



Attendance Policy

PURPOSE

To meet legislative requirements to record enrolments and daily attendance of all students at the College.

SCOPE

This policy document sets out the operational requirements for: -

- a) Monitoring daily attendance
 - i. Following up full and partial absences
- b) Managing and follow up of unexplained absences
- c) Managing poor attendance
- d) Improving chronic non-attendance
- e) Attendance Registration Codes
- f) Exemptions

This policy applies to all stages of learning at New Madinah College.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES STATEMENT

1. Enrolment Register

Upon acceptance of enrolment, a copy of the enrolment application and supporting documents will be entered to the New Madinah College database. The original enrolment application form is to be filed in the student's file.

College Administration will add the student's information to the College Register. The data recorded will include:

- a) Name, age and address
- b) The name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- c) The date of enrolment and where appropriate, the date of leaving the College and the student's destination
- d) For students older than 6 years, previous College or pre-enrolment situation
- e) Where the destination of a student under seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, New Madinah College will retain a written record that a Department of Education and Training Officer with home school liaison responsibilities has been notified by the Principal of the student's name, age and last known address.

New Madinah College will allocate a unique student number from the database to be used by the students throughout their years of enrolment at New Madinah College. New enrolments **will be entered** on the enrolment register at the college. The register of enrolments will be retained for a minimum period of five years.

College Administration is to ensure that the data is entered into the college enrolment register at the time of students enrolling at or leaving the college. An electronic copy of the college enrolment register is to be stored off site, this needs to be renewed at the beginning of each Term.

2. School leaving age

In NSW students must complete Year 10. After Year 10 and until the age of 17 students must be:

- a) in school, or registered for home schooling OR
- b) in approved education or training OR
- c) in full-time, paid employment (average 25 hours/week) OR
- d) in a combination of these

Where the College is not able to verify the post school destination of a student under 17 years of age New Madinah College will retain a written record that a Department of Education and Training Officer with home school liaison responsibilities has been notified of the student's name, age and last known address.

3. Attendance Procedure

3.1 Daily Monitoring of Attendance

New Madinah College Campuses will follow the Student Attendance Procedure outlined below.

A list of enrolled students is generated from the data base and is used by College Administration to make up the College Roll Call lists.

At the beginning of Term 1 each family (and new families entering New Madinah College) must sign acknowledgement of the Student Attendance Policy.

- a) If a student is absent due to illness or family emergency/misadventure, a parent/guardian must notify the campus via telephone/email on the day of the student's absence and send in a note explaining the absence on the day the student returns to College. The note must be returned to College Administration
- b) The note must be specific as to the reason for the absence. New Madinah College Student Planners have a tear out slip for Absentee Notes for this purpose.
- c) All other forms of absence, including travel, require approval by the Principal (for 5 or more consecutive days)
- d) Official roll call will occur in all classes prior to or at the start of the first lesson of the day.
- e) College Administration reconcile class lists with register of telephone calls or emails from parents and prepare an absentee list
- f) For any student who is marked absent, where there is no parent advice of absence, College Administration is to contact a parent to ensure they are aware of the absence

- g) College Administration updates the database from their reconciled list with the day's attendance
- h) All electronic marking of Student Attendance in the database must occur each day by 10.00am
- i) The daily absentee list for the campus is printed from the data base and posted on the staff noticeboard or similar (and the Principal's noticeboard if required)
- j) New Madinah College is to produce a College absentee list daily and email to Principal

3.2 Follow up

- a) Notes explaining absence are required on the first day back at College after the absence. If a note is not presented on the first day back at College, College Administration will request a note be returned to College the following day. E-mails explaining student absences cannot be accepted.
- b) If after seven days, a note has not been presented from the parent explaining an absence, the absence is to be marked in the data base as unexplained absence (A), stating the date you contacted the parent, via a reminder letter sent home requesting an explanation. Copies of these formal letters to be kept on the student file.
- c) Once a note is presented, College Administration will update the data base with details of the explanation and enter appropriate flags e.g Doctor's Certificate, Parent Acknowledgement.

3.3 Partial Absences

- a) Students who arrive at College after the commencement of the first lesson of the day or leave the College prior to completion of the last lesson of the day must sign the sign in/out book at Reception and will have a Partial Absence recorded on the day's attendance register on the database.
- b) Students arriving after the commencement of the first lesson must report to the office. The student will be given a late arrival slip, stating time of arrival at the office before proceeding to class.
- c) Students must present the *late arrival slip* to their class teacher who returns late slips to College Administration.
- d) When a student arrives late or leaves early the database will be updated by College Administration stating the time and reason for late arrival/early departure. The staff noticeboard should also reflect the time the student arrived at/left College.
- e) Students planning to leave College prior to completion of the last class of the day must have a signed note explaining the early departure.
- f) Notes for late arrival/early departure must be filed in the student files.
- g) In the case of persistent late arrival (more than 3 occasions in a term) the Principal will contact the parent and place a file note of this conversation into the student file.
- h) Partial absences where a student leaves College for an approved reason and returns to College the same day are noted on the data base. Notes are held in the Student's file and must state the reason the student left, the departure and the arrival time. The student should use the sign in/out book from reception.

4. Managing and follow up of unexplained absences (RANGS Reference 3.6.2)

- a) A week after any unexplained absence, a written notification from the Principal is to be issued as a reminder to Parents/Carers and copied to the Chairman of the Board.
- b) A record of dates and actions taken in resolving unexplained absences must be retained in the student file.
- c) If after two weeks there is still no satisfactory explanation of an absence, the Principal will inform the Chairman of the Board and organise a parent meeting.
- d) The Principal must complete the **Attendance Referral Form** to Director, Government Education Policy AIS for matters of chronic nonattendance for consideration for further action.
- e) The Principal must escalate matters of chronic unexplained absence or non-attendance to *Legal Services (Department of Education and Communities)* for consideration of further action.

5. Strategies for improving unsatisfactory attendance (Rangs Reference 3.6.2)

At New Madinah College, Student Welfare encompasses the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of students. The College and the Community share the responsibility to develop in the student a sense of self-worth fostering personal development.

- a) Principal and Chairman of the Board to provide counselling and support to families by community members.
- b) If unresolved, The Principal must escalate matters of unexplained absence or chronic non-attendance (Refer Section 4).
- c) Formal meetings with the New Madinah College Board and support personnel to develop strategies and support students and families towards improved attendance. Referrals to external professional support may occur.

RECORDING A STUDENT ABSENCE IN THE DATA BASE

	Type of Absence	Detailed Entry	
		Absence Reason	Time
For a whole day absence			
	Absent from College	Select from drop-down menu	
Late arrival/early departure			
Arrives after start of lessons	Late for College	Select from drop-down menu	Enter time arrived
Leaves College prior to end of last lesson	Early Departure	Select from drop-down menu	Enter time departed

ABSENCE REASONS

Absence Reason entered on Data Base	Code Generated
Excursion, Work Exp., Sport	B
Exemption from College	M
Leave accepted by CC (<i>approved leave of up to 4 days</i>)	L
Leave accepted by Principal (<i>approved leave of 5 days or more</i>)	L
Not required to be at College	F
Shared Enrolment ** Only use this code for students attending hospital schools	H
Sick/Medical Explained	S
Suspended from College	E
Unexplained Absence	A

ABSENCE TYPES

Absent from College
Late for College
Early Departure
Partial Absence

ATTENDANCE REGISTER CODES

Following are the Minister's Codes for recording student absence. These codes are generated by the database depending on the Absence Reasons and Absence Types entered by College Administration.

Symbols to be used in Attendance Rolls for explanation of student attendance			
Symbol	Meaning	Roll Entry	Is this reason for non-attendance recorded as an <i>absence</i> in the student record?
A	<p>The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by parents <u>within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the Principal.</u></p> <p><u>It is at the Principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.</u></p>	A	Yes
B	<p>The student is absent from the College on official College business. This symbol is recorded where the Principal approved the student leaving the College site to undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work experience - College sport (regional and state carnivals) - College excursions - student exchange 	B	No
E	The student was suspended from College.	E	Yes
F	<p>The student participating in flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at College.</p> <p>This could include participation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HSC Pathways Program - Best Start Assessment - Trial or HSC exams - VET Courses <p>** Use this code for students attending external tutorial centres and programs that are College authorised instead of using code H.</p>	F	No

Symbol	Meaning	Roll Entry	Is this reason for non-attendance recorded as an <i>absence</i> in the student record?
H	<p>The student is enrolled at the College and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis.</p> <p>The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream College such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tutorial centre or programs - behaviour schools - juvenile justice - hospital schools - distance education <p><i>** In most cases this code will only be used by DEC schools with the exception of students from non-government schools attending hospital schools.</i></p>	H	No
L	<p>An explanation of the absence has been provided which has been accepted by the Principal. This may be due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - misadventure or unforeseen event - participation in special events not related to the College - domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member - attendance at funerals - travel in Australia or overseas - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions including Fellowship Meetings 	L	Yes
M	<p>The Principal has granted an Exemption from Attending College.</p> <p>(See note below for Reasons for Exemption)</p>	M	No
S	<p>The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a medical certificate is provided or - the absence was due to sickness and the Principal accepts this explanation. The Principal may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance. 	S	Yes

RECORD KEEPING

BOSTES requires that student records should be kept for six years after the student has turned 18 years of age. Student records including attendance data are kept on the data base indefinitely.

APPROVED LEAVE

When a reason for absence from College is not due to illness, excursion, exemption, suspension, shared enrolment or flexible timetable **AND** the reason is accepted by Principal the following absence reasons are to be selected when updating the data base:

- Leave accepted by Principal
- Leave requests for more than 4 consecutive days must be approved by the Principal. **FORM A** (Request for Extended Leave) must be completed and if approved **FORM B** 'Certificate of Extended Leave' is to be returned to the applicant and a copy held in each student's file.
- Students who take leave for vacation/travel during College terms are to request leave using these forms and are **NOT** to be exempt.
- Approved leave by the Principal is recorded as an absence on the student's attendance record.

EXEMPTIONS FROM ATTENDANCE AT NEW MADINAH COLLEGE

Who can grant exemptions?

Under Section 25 of the Education Act (1990), the Minister may grant a Certificate of Exemption from Attendance at School and Exemption from Enrolment at School.

The powers related to certificates of exemption to the parents of children of compulsory school age from the requirement that they be enrolled at and attend a government school or a registered non-government school or be registered for and receive home schooling have been delegated from the Minister under Section 25 of the Education Act 1990, to certain personnel including the Principal.

The Principal has the authority to grant an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12-month period for any one student.

Conditions attached to granting exemptions from attendance at College.

- *Is there a minimum number of days for which students can be exempted?*
 - No, provided the principles in the *Guidelines from Exemption at School (2009)* are adhered to.
- *Can an exemption from attendance at school be cancelled?*
 - Yes, if the conditions attached to the exemption are not met, the certificate is no longer valid.

EXEMPTIONS FROM ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE AT NEW MADINAH COLLEGE

Exemptions from Enrolment

1. Parents can apply for exemption from enrolment under Section 25 of the Education Act, 1990
2. The application for exemption from enrolment must be in writing (**see FORM C**)
3. The application for exemption from enrolment must be made in advance
4. A Certificate of Exemption from Enrolment is issued by the Principal: -
 - i. for a period of time (**see FORM D**)
 - ii. for an apprenticeship/traineeship (**see FORM E**)
5. The original Certificate of Exemption from Enrolment is provided to the parents
6. One copy of the Certificate of Exemption from Enrolment must be placed on the student's file at the College
7. General reasons for granting Exemptions from Enrolment are listed in this policy document (**see FORM F**)

Exemptions from Attendance

1. Parents can apply for exemption from attendance from College under Section 25 of the Education Act, 1990
2. The application for exemption from attendance must be in writing (**see FORM G**)
3. Specific applications for exemption from attendance are required for
 - i. employment in the entertainment industry (**see FORM H**)
 - ii. participation in elite sporting programs (**see FORM I**)
4. A Certificate of Exemption from Attendance is issued by the Principal (for Exemption from College attendance totalling up to 100 days in a twelve-month period) (**see FORM J**)

Exemption for College Attendance totalling 100 days or more in a twelve-month period for any one student must be approved by the Principal.

5. A copy of the Certificate of Exemption from Attendance is provided to the parents
6. A copy of the Certificate of Exemption from Attendance is placed on the student's file.
7. When an Exemption from Attendance is granted the student attendance register on the data base must be updated to reflect the exemption. Exemption from attendance at College is **NOT** recorded as an absence on the student attendance record.

VISITING STUDENTS

From time to time, for a variety of family circumstances a student enrolled at another school including interstate or overseas, may need to attend New Madinah College for a period of time.

Short-term attendance is generally for periods not exceeding ten (10) weeks.

New Madinah College as a host College will provide a safe and secure learning environment and maintain an attendance register for the visiting student.

New Madinah College will forward the visiting student's attendance register to their enrolled school on a weekly basis for the duration of the visit.

Parents/guardian are required to complete a Visiting Student Information Form prior to the student visiting the host School. Current contact details should be provided to the host school in case of emergency, along with any medical information or specific educational requirements as appropriate.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

RANGS Manual 3.8 Attendance

RANGS Manual 3.6.2 Student Welfare

FORM A (Request for Extended Leave)

FORM B (Certificate for Extended Leave)

FORM C (Exemption from Enrolment)

FORM D (Exemption from Enrolment for a period of time)

FORM E (Exemption from Enrolment for an Apprenticeship/Traineeship)

FORM F (General Reasons for Granting Exemption from Enrolment at School)

FORM G (Application for Exemption from Attendance at School)

FORM H (Application for Exemption from Attendance at School for Employment in the Entertainment Industry)

FORM I (Application for Exemption from Attendance at School for Participation in Elite Sport)

FORM J (Certificate for Exemption from Attendance)

Attendance Referral Form