

HUME CENTRAL SECONDARY COLLEGE

ATTENDANCE – GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. COMPLETION OF UNITS OF STUDY AND PROMOTION

- Students with an attendance rate of less than 90% for a specific unit of study within a semester do not meet the minimum requirement to be eligible to achieve an S for that unit.
- For Year 7 - 12 students **unapproved absences must not exceed more than 5 classes for each specific subject within a semester of study.**
 - Students who exceed this limit and do not meet attendance requirements will be at risk of receiving an 'N' (Not Satisfactory) result for the relevant unit.
- **Students must be marked as "present" for a minimum of 80%** of all scheduled classes. The 80% attendance requirement allows for a combined total of 20% approved and unapproved absences. (Students who have met the criteria for Special Provision may be exempt for this expectation at the discretion of the Principal).
- In order to be promoted to the next year level, VCE and VCAL **students must receive a Satisfactory (S) overall result in a minimum of 75% of VCE/VCAL/VET units undertaken** in a calendar year. Students must pass at least one unit of the selected English study.
- Students who have not been able to complete units of study due to prolonged periods of absence due to factors such as chronic illness may be referred to alternative educational settings (e.g. distance education) to continue their education.

2. APPROVED ABSENCES

An absence from any class is considered to be an *"unapproved absence"*, except for the following circumstances that allow for an *"approved absence"*:

- A medical certificate that complies with the guidelines of the Australian Medical Association regarding the period of illness accompanied by a note or phone call from a parent/guardian is provided. In order for the College to accept the medical certificate the document must state that, according to the judgement of the physician, the student was unfit to attend classes at the College. This judgement will only be accepted if the student has visited the licensed physician in person.

N.B. *The College reserves the right to authenticate all Medical Certificates with the issuing practitioner. Any Medical Certificates found to be fraudulent will result in the student and their parent/guardian being required to meet with the Principal to discuss their future enrolment.*

- A statutory declaration made by parents/guardians is provided. This may be used only to approve an absence due to illness for a single day and only if it is provided to the College on the school day following the absence. A statutory declaration will not be accepted to approve absences where a School Assessed Coursework task (SAC) is scheduled.
- Campus Principals and Assistant Principals may approve absences where the parent/guardian has discussed with Team Leader or Coordinator the exceptional circumstances that prevent attendance (e.g. family crisis / tragedy).
- Students who attend other school related activities such as excursions; participate in College sports teams or attend an overnight camp for College purposes.

College approved activities may also include:

• Sport	• Camps and excursions	• Music lessons or performance	• Specialist numeracy/literacy support	• Speech Therapy
• School Production	• Student Wellbeing/welfare support	• Student Leadership activities	• Work experience or work placement	• Other approved activities arranged by teaching staff

An absence due to participation in a College approved activity must be verified prior to the activity by completing appropriate permission forms. The Principal class member will grant final approval for any student to participate in a College activity where there is a need to clarify their participation. The student is permitted to participate in the activity so long as the class work set during the absence is completed to the satisfaction of the classroom teacher, and that there are no other concerns regarding work completion/attendance.

Students, after an absence, may need to seek information from their class teachers on what needs to be done to catch up on missed lessons. The classroom teacher should notify the relevant Team Leader and Coordinators if this is a concern. Should the student not complete the set work as required, that student may not be permitted to participate in any further College approved activity until the outstanding work is redeemed.

3. PUNCTUALITY AND LATENESS

Students are required to be punctual to all classes. If students arrive late to school, they are required to “sign in” at the campus administrative office. Likewise, when leaving early, students are required to “sign out” at the campus administrative office. Students must present a note to the office staff signed by parents and countersigned by the relevant team leader if they are leaving early.

4. ATTENDANCE RECORDING PROCEDURES

At Hume Central Secondary College, the Compass program (electronic roll marking system) will be used to record student attendance and absences session by session.

All student absences are then aggregated on our CASES21 database from Compass and communicated to the DET (Department of Education & Training)

5. PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPLAINED ABSENCES

Absence due to illness /family issue/bereavement must be verified by a note/telephone call from parent/guardian.

6. CONSEQUENCES FOR ABSENCES

Where a student has an attendance record of below 90% (present and approved absences) in a semester, the College will examine the student’s attendance pattern closely. In the event that the attendance remains below 90%, the student may be deemed to have not satisfactorily completed the attendance requirements of the subject and therefore the student will receive an N (Not Satisfactory) result for the unit.

Attendance for School Assessed Coursework (SAC) Tasks

If a VCE student is absent and misses a SAC, a medical certificate is required to be eligible to reschedule the task to receive a score for the assessment.

7. SPECIAL PROVISION

A student whose attendance is affected by periods of prolonged illness or other circumstances related to their personal situation/environment may apply to the Campus Principal / Assistant Principal for special provision. The student will be required to provide supporting documentation in the form of a letter from a registered medical specialist.

8. PARENTAL/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION OF AN ABSENCE TO THE COLLEGE

Parents are requested to provide a written note explaining the absence once the student returns to school. Alternatively, parents may make a telephone call on the day of the absence. Parents are asked to telephone the school prior to 8.30am if the student is going to be absent from the school on that day.

9. NOTIFICATION FROM COLLEGE TO PARENT/GUARDIANS OF A STUDENT ABSENCE

Years 7-9:

Team Leaders and Mentor Teachers will examine daily attendance records. The College will attempt to make contact with the parent of any student (Years 7-9) who has been away for more than one consecutive day unless the reason for the absence has been notified. Where possible, parents will be contacted on the first day of absence. In addition, where there is a need to query a reason for absence or lateness to school, parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

Years 10-12:

Team Leaders and Mentor Teachers will examine daily attendance records. The emphasis on attendance monitoring at these levels will be towards students at risk of not satisfactorily completing a subject due to poor attendance. In addition, where there is a need to query a reason for absence or lateness to school, parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

10. PARENT/GUARDIAN ACCESS TO ATTENDANCE DATA

Parent/guardians may request a copy of their child’s attendance record at any stage. This can be done through a request to the Team Leader. Summary absence data will be provided on semester reports. The school community can also access live and summary attendance data via logging into the Parent Portal on Compass.

11. EXTENDED TRAVEL

Students may be granted special authority by the Principal/Campus Principal to be absent from school to undertake activities which, although not part of the school program, are considered by the school to represent worthwhile educational or personal development opportunities for the student. The following procedures apply:

- Parents make a request to the Principal in writing for the extended absence to be classed as “approved” ▪ Where the period of absence and circumstances are deemed to have a detrimental effect on the student’s educational progress, the student may be required to complete the unit/year level the following year
- The dates of such absences will be relayed to classroom teachers, who may put a learning plan in place over the duration of the absence.

12. STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS TO DISCUSS ATTENDANCE ISSUES

If the reason for a student's absence remains unresolved after an initial attempt at contact, or in the case where a student's attendance falls below 90%, the Team Leader or Coordinator should convene a meeting with the parents/guardians and student (if appropriate). The invitation to attend the meeting should be documented on Compass as a means of indicating its importance. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- ensure that the parents/guardians are aware of the absence and fully appreciate the consequences on learning progress
- examine the reasons for non-attendance
- identify whether further assistance will be needed to re-establish attendance.

The outcome of the meeting should lead to the implementation of strategies to improve the student's attendance.

13. RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN (OR ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN) TO SUPPORT ATTENDANCE

If communication with parents/guardians has not been possible or a meeting does not sufficiently resolve the attendance problem, a return to school plan needs to be developed to support the student's attendance.

Normally this will involve a formal meeting convened by the Principal or nominee and attended by the parents/guardians, student (if appropriate) and a Team Leader or Coordinator.

The school may also seek support from regional student service support staff and community or other government agencies. The return to school plan should result in the establishment of an ongoing attendance support process to develop and monitor an appropriate program of assistance and support for the student, drawing upon any special skills and resources needed, for example from external support personnel. The plan could involve such action as:

- Modification of the curriculum
- Increased supervision of the student
- Personal support and counselling for the student
- Referral to other support agencies.

It is important that wherever possible, the plan is developed in consultation with the parents/ guardians and the student to ensure their active cooperation. The plan should be documented to confirm arrangements to assist the student.

Where the action taken through the return to school plan does not lead to a resumption of satisfactory attendance, the Principal/Campus Principal should determine if it is necessary to convene an attendance conference in the interest of the education of the student and make a referral to the Regional Office if required.

14. ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Clarification of Guardianship

Where a student is under a special guardianship arrangement the Principal/Campus Principal should ascertain who has the legal responsibility for the student when considering action to be taken in relation to attendance issues.

Students who live Independently

Students who live independently are generally able to give consent to formalities normally approved by parents or guardians. Attendance concerns should also be negotiated directly with the student. This circumstance does not prevent the Principal seeking assistance through the Department of Human Services or other community agencies where he/she feels that the educational well-being of the student aged less than seventeen years is in jeopardy through attendance irregularities.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as required or due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Date Reviewed	To Be Reviewed	Endorsed at College Council
June 2021	Annually	Not required to be endorsed