

Bruny Island District School

Attendance Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure is currently under review and should be considered current.

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Version 1.1 – 24/09/2021

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1. Purpose

This policy applies to all government schools with school-aged students (Prep to Year 12).

This policy outlines Department of Education's (DoE) approach to supporting consistent attendance at school which is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes and keeping students engaged in their learning.

It is important that schools have effective, reliable local practices and systems that record student attendance accurately and in a timely manner, to enable schools to identify whether any interventions or additional supports are required to promote consistent student engagement and attendance.

Parents/guardians have a legal obligation to ensure a child is enrolled in and attending school or is registered for home education.

2. Policy Statement

This school Attendance Policy and Procedure provides information on key obligations/accountabilities for schools.

3. How to Record Attendance

3.1 Policy Objective

- Every day a student does not attend school can have a negative impact on their learning.
- Principals have duty of care for every student while they are attending school at the required times.
- Principals are required to keep a register recording the daily attendance or absence of each student, to ensure that the school can identify those students who are attending and those who are not.

3.2 Key Information

For Principals

- Primary Schools, High Schools, District High Schools and Colleges **must**:
 - » record attendance at the start of the first lesson of the day
 - » ensure that teachers take class attendance for every class throughout the day.
- Where 'inheritance' is enabled in EduPoint:
 - » the school **may** elect to routinely record attendance at other times of the day,
 - » the school **must** update attendance if a student's attendance status has changed since it was last recorded.
- Where 'inheritance' is not enabled in EduPoint, the school **must** record attendance for every session that a student is timetabled throughout the day.

For School Staff

- A student is **Present** when:
 - » the student is in class
 - » the student is, for example, off campus on an excursion, attending a work experience/placement activity, or visiting another school as part of an endorsed school activity
- A student is **Absent**, whenever they are not attending their scheduled class, or another alternative authorised activity, even if they are on campus.
- All **Present** and **Absent** EduPoint categories can be found at [Appendix A - EduPoint Categories](#).
- If a parent/guardian or independent student provides a reason for an absence that is not authorised by the *Education Act 2016* or Ministerial Instruction No 4. Students Excused from Daily Attendance at School, then the absence **must** be recorded as unauthorised.

Links to Other Useful Information

- [Attendance Categories: An EduPoint Quick Reference Guide \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [Appendix B – Student Absence Flowchart](#)
- [School Administration System Project \(SASP\) EduPoint Attendance Concepts \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [Bulk Late Arrival and Leave Early \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [Attendance Marking - Flexible Learning \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [Attendance Marking - eSchool \(2015\) \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [Timetable Support Site \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [Year 11 and 12 System Support \[Staff Only\]](#)

3.3 FAQs

School Staff

- What is the first lesson of the day i.e. Home Room, Period 1 or Class 1?

For all students:

- » The first lesson of the day is the first session that a student is required to attend.
 - » If the student is a **High School** student and they have a 15 min Home Group at the start of the day this would be the first lesson.
 - » If the student is **College** student and their first session for the day is Period 3 – this would be the first lesson of the day.
- I am a relief teacher and this is my first day at this school – what should I do?
 - » Contact the School Business Manager, who may allocate a temporary user profile so you can complete attendance-related tasks in the school system.
 - I do not know what EduPoint Codes to use and I cannot find the description for each EduPoint Code.
 - » Please refer to [EduPoint Attendance Categories \[Staff\]](#) or [Appendix A -EduPoint Categories](#).

3.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Principals

- **Must** ensure that a register is kept recording the daily attendance or absence of each school-aged child in the way shown in [Appendix A - EduPoint Categories](#)
- **Must** ensure strategies are undertaken to foster and maintain student engagement in education
- **Must** ensure relevant staff maintain the Transition Contact Log in SSS

Teachers

- **Must** take student attendance for each lesson (*Note: administrative staff may record student absence/presence in EduPoint).

School Business Managers and Administrative Staff

- **Must** ensure school staff follow-up unexplained absences for students enrolled at their school.
- **May** use **vKey** to create a 'Ztemp' account in their school for access to systems (eg SARIS, edi, EduPoint).
- **May** allocate a system 'Ztemp' role to relief staff by resetting the password and providing to the relief teacher.
- Where 'Ztemp' is not utilised a school may provide relief teachers with paper class lists to mark attendance, with administrative staff entering the data.
- **Must** ensure that school staff maintain a student's individual timetable based on their personalised learning plan if required.

4. How to Process Applications for Part-time Attendance

4.1 Policy Objective

- It can be in the best interests of some students to participate in school on a less than full-time basis.
- Only parents/guardians or independent student can initiate an application for a student to attend part-time.
- Students may also attend less than full-time when:
 - » The student is home educated, or
 - » The student has a learning plan in place.

4.2 Key Information

Application for Part-time Attendance

- An independent student or parent/guardian **may** initiate an application for part-time attendance in accordance with the [application form](#). A school **must not** make an application without the independent student or parent/guardian initiating it.
- An application **must** attach any relevant supporting evidence detailing why the application is in the best interests of the child and be accompanied by a report from a school social worker (or similar) **and** Principal.
- The completed application form **must** be emailed by the school to parttimeattendance@education.tas.gov.au.
- Certificates of Part-time Attendance will be issued for a maximum of two terms; however, they **may** be issued for less where the application specifically states this and/or where the Deputy Secretary agrees.

Review of Part-time Attendance

- At least once per term, the Principal **must** review each part-time attendance arrangement.
- The Principal **must** consult with the parent/guardian and/or student as part of this review.
- If, following consultation, both the Principal and parent/guardian or independent student agree that the part-time attendance arrangement should be altered with a reduction in hours than a new application **must** be submitted to the Deputy Secretary, Department of Education at parttimeattendance@education.tas.gov.au
- If, following consultation, both the Principal and parent/student agree that the approval should be revoked, the Principal **must** email the Deputy Secretary, Department of Education at parttimeattendance@education.tas.gov.au.

Links to Other Useful Information

- [Ministerial Instruction No 3 for Part-Time Attendance at School](#)
- [Ministerial Instruction No 11 for Application for Part Time Attendance at an Approved Learning Program](#)
- [Part-time Application Form](#)
- [Appendix E - Part-time Attendance Application Process](#)

4.3 FAQs – Part-time Attendance

Parents/Guardians

- **Why are Certificates of Part-time Attendance issued for no longer than two school terms?**
 - » This is to ensure that a student's part-time attendance arrangement is still in the best interests of the child and is subject to regular reviews.
- **My child was issued with a Certificate of Part-time Attendance. I would like the arrangement to stop – what should I do?**
 - » Parents/guardians and independent students have a right to request that the part-time attendance arrangement stop.
 - » In the first instance, parents/guardians should discuss this request with the Principal.
 - » Parents/guardians *may* contact the Deputy Secretary Learning, Department of Education, at parttimeattendance@education.tas.gov.au and request the part-time attendance arrangement be revoked.

All School Staff

- **What should I do if we do not have a school social worker or school psychologist to complete a report?**
 - » Only school social workers or school psychologists are able to provide an assessment and report for the application.
 - » If you need access to one of these staff members, please contact the Manager, Professional Support Staff, by telephone on 6777 2440.
- **How long does the Principal, school social worker or school psychologist report need to be?**
 - » There is no set length of a school social worker report. The length *may* depend on the circumstances of the student and should provide enough information and detail for the Deputy Secretary, Department of Education, to make a decision.
- **What should I do if I have consulted with the parent/guardian/student and we both agree that the part-time arrangements are no longer suitable for the student?**
 - » At least once per term, the Principal **must** review the student's part-time arrangements. If, after consultation with the student/parents and other relevant persons, it is agreed that the part-time arrangement is no longer working, the parent and school Principal must advise Learning Services through the parttimeattendance@education.tas.gov.au mailbox.
- **How long will it take to receive a decision on an application?**
 - » Applications will be assessed within three weeks. If more information is required to support the application, the process *may* take longer.
- **When does the part-time application arrangement commence?**
 - » The part-time attendance arrangement commences on the date specified on the returned Certificate of Part-time Attendance issued by the Deputy Secretary. It does not commence when the school or parent emails the application form to the Deputy Secretary, Department of Education.
- **Can a school Principal or parent/guardian ask the Deputy Secretary to revoke the certificate of part-time attendance?**
 - » Yes. A Principal or parent/guardian can unilaterally request the Deputy Secretary revoke a student's certificate of part-time attendance through the parttimeattendance@education.tas.gov.au mailbox.

However, discussions between all parties are encouraged before a request is made to the Deputy Secretary. The decision to revoke remains with the Deputy Secretary.

- **What should I do if I think it is in the best interests of the child to attend part-time, but the student/parent/guardian does not agree?**
 - » A part-time attendance arrangement can only occur where the parent/guardian or independent student has initiated the application. If the application is not initiated by the parent/guardian/student, then the school must work with the parent/guardian/student to achieve the best educational outcomes for the child or young person.

4.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Principals

- **Must** review each part-time arrangement at least once each school term.
- **Must** provide a written statement on each application for part-time attendance.
- **Must** ensure the written statement includes an explanation as to why the application is in the best interests of the child and, if applicable, include re-engagement strategies.
- **Must** refer any applications for part-time attendance to the Deputy Secretary, Department of Education.

School Social Workers or Psychologists

- **Must** provide a comment on each application for part-time attendance.

Deputy Secretary Learning

- **Must** consider if each part-time attendance application is in the child's best interests

How to Excuse a Student from Attendance

4.5 Policy Objective

- Every day that a student does not attend school can have a negative impact on their learning.
- There is a list of specific reasons for a student to be authorised as absent from school.
- Specific reasons for students to be authorised as absent from school helps students, parent/guardians and the community to understand the importance of attending school.
- In certain instances, the parent/guardian may be required to provide an explanation as to why a child is absent from school.

4.6 Key Information

For Principals, Teaching Staff and Non-Teaching Staff

- A student **may** be authorised as absent from daily attendance at a school for a period deemed reasonable by the Principal where the student is:
 - » sick or incapacitated, where the school has been notified of the reason within five days;
 - » suffering an infestation or disease that is categorised by the Director of Public Health as infectious, contagious, or harmful; or
 - » directed by the Principal, on advice from the Director of Public Health, to not attend school. For more information please telephone the Public Health Service hotline on 1 800 671 738 or visit the [Department of Health website](#).
- A staff member **must** attempt to contact a parent/guardian on the day for each occasion where a student is absent and the reason is unexplained. Such an attempt **may** include:
 - » an email or text message to parent/guardian advising of absence and seeking an explanation;
 - » telephoning the parent/guardian
- If the absence is still unexplained by the end of the term, the school **may** contact the parent/guardian on all outstanding unexplained absences to obtain explanations.
- When administrative staff (or teaching staff) first contact a parent/guardian about a student's unexplained absence;
 - » if the reason provided by the parent/guardian is sickness or another excusable circumstance ¹, then the administrative staff (or teaching staff) **must** record it in EduPoint as an authorised absence, using the appropriate category, and add an attendance note with brief explanation provided by the parent/guardian if necessary.
 - » if the reason provided by the parent/guardian is not an excusable circumstance that can be authorised (e.g. student is absent because it is their birthday), the administrative staff (or teaching staff) **must** record it as an unauthorised absence using the appropriate category, and add an attendance note with a brief explanation provided by the parent/guardian.
 - » If the parent/guardian is unable to be contacted, the administrative staff (or teaching staff) **must** record the absence as unauthorised using the unexplained by parent/carer category, and add an attendance note with the time and date of the unsuccessful contact.

¹ Excusable Circumstances are outlined in section 3.1 of Ministerial Instruction No 4 – Students Excused from Daily Attendance at School. This list is also available in Appendix C of this document.

- When teaching staff/support staff are following up unauthorised absences;
 - » They **must** access student absences records and attendance notes in EduPoint. (The EduPoint report *AT002 Student Listing of Daily Absences* can be used to get a list of student absence records and attendance notes).
 - » They **must** enter all conversation with parents/guardians around all absences (including unsuccessful attempts to speak with parents/guardians) in the contact log in the Student Support System (SSS).

Example	How schools will record the absence with the appropriate EduPoint Category
A student is absent sick for less than 5 total days per school year <u>and</u> notifies the school within 5 days of each days' absences.	Explained - Sickness/Incapacity (E)
A student is absent sick for less than 5 total days per school year <u>and</u> does not notify the school within 5 days of each days absence, or at all.	Unauthorised - Unexplained by parent/carer (U)
A student is absent sick for less than 5 total days per school year <u>and</u> notifies the school after 5 days of each day's absence.	Explained – Other (O)
A student is absent sick for 6 or more days (not necessarily consecutive) per school year, <u>and</u> the school does not request a medical certificate or statutory declaration.	Explained – Sickness/incapacity (E)
A student is absent sick for 6 or more days (not necessarily consecutive) per school year, <u>and</u> the school requests a medical certificate or statutory declaration, <u>and</u> the parent provides it.	Explained - Sickness/Incapacity (E)
A student is away for 6 or more days (not necessarily consecutive) per school year, <u>and</u> the school requests a medical certificate or statutory declaration, <u>and</u> the parent does not provide it.	Unauthorised - Not an excusable circumstance (MI4)(X)

4.7 Links to Other Useful Information

- [Ministerial Instruction No 4 Students Excused from Daily Attendance at School](#)
- [Attendance Categories: An EduPoint Quick Reference Guide \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [School Administration System Project \(SASP\) EduPoint Attendance Concepts \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [Appendix D - Attendance Flowchart for School Business Managers and Administrative Staff \[Staff Only\]](#)
- [Recording Absences for an individual \(video tutorial\) \[Staff Only\]](#)

- [Updating Absences for an individual \(video tutorial\)](#) [Staff Only]

4.8 FAQs

Principals, Teachers and Administrative Staff

- The parent/guardian has provided a reason, but it is not in the list at [Appendix C - List of Authorised Reasons for Children to be Excused from Schools](#) – what do I do?
 - » You **must** record it as an unauthorised absence.
- A student has been away for a single day this week. They have already been authorised as absent from school for a total of 5 days this year due to sickness. The parent has said the child was sick this week, but the student was seen at the movie cinema on the same day. What can I request as evidence and how should I record the absence based on the evidence provided?
 - » A Principal has the option to request evidence to support that the child was sick on this day or any subsequent days. The evidence **may** include:
 - A medical certificate from a medical practitioner; or
 - A statutory declaration from a parent/guardian
 - » If the Principal requests evidence (such as a certificate from a medical practitioner or a statutory declaration), then the parent/guardian **must** provide this evidence for the student to be marked as away from school as Explained – Sickness/Incapacity (EduPoint Code E).
 - » If a Principal requests evidence and this is not provided, then the absence **must** be marked as an Unauthorised – Not an excusable circumstance (MI4) (EduPoint Code X).
- A student has missed class because of a hair appointment – what should I record this as?
 - » These **must** be marked as Unauthorised – Not an excusable circumstance (MI4) (EduPoint Code X).
- Should I accept a medical certificate with no specified end date?
 - » You should not accept a medical certificate that does not specify an end date.
- A student comes to school but is not attending a specific class that they should be – what should I record this as?
 - » Unauthorised – Truant (EduPoint Code T).
- A parent/guardian has telephoned the school explaining that the student is absent with a reason that is categorised as 'Explained-Other'. This is the child's first absence this year, however I don't think the reason given is true. What should I do?
 - » The Principal **may** request additional evidence, such as a statutory declaration from a parent/guardian, to confirm the explanation.
 - » School administrative staff **may** mark the absence as unauthorised until the requested evidence is provided.

Learning Services Staff

- How do I conduct reviews of a schools unmarked attendance?
 - » You can view a schools unmarked attendance in EduPoint by viewing the report 'Unmarked Class Attendance Listing'.

Teaching Staff

- **Must** accurately record attendance data by using the codes at [Appendix A - EduPoint Categories](#).

Non-teaching Staff or Teaching Staff

- **Must** follow steps outlined above when a student is absent

5. How to Manage Unauthorised Absences

5.1 Policy Objectives

- Identifying and responding to unauthorised absences enables schools to offer appropriate follow-up supports to students and parent/guardians regarding a student's attendance and empowers Principals to adopt early intervention strategies to address non-attendance.

5.2 Key Information

Procedure for Students in Prep-Year 12

- When a student has the equivalent of five (5), ten (10) or fifteen (15) days of unauthorised absence (not necessarily consecutive), the Student Support System (SSS) will generate an email to the Principal advising that the absence threshold has been breached and will add an alert to the Principal's 'To Do' list.
- Principals *may* determine whether the letter is sent.
- Where the letter is dismissed, the reason **must** be recorded as a Quick Note.
- If the Principal determines to send a letter, then it **must** be generated from SSS.
- A signed copy of the letter and attachments **must** be uploaded to the student's SSS file.
- The letter **must** be posted, delivered or emailed to the parent/guardian or independent student (registered post is not required).

Process After 15 Days of Unauthorised Absences

Please refer to the [Appendix G - Compulsory Conciliation Conference Referral Checklist](#).

Links to Other Useful Information

- [Secretary's Instruction No 5 for Managing Absences in a State school that are not Authorised by the Education Act \(2016\)](#)

5.3 FAQs – How to Manage Unauthorised Absences

All Schools

- Do I have to issue letters when they are generated in SSS?
 - » No. Principals have discretion whether to issue the letter. If a Principal decides to dismiss the letter, this should be recorded in the student's contact log as a quick note. Principals *may* know of extenuating circumstances and/or *may* wish to discuss the non-attendance with the parent/guardian or independent student in a less formal manner, before the issuing of non-attendance letters commence.
- When should Principals consult with school social workers to help provide support for a student's non-attendance?
 - » There is no set time for when Principals or other staff should seek school social worker support for a student's absence. Generally, Principals or teachers should try to resolve a student's non-attendance before engaging a school social worker.
- What kind of re-engagement strategies should the school use before requesting a referral to the Education Registrar?

- » Re-engagement strategies will vary depending on the student and the reasons behind the absence. Schools **must** consult with their school social worker, or a Learning Services senior social worker, as to the strategies that could be used to re-engage the student.

5.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- **May** choose to issue a non-attendance letter.
- **Must** ensure there have been efforts to resolve the student's non-attendance, including discussion with the school social worker or school psychologist.
- **May** choose to refer a non-attendance matter to the Learning Services Student Support Leader.

6. How to Manage Absences of Overseas Students

6.1 Policy Objectives

- International student absences may have an impact on an individual's visa. As such, absences **must** be managed through the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training Services to Overseas Students.

6.2 Key Information

- Primary schools, High schools, and Colleges **must** follow [Appendix F – International Student Absences](#) when an:
 - » International Student's attendance rate is 85%
 - » International Student's attendance rate decreases to 80%
 - » International Student's attendance rate decreases further post an initial warning has been issued
 - » International Student's attendance rate continues to decrease further after the final warning has been issued.
- Schools can view a student's attendance rate in *edi*.

6.3 Links to Other Useful Information

- [Government Education and Training International](#)

6.4 FAQs

All Schools

- Who do I contact to talk to someone about an international student at our school?
 - » Visit: <http://study.tas.gov.au>
 - » Call: (03) 6165 5727
 - » Email: info@geti.tas.gov.au

6.5 Roles and Responsibilities

Principals

- **Must** develop an Intervention Plan when an international student's attendance rate drops to 85%, and send this to the Principal Executive Officer by contacting:
 - » Email: info@geti.tas.gov.au
 - » Phone: (03) 6165 5727
 - » Post: GPO Box 169, Hobart Tasmania, 7001 Australia.
- **Must** advise the Principal Executive Officer if the international student's attendance rate is at 80% or below.

Principal Executive Officer (PEO)

- **Must** consider what appropriate action should be taken if an international student's attendance rate is at 80% or below.

7. How to Appoint an Authorised Person

7.1 Policy Objective

- To provide schools with an additional mechanism to manage unauthorised student absences; to investigate absences; and to work with students and families to resolve non-attendance issues.

7.2 Key Information

For Principals

Authorised Person

- Authorised Persons can be used by schools to assist in the investigation of an unauthorised or suspected unauthorised absence of a school-aged child or youth from a school or Approved Learning Program.
- Schools are not required to request an Authorised Person be appointed, however they **may** choose to where it **may** assist with managing unauthorised absences in accordance with the school's Attendance Process.
- Where a school seeks to appoint an Authorised Person, those persons **must** act in accordance with any policy of the Department of Education or school policy and **must** undertake an e-learning training module before carrying out their duties.

Appointment

- A Principal **may** apply to the Secretary, Department of Education for the appointment of an Authorised Person. The application **must** be made using the approved [Authorised Person App](#).
- A person who is appointed as an Authorised Person **must** be someone who is likely to be known to a school-aged child or youth from that school and **must** be an employee of the Department of Education.
- The person nominated **must** be considered by the Principal at the school at which the person works to have the skills and attributes deemed appropriate to undertake the role of an Authorised Person.

Identification and Requirements

- An Authorised Person will be issued an ID card bearing the photograph of that person and **must** carry this ID card at all times.
- The Authorised Person **must** present their ID card to anyone that they make contact with for the purpose of investigating any unauthorised or suspected unauthorised absence of any school-aged child or youth from a school or an Approved Learning Program.
- The Authorised Person **must** keep a record of any contact made and conversations had with any persons as part of their investigation.
- An Authorised Person does not have authority to restrain a school-aged child or youth.

Operating as an Authorised Person

- On approaching a person, an Authorised Person **must** show the person their ID card.
- An Authorised Person **may**:
 - » approach any person who appears to him or her to be under the age of 18 years and is apparently not in attendance at a school or an Approved Learning Program; and
 - » request the person approached to provide:
 - » his or her name, age and address; and
 - » the name and address of the school or the provider of the Approved Learning Program normally attended by the person approached; and

- » the reason for being absent from school or the Approved Learning Program.
- An Authorised Person **may** accompany any person approached to his or her home, or to the school or the relevant provider of the Approved Learning Program specified by the person approached, to verify the information provided.
- In investigating an unauthorised absence, or suspected unauthorised absence of a school-aged child or youth, an Authorised Person **may**:
 - » approach the parent/guardian of the child or youth; and
 - » require the parent/guardian to explain the reason that the child or youth is, or was, absent from school or an Approved Learning Program.

7.3 Links to Other Useful Information

- [Ministerial Instruction No 5 for Authorising a Person to Act as an Authorised Person for the Purposes of sections 40\(2\) and 40\(3\)](#)
- [Authorised Person App](#) – manages the appointment process including required training and delivery of the ID Card
- [Authorised Persons Parent Fact Sheet](#)

7.4 FAQs

Principals

- **What can an Authorised Person do?**
 - » Authorised Persons can be used by schools to assist in the investigation of an unauthorised or suspected unauthorised absence of a school-aged child or youth from a school or Approved Learning Program. The information collected from an Authorised Person's investigations could also be provided at a compulsory conciliation conference.
- **How might my school benefit from having an Authorised Person?**
 - » The *Education Act 2016* provides Authorised Persons with the authority to approach school-aged children or youths who are not at school and determine whether they should be at school, and take steps to help them return to school where that is appropriate. Authorised Persons **may** also approach the parent/guardian of a child or youth and ask that the parent/guardian explain the reason that the child or youth is or was absent from school or an Approved Learning Program.
- **Who from my school might apply to be an Authorised Person?**
 - » An Authorised Person **must** be someone employed by the Department of Education and should be known to students. An Authorised Person **may** be a school social worker who, for example, is known to and has a relationship with students, and who has experience working with students and families to resolve unauthorised absences.
- **How is an Authorised Person appointed, and for how long?**
 - » The Secretary, Department of Education **may** authorise a person to be an Authorised Person. The Authorised Person will be issued with an ID card valid for 3 years.
- **Who can I go to with questions?**
 - » For questions about Authorised Persons, please contact the Learning Services, Manager Professional Support Staff.

7.5 Roles and Responsibilities

Principals

- **May** apply to the Secretary, Department of Education for the appointment of an Authorised Person.

Secretary, Department of Education

- **May** authorise the appointment of a person as an Authorised Person.

Authorised Person

- **Must** undertake training before carrying out the function of an Authorised Person.
- **Must** have their ID card on them when undertaking the functions of an Authorised Person
- **Must** follow any policy of the Department of Education, and any school based policy or process, including but not limited to policies relating to the transporting of a school-aged child or youth in a vehicle.

8. How to Refer a Student's Absence to the Education Registrar

8.1 Policy Objective

- Engaging an independent third-party to help identify and resolve issues contributing to a student's non-attendance empowers students, parent/guardians and the school, to support a student's regular attendance at school.

8.2 Key Information

For Principals and School Social Workers

- At any time, a Principal, or person authorised by the Principal, may ask that the Learning Services Student Support Leader refer a student's non-attendance to the Education Registrar, Office of the Education Registrar, to conduct a compulsory conciliation conference.
- The Principal **must** complete an Office of the Education Registrar [application form](#).
- A checklist has been provided at ([Appendix G – Compulsory Conciliation conference Referral Checklist](#), to provide guidance on the relevant material required for a referral and the requirement to engage with a school social worker to help re-engage the student.
- The Principal **must** send the Office of the Education Registrar [application form](#) and [completed checklist](#) to the Learning Services Student Support Leader.

For Learning Services Student Support Leaders

- Upon receipt of a request from a Principal, the Learning Services Student Support Leader **must** notify the Learning Services Director Student Support and in consultation with the Director of Student Support either:
 - » Accept the request and refer the application form and request form to the Education Registrar and copy to the Principal.
 - » Not accept the request and discuss other potential student re-engagement options with the school to exhaust the school's Attendance Policy.

Links to Other Useful Information

- [Ministerial Instruction No 6 Relating to School Student Absences](#)
- [Office of the Education Registrar website](#)
- [Office of the Education Registrar – Information for Schools](#)

8.3 FAQs

- **When should Principals consult with school social workers to help provide support for a student's non-attendance?**
 - » There is no set time for when Principals or other staff should seek school social worker support for a student's absence. Generally, Principals and teachers should try to resolve a student's non-attendance before engaging a school social worker.
 - » If a student's non-attendance is referred to the Learning Services Student Support Leader, then the school social worker is required to provide a summary of the school social worker's intervention.
- **What kind of re-engagement strategies should the school use before requesting a referral to the Education Registrar?**

- » Re-engagement strategies will vary depending on the student and the reasons behind the absence. Schools **must** consult with their social worker, or a Learning Services social worker, as to the strategies that could be used to re-engage the student.
- **What should I do if I do not have a school social worker or school psychologist to sign the checklist?**
 - » School social workers or school psychologists **must** sign a checklist that accompanies a referral to the Learning Services Student Support Leader. This requirement is to ensure that as many re-engagement strategies as possible have been attempted with the student. If you need access to one of these staff members, please contact the Senior Social Worker, or Manager, Professional Support Staff.
- **What is the role of the Education Registrar?**
 - » The Office of the Education Registrar was established to help resolve reasons for student's continued unauthorised non-attendance at school. A compulsory conciliation conference is a process whereby students, parent/guardians and Principals can discuss and agree to what needs to happen to support a student to attend school.
- **Does the Department of Education run the compulsory conciliation conference?**
 - » No. The independent Education Registrar, is responsible for the compulsory conciliation conference process. The Education Registrar, will determine if the matter is suitable for a compulsory conciliation conference and will appoint an independent conciliator to run the process.
- **What happens at a compulsory conciliation conference?**
 - » If the Education Registrar accepts a referral, the Education Registrar will require the parent, the Principal and/or any other person involved in supporting the student to attend a conciliation conference to work through the reasons contributing to non-attendance.
 - » The compulsory conciliation conference will provide everyone with an opportunity to discuss the reasons for the student's absence, and what can be done to assist the student to attend school every day. The conciliation conferences are designed to be helpful and to offer support to resolve any problems and to assist to find ways to improve the student's attendance.

8.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Principals

- **Must** ensure appropriate student attendance records are kept.
- **Must** ensure the school and its staff take reasonable steps to re-engage a student.
- **Must** consult with the school social worker or on-call social worker when considering re-engagement strategies.
- **May** refer a student's non-attendance to the Learning Services Student Support Leader for a compulsory conciliation conference.
- **Must** obtain a school social worker or on-call social worker signature when referring a student's non-attendance through the Learning Services Student Support Leader to the Office of the Education Registrar.
- **May** accelerate a referral to the Learning Services Student Support Leader to resolve the non-attendance where:
 - » an incident has occurred at school which is unlikely to be resolved by the passage of time and needs to be resolved quickly in order to expedite the student's return to school;
 - » a school student with otherwise excellent attendance suddenly ceases attending school with no reasonable excuse;

- » a parent/guardian indicates at a very early stage that the student will not be returned to school unless a particular matter is resolved and the school needs the assistance of a third-party to resolve that matter.
- **must** complete an application form and referral form when referring a student's non-attendance to the Learning Services Student Support Leader.

Authorised Persons

May be engaged to resolve the non-attendance reasons where it would assist the school to do so. School Social Workers/Attendance Counsellor/Youth Worker

- **Must** undertake reasonable steps to intervene and re-engage the student before the matter is referred to the Learning Services Student Support Leader.

Learning Services Staff

- **Must** consider a referral from a Principal.
- **Must** ensure that the school social worker has considered strategies to re-engage the student.
- **May** refer a matter to the Education Registrar or discuss other re-engagement strategies with the Principal or school social worker.

9. Related policies

- Approved Learning Programs: Requirements and Guidance for Youth Engagement in Post-Year 10 Education and Training.

10. Related procedures

- Enrolment Procedure [Staff Only].

11. Supporting information/websites

- Parent Fact Sheet – Attendance

12. Legislation

- *Education Act 2016*
- Ministerial Instruction No 3 for Part-Time Attendance at School
 - » This Ministerial Instruction outlines the process for applications for part-time attendance and specifies the circumstances in which a parent of a school-aged child, or independent student may apply to attend State or non-government schools on a part-time basis.
- Ministerial Instruction No 4 Students Excused from Daily Attendance at School
 - » This Ministerial Instruction specifies the circumstances in which a school-aged child or youth is excused from attendance at school, which are in addition to those circumstances identified in sections 19 and 36 the *Education Act 2016*.
- Ministerial Instruction No 5 for Authorising a Person to Act as an Authorised Person for the Purpose of Sections 40(2) and 40(3)
 - » This Ministerial Instruction sets out the requirements for authorised persons.
- Ministerial Instruction No 6 Relating to School Student Absences
 - » This Ministerial Instruction outlines the processes to be followed in managing absences of school students, the information to be included in a referral to the Registrar and how this information will be assessed against the requirements for convening a compulsory conciliation conference, and requirements of a conciliator in conducting a conference.
- Ministerial Instruction No 7 for Elimination or Amelioration of Risks to Health and Safety of Persons at School
 - » This Ministerial Instruction applies to all State and Non-Government Schools and provides principals with the authority to request or require information about a child's behaviour where it may pose a risk to the health and safety of the child, or other persons at the school, while supporting the child's access to education.

13. Definitions

See *Education Act 2016* definitions.

Internal Information Only*

Authorised by: Anita Griffin, Director Strategic Policy and Planning

Contact: Strategic Policy and Planning, **Last Significant Review:** 10 July 2017

Review Due: 30 August 2020

This Document Replaced: Attendance Policy and Process

Appendix A - EduPoint Categories

EduPoint Code	EduPoint Category Name	Attendance Status	Contributes to	
			Attendance %	Absence Alerts
I	In Class	Present	✓	✗
W	Workplace Learning	Present	✓	✗
L	Alternative Learning Activity	Present	✓	✗
C	Out of Class - Medical	Present	✓	✗
B	Out of Class - Behaviour	Present	✓	✗
P	Out of Class - Other	Present	✓	✗
E	Explained - Sickness/Incapacity	Absent	✓	✗
O	Explained - Other	Absent	✓	✗
T	Unauthorised - Truant	Absent	✓	✓
X	Unauthorised – Not an excusable circumstance (MI4)	Absent	✓	✓
U	Unauthorised - Unexplained by parent/carer	Absent	✓	✓
S	Discipline - Suspension or Exclusion	Absent	✓	✗
D	Shared Enrolment	Absent	✗	✗
N	Approved for part-time attendance	Absent	✗	✗
V	Absence pending course change	Absent	✗	✗
Y	Not Required (Not Scheduled)	Absent	✗	✗
A	Alternative Learning Activity (Off-Campus)	Absent	✗	✗
G	Absent at Online Lesson (VLT only)	Absent	✗	✗
H	No evidence of engagement (VLT only)	Absent	✗	✗
Q	Present at Online Lesson (VLT only)	Present	✗	✗
R	Evidence of Engagement (VLT only)	Present	✗	✗
Z	ASBA-Approved School-based Apprenticeship	Absence	✗	✗
D	Shared Enrolment	Absence	✗	✗

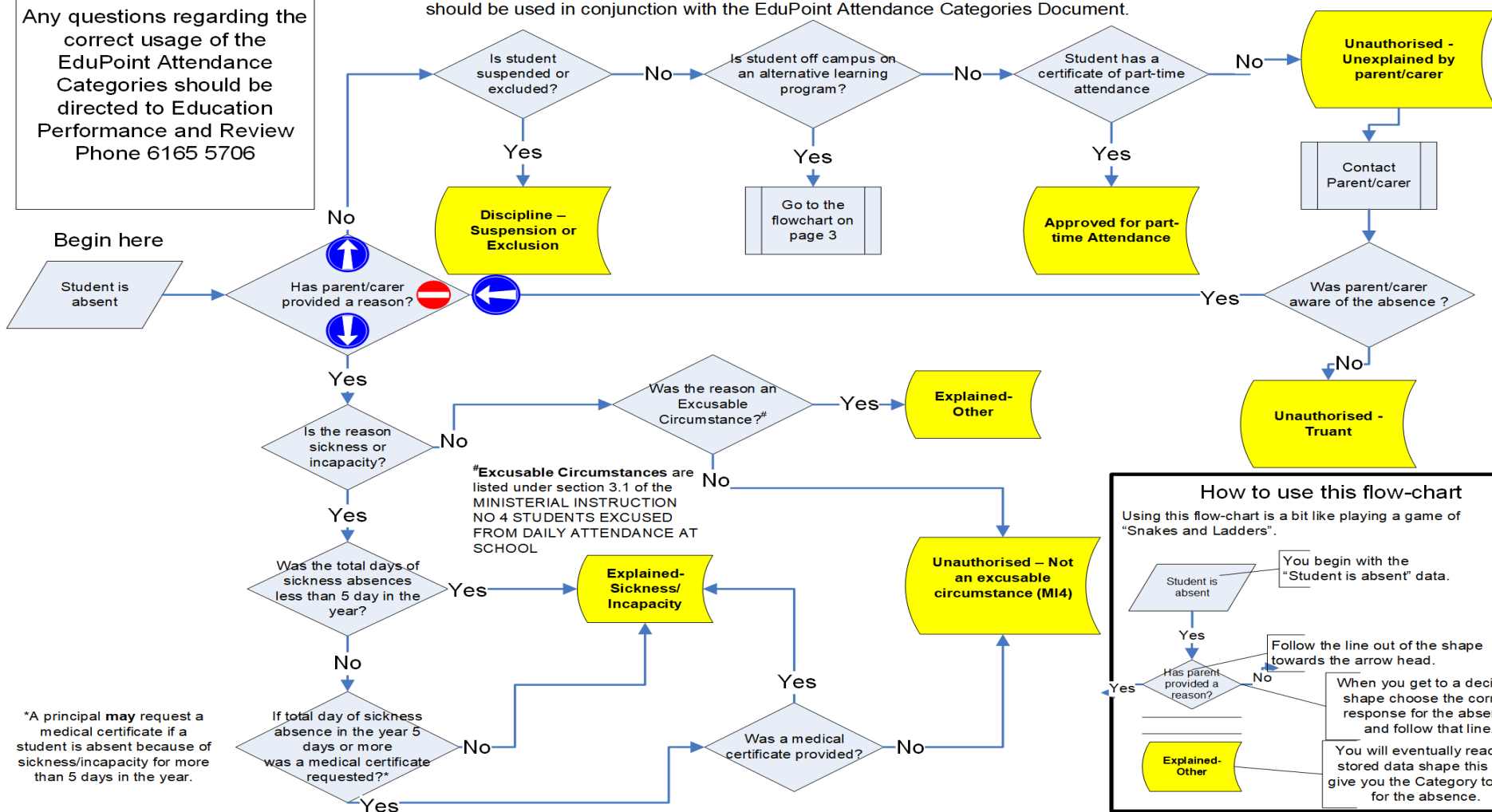
Details of the correct usage of these codes can be found at [Attendance Categories – An EduPoint Quick Reference](#) the Attendance page on the [School Administration Resources SharePoint](#).

Appendix B - Student Absence Flowchart

Marking student absence flow-chart

This chart is to assist schools in the correct recording of student absences in EduPoint and should be used in conjunction with the EduPoint Attendance Categories Document.

Any questions regarding the correct usage of the EduPoint Attendance Categories should be directed to Education Performance and Review Phone 6165 5706



How to use this flow-chart

Using this flow-chart is a bit like playing a game of "Snakes and Ladders".

- You begin with the "Student is absent" data.
- Follow the line out of the shape towards the arrow head.
- When you get to a decision shape choose the correct response for the absence and follow that line.
- You will eventually reach a stored data shape this will give you the Category to use for the absence.

*A principal may request a medical certificate if a student is absent because of sickness/incapacity for more than 5 days in the year.

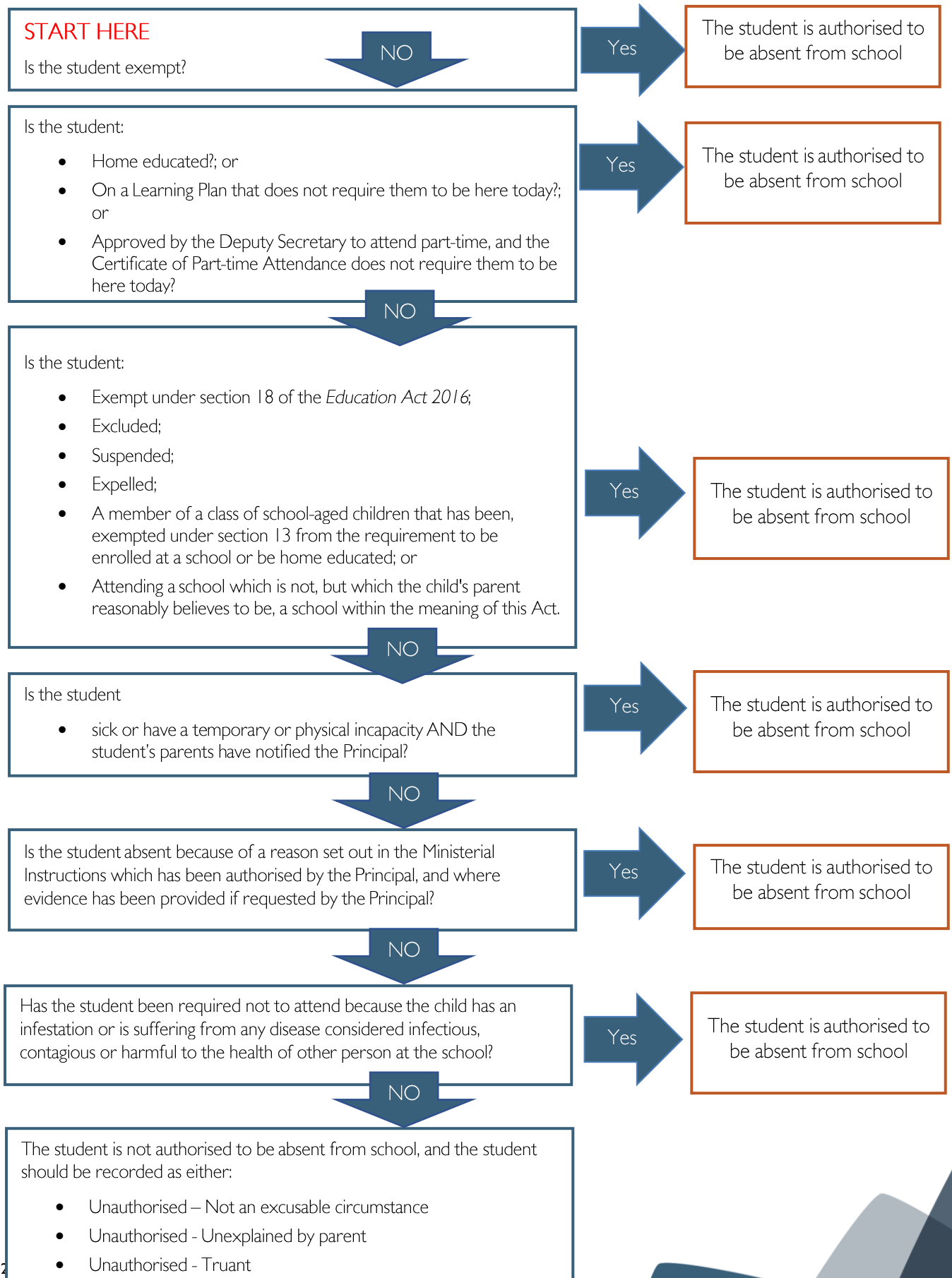
July 2019

Department of Education - Tasmania

Appendix C - List Of Authorised Reasons for Children to be Excused from Schools

- a. bereavement of a person with whom the school-aged child or youth has a close, significant or family relationship; or
- or
- b. medical, legal or related appointments; or
- c. where the school-aged child or youth has witnessed or been subjected to family violence; or
- d. terminal illness of an immediate family member; or
- e. where a natural disaster or extreme weather event prevents:
 - i. a school-aged child or youth from a non-government school safely attending their enrolled school; or
 - ii. a school-aged child or youth from a State school safely attending their enrolled school or nearest State school; or
- f. participation of a school age child or youth in a:
 - i. recognised learning experience (e.g. a music examination); or
 - ii. cultural activity (e.g. participation in NAIDOC Week); andinitiated by an independent student or parent, where the principal is of the opinion that the experience or activity has educational value to the school age child or youth; or
- g. attendance at a recognised event (e.g. a State, National or International level event sanctioned and organised by the official governing body) as:
 - i. a participant; or
 - ii. an official of a team or other body, competing or participating in that event ; or
 - iii. an official otherwise engaged in that event; or
- h. where an independent student or parent objects, as a matter of conscience, to his or her school-aged child or youth participating in a school activity specified in the *Education Regulations 2017*; and
 - i. the independent student or parent notifies the school's principal in writing at least two (2) days in advance of that school activity occurring; and
 - ii. that activity will occur for at least one (1) full school day; and
 - iii. separate supervision of the school-aged child or youth is not possible; or
- i. where an application for home education has been received by the Registrar and provisional registration has been granted; or
- j. where the parent or independent student notifies the principal of an absence due to sickness, temporary or physical incapacity later than five (5) days from the date of the absence.

Appendix D - Attendance Flowchart for School Business Managers and Administrative Staff



Appendix E - Part-Time Attendance Application Process



Appendix F - International Student Absences

International Students attendance rate is 85%	International Students attendance rate is 80%	International Students attendance rate decreases post the initial warning has been issued	International Students attendance rate continues to decrease further post the final warning has been issued
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Students attendance rate drops to 85%, it is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that an Intervention Plan is established. The Plan must include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reasons for the introduction of the plan ○ Expectations of the student to address absenteeism ○ Assistance from the school to assist in increasing attendance • The completed document needs to be dated and signed by all parties and sent to the GETI Office for filing in the students file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal must advise the PEO of international student absence rate • PEO to determine if any compelling or compassionate reasons exist that has contributed to the level of absenteeism • Decision is made as to what action is to be taken • A meeting may be arranged with the student and a support person of their choosing where a written warning is issued in line with the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training Services to Overseas Students • Student is to be advised of the appeals process for international students • A copy of the warning is handed to the student for their records • A copy of the warning is to be sent to the student's agent • A copy of the warning is to be sent to the student's parents • A copy of the warning is to be sent to the Principal to be filed in the students records • A copy of the warning is filed in the GETI Office student file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal must advise the PEO of international student absence rate • PEO to determine if any compelling or compassionate reasons exist that has contributed to the level of absenteeism • Decision is made as to what action is to be taken • A further meeting may be arranged with the student and a support person of their choosing where a final written warning is issued in line with the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training Services to Overseas Students • Student is to be advised of the appeals process for international students • A copy of the warning is handed to the student for their records • A copy of the warning is to be sent to the student's agent • A copy of the warning is to be sent to the student's parents • A copy of the warning is to be sent to the Principal to be filed in the students records • A copy of the warning is filed in the GETI Office student file. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal must advise the PEO of international student absence rate • PEO to determine if any compelling or compassionate reasons exist that has contributed to the level of absenteeism • Decision is made as to what action is to be taken • A further meeting may be arranged with the student and a support person of their choosing where an Intention to Report letter is issued in line with the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training Services to Overseas Students • Student is to be advised of the appeals process for international students • A copy of the letter is handed to the student for their records • A copy of the warning is to be sent to the student's agent • A copy of the warning is to be sent to the student's parents • A copy of the letter is to be sent to the Principal to be filed in the students records • A copy of the letter is filed in the GETI Office student file.

- The PEO may decide not to report the student for breaching attendance requirements if the student is still attending 70% of the scheduled course hours and within 20 days of the student being advised of the Intention to Report if:
 - The student provides genuine evidence demonstrating that compassionate or compelling circumstances apply
 - The student successfully appeals the decision through the documented internal complaints and appeals process

Appendix G - Compulsory Conciliation Conference Referral Checklist

Request to the Learning Services Student Support Leader to refer matter to compulsory conciliation conference

Which of the following circumstances apply to the students' non-attendance? (please check/tick)

<input type="checkbox"/>	linked to an incident at or related to school;
<input type="checkbox"/>	a dispute between the parent and the school, or the student and the school;
<input type="checkbox"/>	allegation of difficulties with other students, harassment or inappropriate social behaviour;
<input type="checkbox"/>	difficulties with transport;
<input type="checkbox"/>	disability or illness (including anxiety) suffered by the child or the parent; (with accompanying medical diagnosis)
<input type="checkbox"/>	insufficient skills or understanding on the part of the parent to successfully get the child to school;
<input type="checkbox"/>	experiencing difficulty with transition points such as year 6 to 7;
<input type="checkbox"/>	difficulty engaging with the parent to determine the cause of the non-attendance;
<input type="checkbox"/>	incident has occurred at school which is unlikely to be resolved by the passage of time and needs to be resolved quickly in order to expedite the student's return to school;
<input type="checkbox"/>	school student with otherwise excellent attendance suddenly ceases attending school with no reasonable excuse;
<input type="checkbox"/>	parent indicates at a very early stage that the student will not be returned to school unless a particular matter is resolved and the school needs the assistance of a third party to resolve that matter;
<input type="checkbox"/>	other (please explain in the space provided below or attach reasons)

Which of the following information is provided with this request for referral? (please check/tick):

<input type="checkbox"/>	a summary of interventions by the school social worker;
<input type="checkbox"/>	a copy of the school student's attendance records, certified by the Principal;
<input type="checkbox"/>	a copy of all correspondence sent to parents/guardians regarding non-attendance (including Minutes of meetings);
<input type="checkbox"/>	a copy of the school student's enrolment form (or validation form), that includes the parent/guardian contact details;
<input type="checkbox"/>	a copy of any court orders relating to who the child resides with;
<input type="checkbox"/>	a copy of any policy of the Administrative Authority as it relates to school student's attendance and the managing of absences of school students not authorised by Part 3 of the <i>Education Act 2016</i> ;

<input type="checkbox"/>	a summary of phone or verbal conversations held with parents/guardians regarding non-attendance, including with an Authorised Person;
<input type="checkbox"/>	a copy of correspondence from parents/guardians including medical certificates;
<input type="checkbox"/>	a copy of all other information regarding the non-attendance of school student including meeting notes, action plans etc.;
<input type="checkbox"/>	a summary of actions including support/intervention provided to date to engage with the school student (including all relevant information from teaching and support staff, i.e. school social workers/psychologists);
<input type="checkbox"/>	student voice regarding the issue;
<input type="checkbox"/>	current legal guardian of student (to identify any legal custody issues, restraint orders etc.);
<input type="checkbox"/>	underlying core reasons of the issue as seen from Principal's perspective (please explain in the space provided below or attach reasons).

<Name>

<Name>

Principal
Worker

School Social Worker / On-Call Social

<School name>

Date