



## Policy Statement

### Swinburne Senior Secondary College Student Attendance

The purpose of the student attendance policy is to reinforce regular attendance at school as a key factor in determining student success in senior schooling. In line with the young adult learning environment and our values of respect, responsibility and commitment, the College expects students to take responsibility for attendance and punctuality and develop strategies to participate fully in all timetabled classes.

## Guidelines

The Attendance Policy has been developed in line with the requirements stipulated by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).

VCAA policy requires that students attend at least 50 hours of class time for each unit during a semester. As a result **students must not be absent for more than 8 single periods per subject each semester**. This minimum requirement is designed to accommodate student illness, bereavement or other significant personal circumstances. A student will be deemed to have not met the college's attendance requirement when they have missed 9 or more periods. The Year Level Managers have overall responsibility for attendance management. Absences related to significant personal circumstances need to be approved by the Wellbeing Department, Year Level Managers, or VCE Manager

## Student attendance requirement

- Students who have missed 8 single periods for a subject will be deemed to have reached their limit for the semester.
- Students whose attendance is between 8 and 16 absences will be required to redeem time so that they have no more than 8 unredeemed absences.
- Students cannot redeem more than 8 absences in a semester.
- Students who are absent for more than 16 periods in a subject will not meet the school's attendance requirement and will be removed from the subject. This may then impact students' ability to complete a VCE over the normal 2 year period.
- Note, these absences are inclusive of physical or mental illness or other personal circumstances. Students who experience significant circumstances that impact their ability to attend may apply for Special Provision through the Wellbeing team (see below).

## Implementation

### College Responsibilities

- The Attendance Policy will be published on the College website.
- Students will be informed of the policy during assembly and Mentor classes at the start of the year.
- Compass School Manager will show a student's attendance in real time. Students and parents/guardians have access to Compass School Manager 24/7.
- At each progress report cycle Year level Managers will run an attendance report to identify students who are struggling to reach the attendance requirement.
- Parents / Carers and students will be informed via email or progress reports when attendance issues are identified

### **COVID absences**

- Absences due to COVID are not calculated as part of a student's normal attendance requirement. If a student must isolate due to COVID this absence from class will not count towards a student's maximum amount of absences.
- Students who must isolate due to COVID should contact their mentor, who will enter an attendance exemption.



- Teachers will provide some classwork to students who are isolating if they feel well enough to do so.

### **Redemption**

- Students may complete redemptions in order to maintain the minimum attendance requirement. Redemption sessions must be organised with the classroom teacher and can only take place within the College.
- Students with an attendance between 8 and 16 missed periods are required to complete redemption classes in order to make up for the time they have missed. Students cannot redeem classes beyond 16 missed periods and will be deemed to have not met the college's attendance requirement.
- Redemptions for missed classes must take place within two weeks of the original absence, unless a reasonable explanation can be provided.
- When completing redemption, the student is responsible for checking with the teacher at the start of the redemption time in order to agree on the work that is to be completed. The student must then see the teacher at the conclusion of the redemption session in order to have their work checked. Should the student fail to report back to the teacher or not have completed sufficient work, the redemption will not be recorded.
- Teachers will indicate in Compass Chronicle when a student has completed a redemption. Redemptions are recorded separately from attendance and will not alter the student's in-class attendance on Compass.
- Students can complete a maximum of 8 periods of redemption for each subject per semester. Students can seek extra help beyond this cap, but it will not qualify towards redeeming attendance.

### **Special Provision**

- Special Provision arrangements can be put in place to assist students in defined circumstances to complete the VCE or VCAL. Further information is available through the Wellbeing Team.
- A student may be eligible for Special Provision if they are adversely affected in a significant way by illness (physical or psychological); factors relating to personal environment; an impairment or disability including learning disabilities.
- If granted, students with a Wellbeing attendance reduction will be allowed up to 12 missed periods without having to redeem time, and will be required to redeem classes between 12 and 20 missed periods. If the student misses more than 20 periods they will be removed from the subject.
- Students wishing to apply for Special Provision are required to schedule a meeting with a member of the Wellbeing department. In order to qualify for Special Provision they will need to supply supporting documentation such as a medical diagnosis or a recommendation from a Psychologist/Psychiatrist.
- Students should apply for Special Provision before their attendance falls below 16 periods. Failure to do so may result in being denied Special Provision arrangements.
- In extenuating circumstances the principal may exercise an exemption to a student's attendance requirement.

### **Bell Times - Absences & Lateness**

- Before each class a 5 minute warning bell will sound telling students to make their way to class. The second bell will sound to mark the start of class.
- Students are expected to be punctual and as such students who arrive after the second bell will be marked late.
- Students who arrive after the first 15 minutes of class will be marked absent for the first period (each class is made up of two periods).
- Punctuality will be taken into account when calculating the number of hours attended during a semester.

### **Absences and school-based assessments (SACs / SATs)**



- The college expects students to attend all School Assessed Coursework (SAC) and submit School Assessment Tasks (SAT) on time.
- If a student is absent from a Year 12 SAC, it will not be scored unless the Mentor has been supplied with a medical certificate or other appropriate documentation explaining the absence. The Mentor will then record that documentation has been received on Compass.
- SAC grades may be withheld from the VCAA until supporting documentation is provided to cover the student's absence. The school may verify this documentation with the provider.
- Please see the college Assessment policy for further information in regard to assessment tasks.

#### **Attendance notifications and removal from classes**

- Attendance checks will be conducted by Year Level Managers on a fortnightly basis.
- If a student is absent for 8 periods for a subject, they and their parents will be notified that they have reached the limit for the semester via an email.
- If a student is absent for 14 periods a second email will be sent by Managers, and Mentor teachers will call parent / guardian to discuss and warn of withdrawal.
- If a student is absent for 17 periods for a subject, Year Level Managers will advise students and parents/guardians via a support meeting either in person or online that they have not met the college's attendance requirement and will be removed from the subject.
- This support meeting will discuss plans to assist the student to pass the rest of their units and or advise on future pathways.
  - This could involve:
    - Study support
    - Focusing on 1-2 subjects for the rest of the semester
    - A meeting with the Careers advisor
- The same procedure as above will apply for students with a Wellbeing attendance reduction if the student misses 20 periods.

#### **Student Responsibilities**

- If a student is absent for any reason, it is expected they will discuss work requirements that have been missed with their teachers on return to school.
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that in class attendance does not fall below 8 single periods.
- If a student arrives late to class, they should check with the teacher to ensure that they have been marked as attending.
- Students should engage with their teachers to redeem class time (usually on Wednesdays).
- Students who miss a SAC or SAT must contact the Leading Teacher - Curriculum, Reporting & Assessment immediately on their return to school with the required documentation.
- If a student is removed from a subject they are expected to spend the time studying to ensure success in their other subjects. It is highly advised that during this time they engage with Study Support.

#### **Parent Responsibilities**

- Parents/guardians are expected to notify the college on the day of an absence and verify any absence that is not school related on the day of the absence (where possible).
- Ideally notifications would be recorded into Compass under Absences/Notes and Approvals. If it is not possible to enter it into Compass, notification may take the form of a phone call, written note or email to the Year level Manager or Mentor. Absences are unapproved until verification is received. It is preferable that a medical certificate is provided to support absences due to illness.
- A medical certificate needs to be provided to explain absences for a SAC for health matters. Without a medical certificate the SAC will not be scored. An email from the parent is sufficient for a bereavement.



- It is important that it is understood that verifying an absence does not exclude students from completing any work missed by the student when absent or alter the requirement to attend no less than 50 hours of class time.
- Parents/guardians should monitor student absences to ensure they do not miss more than 8 periods.

Principal  
Daryl Bennett