interview or appointment, an appointment card, Certificate of Attendance or letter should be provided. Please note: students are encouraged to make appointments outside of their scheduled timetabled classes.
- Students leaving early must sign the Late Arrival / Early Leaving Book at Reception. They should provide an Attendance Slip to the office, signed by their teacher.

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- If a student is to leave the classroom, outside of nominated break times they are required to obtain an Attendance Slip from their teacher indicating that they are permitted to leave. The time will be reflected on the student roll.
- Students asked to remove themselves from a classroom by a teacher, must come to Reception with an Attendance Slip signed by a teacher.

3.6 Ensuring enrolment details (contact details) remain current

The School will ensure parent/carer contact details are maintained by doing an annual check/ update of details at the start of every school year as a minimum.

At enrolment, parents/carer complete enrolment form and are informed that when personal details change, they are required to inform the school of these changes.

On occasions where posted mail, emails, phone calls or text messages used for a parent/carer are returned, bounce or no longer valid, this will be investigated immediately by the school administration team and updated in Sentral.

Reminders to students, parents/carer will also occur at annual general assemblies and half-yearly Parent-Teacher interviews.

Related Documents

Legislation: Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth), Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth), Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth), Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth), Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth), Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth), The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), Disability Act 2006 (Vic), Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic), Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic), Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic).

Policies: School Enrolment Policy and Procedure, Student Discipline (including Suspension & Expulsion) Policy and Procedure, School Complaints Policy and Procedure, Privacy Policy and Procedure.

Other: VRQA Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration, Attendance Register.