



**St Ursula's College**  
TOOWOOMBA

CRICOS No 03033M

| <b>Student Attendance Policy and Procedures</b> |  |
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| Approval Date                                   | 11 Aug 2022                                |
| Next Review Date                                | 11 Aug 2026, or if the Legislation changes |
| Author  | Principal                                  |
| Approved By                                     | College Leadership Team                    |

## **Student Attendance Policy and Procedure**

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## 1. Preface

The Queensland Government requires that each parent of a child enrolled at St Ursula's College have obligations under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)* to ensure that their child attends school, on every day for the educational program in which their child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

St Ursula's College understands the importance of complying with their obligations under the Act.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to define the College's process of monitoring student attendance and reporting processes. The College acknowledges the mandatory nature of maintaining accurate and secure records regarding attendance. It is understood that students who attend College regularly and maintain high attendance have healthy learning outcomes and better employment prospects.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to individuals who either identify, maintain, communicate, safeguard and/or respond to matters related to student absence and procedures related to absenteeism.

## 4. Relevant legislation

- 4.1 Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)
- 4.2 Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)
- 4.3 Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)
- 4.4 Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
- 4.5 Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011 (Qld)

## 5. Related policies

- 5.1 College Recruitment & Selection Policy
- 5.2 College Student Protection Policy & Guidelines
- 5.3 College Student Protection Processes
- 5.4 College Homestay Welfare and Accommodation Policy
- 5.5 College Homestay Risk Management Strategy
- 5.6 College International Students Policy
- 5.7 College Grievance (Maintain right relationships) Policy

- 5.8 College Blue Card – Working with Students Policy
- 5.9 Code of Conduct – Parents/Families/Visitors & Volunteers
- 5.10 Code of Conduct - Students

## 6. Responsibilities

- 6.1 **General Requirements.** Student attendance is a shared responsibility. A positive College culture promotes a high level of student engagement with learning, student wellbeing and positive relationships.
- 6.2 The focus of this Policy and Procedure is on providing staff with information regarding the management of student absences. The process below indicates the steps necessary in the effective collection, maintenance and security of data related to attendance.

## 7. Attendance Policy Process

- 7.1 The following diagram represents the processes related to the maintenance of attendance at St Ursula’s College.



## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 It is understood that St Ursula’s College has high expectations related to attendance at the College.

The following table identifies the roles and responsibilities of the individuals who either identify, maintain, communicate, safeguard and/or respond to matters related to student absence.

| Role              | Responsibilities   |
|-------------------|--|
| Parents/Guardians | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Report absence or lateness in a timely manner before 8.35 am to administration staff by email or phone call or telephone message on 07 4632 7611 or <a href="mailto:admin@st-ursula.qld.edu.au">admin@st-ursula.qld.edu.au</a> and cc the Pastoral Care Teacher</li> <li>• Or submit the absence or lateness through Parent dashboard before 8:35 am</li> <li>• Provide reason for absence and/or lateness to administration staff for accurate recording of data</li> <li>• Respond to the enquiry of absence from staff as required</li> </ul> |

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|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek approval prior for explained absence of three (3) or more days such as holiday etc from the Principal in a timely manner and in writing to <a href="mailto:principal@st-ursula.qld.edu.au">principal@st-ursula.qld.edu.au</a></li> <li>• Seek approval for absences related to Elite sports or special student representation with the Deputy Principal and or Director of Sport</li> <li>• Maintain optimal levels of attendance. This means 90-100% attendance</li> <li>• Liaise with respective staff regarding the maintenance of optimal attendance</li> <li>• Report the delayed starts and early departures and absentees of boarders to Head of Boarding</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Students</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign-in and out of the College Administration office for lateness and or early departure or as required during the College day.</li> <li>• Sign-in and out at the College Administration Office regarding appointments with counsellor or other educational activity</li> <li>• Be on time for each class and be present in every lesson</li> <li>• Ensure that the student responds clearly when their name is called during roll call processes during the College day</li> <li>• Be present for all College-based activities and events</li> <li>• Advise Boarding staff if a flight/bus by phone call, text or email if delayed (Boarders Only)</li> <li>• Report illness and/or Misadventure to the Deputy Principal if related to senior assessment.</li> <li>• Students are expected to catch up on missed work by emailing their respective subject's teachers</li> </ul> |
| <b>Principal</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Inform parents of their legal obligations on student attendance as required</li> <li>• Monitor and approve whether an exemption of schooling, flexible arrangement or alternate education program is appropriate and required.</li> <li>• Ensure that enrolment data is maintained, collected, and secured to facilitate accurate attendance management and census collection</li> <li>• Monitor student absences/lateness and identify when absences/lateness are of concern.</li> <li>• Record data related to attendance</li> <li>• Monitor the attendance of Scholarship recipients and liaise with the Deputy Principal</li> </ul>  |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Deputy Principal</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Monitor student absences/lateness and identify arising concerns across the College and report these to the Principal</li> <li>• In consultation with parents/carers and the Principal, identify and/or recommend whether an exemption of schooling, flexible arrangement or alternate education program is appropriate and required</li> <li>• Monitoring of absence of three or more consecutive days and maintain documentation regarding contact with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Maintain attendance strategies to promote a healthy culture across the College and report on data to the Principal</li> <li>• Report absence from assessment due to illness/Misadventure to the Principal</li> <li>• Respond to consistently incorrect roll marking of staff and liaise with staff regarding absentees</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Assistant Principal Pastoral Care</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Monitor student absences and identify arising concerns across the College and report these to the Deputy Principal</li> <li>• Maintain attendance strategies to promote a healthy culture across the College and report on data to the Deputy Principal</li> <li>• Identify and act on patterns of absence for three or more consecutive days and maintain documentation regarding contact with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Oversight the follow up on attendance from Heads of Year and Pastoral Care Teachers</li> <li>• Recommend whether an exemption of schooling, flexible arrangement or alternate education program is appropriate and required, to the Deputy Principal and Principal</li> <li>• Liaise with the Assistant Principal Mission &amp; Identity with specific attendance strategies pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence.</li> </ul> |

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| <b>Assistant Principal Mission &amp; Identity</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Monitor student absences and identify arising concerns pertaining specifically to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across the College and report these to the Deputy Principal</li> <li>• Identify and act on patterns of absence for three or more consecutive days for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>• Maintain attendance strategies to promote a healthy culture of learning engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across the College and report on data to the Deputy Principal</li> <li>• Maintain documentation regarding contact with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Liaise with the Community Engagement Officer to apply specific strategies targeting attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>• Liaise with the Assistant Principal Pastoral Care and/or Head of Boarding with specific attendance strategies pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students both day and boarding</li> <li>• Monitor attendance for students on Smith Family Scholarships and report to Principal</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence</li> </ul> |
| <b>Business Manager</b>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extract data from Synergetic regarding absences and attendance for the purpose of census data collection and funding</li> <li>• Oversight of safeguarding data security across the network through the ICT Manager</li> </ul>   |
| <b>ICT Manager</b>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance of effective data security</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Head of Boarding</b>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Maintain oversight of late starts and/or early departures into Boarding and liaise with respective Administration staff and College Leadership Team (CLT) staff and Head of Year to advise of reasons for absence or early departure.</li> <li>• Monitor ABSTUDY and QATSIF requirements for delayed starts to College or absence from collection point and liaise with Assistant Principal Pastoral Care and Mission &amp; Identity for patterns of behaviour</li> <li>• Maintain 90-100% per term attendance of boarders with regards to delayed starts and early departures</li> </ul>  |

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|                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closely monitor International student attendance such as delayed starts and early departures as per CRICOS expectations. Report concerns to the Principal.</li> <li>• Liaise directly with Boarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander parents/Guardians regarding delayed start to College or absence and communicate the reasons to all CLT members and impact on Scholarships and funding such as ABSTUDY, QATSIF &amp; Smith Family Scholarships</li> <li>• Liaise with Assistant Principal Mission &amp; Identity and Principal regarding any possible 'At Risk' students who demonstrate decline under the expected College threshold for students on Smith Family Scholarships</li> <li>• Maintain documentation regarding contact with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence</li> </ul> |
| <b>Heads of Year</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Monitor student absences/lateness and identify concerns across a specific year group/s</li> <li>• Monitor absences of three or more consecutive days and make contact with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Maintain documentation regarding contact with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Maintain attendance strategies to promote a healthy culture across a specific year group/s</li> <li>• Follow up and document on patterns of absence and report these to the Assistant Principal Pastoral Care</li> <li>• Liaise with the Assistant Principal Pastoral Care with specific attendance strategies pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence</li> </ul>                           |
| <b>Head of Faculty</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Monitor absences related to assessments for patterns of behaviour</li> <li>• Report absences related to assessment to Head of Year, Assistant Principal Pastoral Care and Deputy Principal</li> <li>• Report absences related to assessment to parents/guardians</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific</li> </ul>  |

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|                             | <p>or highly sensitive information related to absence</p>  |
| <b>Pastoral Teacher</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</li> <li>• Monitor absences of three or more consecutive days and make contact with parents/guardians</li> <li>• Monitor student absences and identify concerns across a pastoral group</li> <li>• Maintain documentation regarding contact with parents/guardians regarding absences of three or more consecutive days</li> <li>• Maintain attendance strategies to promote a healthy culture across a specific year group/s</li> <li>• Monitor student lateness and identify concerns across the pastoral group</li> <li>• Follow up on patterns of absence and/or lateness with Head of Year</li> <li>• Liaise with the Head of Year regarding patterns of absence</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence</li> </ul> |
| <b>Teaching Staff</b>       | <p>Promote a positive College culture with high College attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain accurate and timely daily attendance per lesson</li> <li>• Monitor and act on absences in your respective classes of three or more consecutive days by reporting to Head of Faculty and/or Head of Year</li> <li>• Monitor attendance patterns related to assessment or other reasons and report concerns to Head of Faculty and/or Head of Year</li> <li>• Follow up and document concerns related to absences in relation to classwork or assessment with parents</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Administration Staff</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive and record daily absence data from parents/guardians and maintain accurate records on synergetic. A note from parent or carer explaining lateness is required.</li> <li>• Communicate any unexplained absence via an automated text message to the parent/guardian requesting a response from the parent. If no response from the parent is communicated, this is followed up with a phone call to the parent. If no response from the parent/guardian this will then be recorded as an</li> </ul>  |

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|  | <p>unexplained absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and Monitor absence of three or more consecutive days and report these to Pastoral care Teacher, Head of Year, Assistant Principal Pastoral Care and Assistant Principal Mission &amp; Identity as patterns of absence</li> <li>• Monitor the accuracy of daily and per lesson attendance from the teaching staff</li> <li>• Timely follow up on inaccurate or late attendance checking from teaching staff by email as required</li> <li>• Report consistently incorrect role marking to the Deputy Principal.</li> <li>• Report alleged truancy or unexplained absences to Head of Year, Assistant Principal Pastoral Care and Assistant Principal Mission &amp; Identity and Principal as required</li> <li>• Maintain hardcopy of rolls as required and accurate attendance for critical incidents (real and training days), carnivals, special events and excursions as required</li> <li>• Liaise with the Head of Boarding regarding specific delayed starts to College or early departure of Boarders</li> <li>• Extract attendance data as required by members of the CLT</li> <li>• Maintain the privacy of students related to specific or highly sensitive information related to absence</li> </ul> |
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## 8.2. Identify

The College identifies 'explained', 'unexplained' or 'unsatisfactory absences or patterns of absences, for example:

- when a student is absent for three or more consecutive College days
- where there is a persistent pattern of unexplained absences or absences that do not have a reasonable explanation such as in a negotiated enrolment plan.
- A student's attendance is considered unsatisfactory when it falls beneath the threshold of 90% per College term.
- The Principal or delegate confirms that the student is obliged to attend College and that no circumstances exists where the parent/legal guardian's obligation does not apply.
- The College is to monitor attendance and its impact on academic progress and wellbeing. A student may be considered at risk if absenteeism falls under the acceptable threshold of 90% per term.

- Once a student has been identified as falling under the expected threshold, the College will initiate intervention strategies to address the absenteeism.
- It is compulsory to monitor the absenteeism of International Students according to CRICOS regulations. Unacceptable levels of absenteeism may result in the cancellation of a student's visa and may result in deportation.

### **8.3 Contact**

Principal or delegate makes reasonable attempts to contact the parent/legal guardian to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for not ensuring the student is attending College.

### **8.4 Respond and Report**

The College will follow up initial contact with the parent/legal guardian and offer support and intervention to ensure a student's attendance improves. A Return to School Plan may be required to support a student's successful transition back to the College and considers the needs of students, families, and staff members.

Return to School Plans are essential when managing mental health and the wellbeing of students.

### **8.5 Accepted Absence**

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Sickness or accident, where the student is not well enough to attend College
- Medical or dental appointments, where out of hours appointments cannot be obtained
- Bereavement or attendance at a funeral of a close family member, including Sorry Business with negotiated time agreements for Sorry Business approved by the Principal
- College refusal where a plan is in place at the College
- College suspension or exclusion
- Employment in industry such as placement as approved by the College
- College representation as approved by the Principal
- Special leave approved by the Principal

### **8.6 Unacceptable Absence:**

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Participation in leisure activities or social events without approval
- Family holidays during examination blocks
- Not following a Plan as developed in partnership with the College and family
- Truancy during College hours or on College events such as excursions, sporting events etc.

## 8.7 Unexplained absence

- Unexplained absence is when the parent/guardian has failed to notify the College on any given day providing a reason for the student's absence.
- Administration staff will identify students who have unexplained absences and record this in Synergetic
- Unexplained absence is also to be recorded by Administration staff when a boarder has not arrived at a designated place for collection by Boardings staff such as a flight/airport or bus exchange
- Parents are given up until approximately 1130am to explain an absence, and then the day's nominal roll is to be finalised.
- The College administration or other staff will reasonably attempt to contact the parent or guardian, by phone call or SMS and or email to ascertain the reason for the absence (with the exception if this is a Boarding pickup)
- The College staff will make reasonable attempts to locate a student who has presented as suddenly 'unexplained' on any day in every specific class
- If this student is unable to be located by College staff during the College day or at an International or Domestic pickup. The College will attempt the following measures:

### **At College:**

1. Make an announcement over the PA
2. Alert the Principal of an alleged missing student
3. Search the College grounds and key sites such as Health Centre, Library, Counsellor's Rooms, Music tuition etc.
4. Contact the family of the student (Call made by CLT member)
4. Contact the friends of the student if required and as instructed by a member of the CLT
5. Notify the police (Call made by the Principal or CLT delegated task)

### **At a Domestic or International Airport Pickup or Bus Interchange**

1. Attempt to contact the student by phone or text
2. Notify the Principal
3. Notify the airline or airport security/bus company
4. Principal to notify the parent
5. Principal to notify the police (call made by the Principal or delegate)
6. Notify government authorities for International students according to CRICOS including Interpol as required (call made by the principal or delegate)

Note: When explanation of the unexplained nature of the absence is received, this will be recorded eg. Missed International flight connection.

## 8.8 Truancy

Truancy is when a student chooses not to attend a class or classes, leaves the College grounds without signing out, or does not attend functions related to the College such as assemblies, mass/liturgies/year group meetings or in-College or College-focused activities such as an excursion or functions that are deemed compulsory in attendance.

This unacceptable behaviour is not deemed the fault of the parent unless the parent has explicitly encouraged the student to be absent themselves without informing the College showing disregard for College expectations.

Or that the parent does not have the capacity to control the student's independent behaviour that is not in keeping with College expectations related to attendance.

It is expected that the parents and students will work with the College to address matters related to truancy.

Truancy will have consequences according to the Student Code of Conduct.

## 8.9 Exemption from Schooling

An exemption from compulsory schooling or the compulsory participation phase is available when a student or a young person cannot attend, or it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances to require them to attend College or participate in an eligible option for a period of more than 10 consecutive College days.

## 9. Definitions

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| <b>Absenteeism</b>  | Any form of absence from College or class or excursion or at point of collection for boarders  |
| <b>Alternate program/<br/>Negotiated<br/>Enrolment<br/>Plan</b> | In some instances (such as for students experiencing long-term diagnosed illness, elite sportspeople, young carers, pregnancy, and students employed in industry), a student's educational program may be altered so that they can remain enrolled in the College but do not attend the same hours as their peers.   |
| <b>Parent or<br/>legal<br/>guardian<br/>obligation</b>          | <p>In Queensland, the law requires parents to ensure their compulsory College aged student is enrolled at College and attends College for the educational program on every College day.</p> <p>Compulsory College age starts when a student is at least 6 years of age and finishes when the student turns 16 years of age or completes Year 10 whichever is sooner. Students under the compulsory age must be either learning or earning an income.</p> |

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| <b>Flexible arrangement</b>   | A flexible arrangement allows for all or part of a student's educational program to be delivered by an alternative education provider, where it is in the best educational interest of the student.  |
| <b>Misadventure</b>           | An event is unforeseen and beyond a student's control (QCAA: QCE & QCIA handbook Sec 6.5)  |
| <b>Reasonable excuse</b>      | <p>Parents/legal guardians have a reasonable excuse if, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the student (or student in question) resides with parent 1, and parent 2 (who does not reside with the student) believes, on reasonable grounds, that parent 1 is complying with the obligation to have their student or student enrolled and attending College. Parent 2 has a reasonable excuse</li> <li>• the parents/legal guardians are not reasonably able to control the student's behaviour to the extent necessary to comply with their obligation to have their student enrolled, attending or participating</li> <li>• the parents/legal guardians are unable to comply with their obligation because of ill health or a disability</li> <li>• the student in question is considered to be independent, and is no longer practically subject to the parental authority of the parents/legal guardian</li> <li>• the student's non-attendance or non-participation was due to an accident or unforeseen event that the parent/legal guardian could not prevent. Evidence must be provided e.g., certificate signed by medical/health professional in case of medical event.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Return to School Plans</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to School Plans take many forms and for varied purposes.</li> <li>• A Return to School Plans or Return to Boarding Plan is essential when a student has been absent after for mental health hospitalisation or care.</li> <li>• This takes place as a family consultation with the student, respective staff members and Principal</li> </ul>  |

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|                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Return to School Plans are also issued when returning from a suspension and transition to College.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>College refusal</b> | When a student refuses to attend College and/or has problems remaining in class for an entire day and is anxiety based e.g. separation, generalised or social anxiety. Formalised diagnosis is required with counselling support provided to the student. |
| <b>Sorry Business</b>  | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bereavement Leave.  |

## 10. St Ursula's College Improvement Strategies

Improvement strategies may be implemented through an early intervention approach to identifying underlying issues impacting on attendance.

- Resilience in our Teens (RIOT Program) skills to curb anxiety loops and challenge negative self-talk and/or negative cognitive distortion
- Regular Wellbeing check-ins with follow up
- Parent training related Resilience and Anxiety
- Staff training in Resilience and Anxiety in Teens
- Care Conversations in Boarding
- Early parent notification of a pattern of behaviour
- Strong and consistent staff follow up with parents
- Counselling
- Growth Coaching
- Effective engagement in learning
- Learning intervention

## 13. Review

This policy will be reviewed every four years, or if legislation changes

## 12. Amendment Register

| Issue No | Date of Issue | Details of next review and reason for amendment |
|----------|---------------|---|
| 01       | 11 Aug 2022   | 11 Aug 2026, or if the legislation changes      |
| 02       |               |   |
| 03       |               |   |
| 04       |               |   |