

Attendance Policy

VISION STATEMENT

GERALDTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL WILL PROVIDE OUTSTANDING EDUCATION AND A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY, CULTIVATING PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY, INDEPENDENCE OF MIND AND A LOVE OF LEARNING.

Introduction	This statement outlines the Geraldton Grammar School policy on Student Attendance.
Scope and application	Policy applies to all employees of Geraldton Grammar School but mainly the policy makers – members of the senior management team
Related legislation and guidelines	School DES re-registration requirement, Department of Education Student Attendance Policy. AISWA guidelines are used as a format for this policy.
Related Policies	Education Act, (1999) School Education Regulations (2000) Staff Induction booklet
Evaluation	Annual

Date	Action (issue, reissue, amendment, replacement of pages, etc)	Initials
31/3/10	Revised	SSW,SPN
5/8/10	Revised	SSW
22/03/11	Revised	GMY
25/3/13	Crest	SPN
13/05/14	International Students amendment	GMY
18/02/15	Amended SEQTA changes included	DLE
08/03/16	Updates: Attendance Officer procedure updates to meet current practices.	NJE
21/02/17	Revised – no amendments	DLE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Principal is responsible for the accurate recording and rigorous monitoring of the attendance of all students and for implementing appropriate strategies to restore attendance if there are attendance issues.

BACKGROUND

Geraldton Grammar School offers instruction from kindergarten to year 12. The School Education Act 1999 requires compulsory aged students, as defined in the Act, to attend school, or participate in an educational program of a school, on the days on which the School is open for instruction unless an arrangement in writing has been entered into for a student.

The School Education Amendment Act 2012 changed the definition of compulsory attendance for year 11 and 12 students and the obligation of schools in relation to those students

RELEVANT LEGISLATION/AUTHORITY

School Education Act, 1999

Sections 21 (1) (f), 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 40

Schools Education Amendment Act 2012

PROCEDURES

Recording Attendance:

The Principal is to ensure that accurate attendance records are kept for each student enrolled at Geraldton Grammar School.

- a) A continuous attendance by a child of not less than two (2) full hours' secular instruction is to be recorded as a half day's attendance. Students who arrive late, but still meet this requirement, are not to be included as a half-day absence. Rolls are taken on an AM/PM basis in primary to ensure accurate recording. In the middle and senior school period basis attendance ensures accurate recording of this.
- b) Students who are on an excursion, participating in an off campus program or in some other school-approved activity are not to be counted as absent.
- c) Students on suspension are to be recorded as absent during the period of suspension. The data is recorded on SEQTA as an extraordinary absence, delineating absence types.
- d) Attendance records are to be kept on SEQTA and reports generated when required.
- e) SEQTA allows records to be kept and reported upon for any date range the system has been in operation (inception January 2014).
- f) Absentee notes that are separate from the student's records are to be kept for one (1) year from the date of receipt and then destroyed. This includes details recorded by the School when a parent provides the School with a verbal reason.

- g) Unsatisfactory attendance reports on students must be retained in a student's records for 25 years from date of birth (Refer to *Manual for Records Management: School, College and Campus Records*).

Monitoring Attendance:

- a) Geraldton Grammar monitors and inputs data in a systematic and consistent manner allowing for the effective identification and action for all students with attendance issues.
- b) A software package as part of the SEQTA suite is used to enter and collate data so as to maintain consistency and accuracy of record keeping and reporting.
- c) When a student has been absent from school and an acceptable explanation has not been forthcoming, Geraldton Grammar School will send a written request for an explanation to the student's family to establish the reasons for non-attendance.
- d) If it is established that the student was absent from Geraldton Grammar School for a legitimate reason, no further action is required unless the frequency and or number of absences gives the School cause for concern. As there is no requirement in the School Education Act 1999 for the reason to be provided in writing, schools must record all details when a parent or caregiver provides the School with a verbal reason, either in person or over the telephone, that the School believes is an acceptable reason in the context of the School.
- e) Geraldton Grammar School uses a case management approach for attendance issues and is mindful of consulting with all stakeholders, and accessing support from other community groups and agencies if required.
- f) If there is difficulty or little success with restoring a student's attendance, prior to making a formal referral to the School attendance officer (Department of Education & Training, Midwest Office), Geraldton Grammar School will make informal contact with the school attendance officer who may be able to provide advice or alternative intervention strategies.

Referrals to School Attendance Officer:

- a) If Geraldton Grammar School has identified a student as being a regular or chronic non-attender, and the intervention strategies implemented have not been successful in restoring the student's attendance, the student is to be referred to the school attendance officer (Department of Education & Training, Midwest Office) by the Principal.
- c) Geraldton Grammar School will work collaboratively with the school attendance officer, the student's family and other community groups and agencies to restore the student's attendance at school. If the school attendance officer considers it to be appropriate, he or she will facilitate inter-agency access and support through structures and or protocols established by the district office.

Transferring Students:

- a) When a student is withdrawn from Geraldton Grammar, to another school within Western Australia, a transfer note is sent from his/her forwarding school. If this is not received within 2 weeks of his/her withdrawal, the forwarding school is contacted, if known.
- b) When a student is withdrawn from Geraldton Grammar, to another school other than Western Australia, contact is made with the forwarding school, if known, to request confirmation of his/her attendance.
- c) If a forwarding school is unknown Geraldton Grammar will make every endeavour to contact the student's parent/guardian.
- d) If the student did not commence and their whereabouts is unknown Midwest District Education Office is advised.

International Students:

1. Geraldton Grammar School systematically monitor students' compliance with student visa conditions relating to attendance. The School is proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements. The School will report students under Section 19 of the ESOS Act who have breached the attendance requirements.

1.1 The School will record the attendance of each student for the scheduled course contact hours for each CRICOS registered course in which the student is enrolled which is:

- a. an accredited vocational education and training course (unless Standard 1.2 applies);
- b. an accredited school course;
- c. an accredited or non-award ELICOS course; or
- d. another non-award course [\[1\]](#).

1.2 Where the School implements the Commonwealth Department of Education (CDoE) and Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) approved course progress policy and procedures for its vocational education and training courses, (1) 1.1 to 1.9 does not apply.

1.3 For the courses identified in 1.1, the School has and will implement appropriate documented attendance policies and procedures for each course which must be provided to staff and students that specify the:

- a. requirements for achieving satisfactory attendance, which at a minimum, requires overseas students to attend at least 80 percent of the scheduled course contact hours;
- b. manner in which attendance and absences are recorded and calculated;
- c. process for assessing satisfactory attendance;
- d. process for determining the point at which the student has failed to meet satisfactory attendance; and
- e. procedure for notifying students that they have failed to meet satisfactory attendance requirements.

- 1.4 For the courses identified in 1.1, the school's attendance policies and procedures must identify the process for contacting and counselling students who have been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval or where the student is at risk of not attending for at least 80 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled (before the student's attendance drops below 80 per cent).
- 1.5 For the courses identified in 1.1, the School will regularly assess the attendance of the student in accordance with the School's attendance policies and procedures.
- 1.6 Where the School has assessed the student as not achieving satisfactory attendance for the courses identified in 1.1, the School must notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student for not achieving satisfactory attendance. The written notice must inform the student that he or she is able to access the School's complaints and appeals process (Grievance Policy Parents-Students) and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so.
Ref: <http://aei.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/NationalCodeExplanatoryGuide/PartD/default.htm>
- 1.7 Where the student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period, withdraws from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the School, the School must notify the Secretary of CDoE through PRISMS that the student is not achieving satisfactory attendance as soon as practicable.
The school attendance officer will forward this information to the Principal and the Business Manager for action.
- 1.8 For the vocational education and training and non-award courses identified in 1.1 a. and 1.1 d. The School may only decide not to report the student for breaching the 80 percent attendance requirement where:
- a. that decision is consistent with the School's Attendance Policy and Assessment Policy; and
 - b. the student records clearly indicate that the student is maintaining satisfactory course progress; and
 - c. the School confirms that the student is attending at least 70 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled.

- 1.9 For the English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) and school courses identified in 1.1, the School may only decide not to report a student for breaching the 80 per cent attendance requirement where:
- a. the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating that compassionate or compelling circumstances (for example illness where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes) apply; and
 - b. that decision is consistent with its Attendance Policy and Assessment Policy; and
 - c. The School confirms that the student is attending at least 70 per cent of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled.

2. Geraldton Grammar School will assess requests from students for a transfer between prior to the student completing six months of his or her principal course of study in accordance with their documented procedures.

- 2.1 The School will not knowingly enrol the student wishing to transfer from another registered school's course prior to the student completing six months of his or her principal course of study except where:
- a. the original registered school has ceased to be registered or the course in which the student is enrolled has ceased to be registered;
 - b. the original registered school has provided a written letter of release;
 - c. the original registered school has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the Australian Government or state or territory government that prevents the student from continuing his or her principal course; or
 - d. any government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student's best interest and has provided written support for that change.
- 2.2 The School will respond to transfer requests to another registered educational institution within two weeks of receiving such a request from the students parents.
- 2.3 The School has and will implement its documented Attendance Policy and Assessment Policy, which is available to staff and students. The policy must specify:
- a. the circumstances in which a transfer will be granted;
 - b. the circumstances the School considers as providing reasonable grounds for refusing the student's request, including when a transfer can be considered detrimental to the student; and
 - c. a reasonable timeframe for assessing and replying to the student's transfer request having regard to the restricted period.

- 2.4 The School will grant a letter of release only where the student has:
- a. provided a letter from another registered school confirming that a valid enrolment offer has been made; and
 - b. where the student is under 18;
 - i. The School has written confirmation that the student's parent or legal guardian supports the transfer; and
 - ii. where the student is not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative, the valid enrolment offer also confirms that the School will accept that responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements as per Standard 5 (Younger students).

Ref: <http://aei.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/NationalCodeExplanatoryGuide/PartD/default.htm>

- 2.5 A letter of release, if granted, must be issued at no cost to the student and must advise the student of the need to contact DIBP to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required.
- 2.6 Where the School does not grant a letter of release, the student must be provided with written reasons for refusing the request and must be informed of his or her right to appeal the School's decision in accordance with the School's Grievance Policy.
- 2.7 The School will maintain records of all requests from students for a letter of release and the assessment of, and decision regarding, the request on the student's file.

- 3. Geraldton Grammar School** will systematically monitor students' course progress. The School is proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet their course progress requirements. The School will report students, under section 19 of the ESOS Act, who have breached the course progress requirements.

Ref: <http://aei.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/default.htm>

- 3.1 The School will monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for each unit of the course for which the student is enrolled in accordance with the School's Assessment Policy.
- 3.2 The School has and implements appropriate documented course progress policies and procedures for each course, which must be provided to staff and students, that specify the:
- a. requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress;
 - b. process for assessing satisfactory course progress;
 - c. procedure for intervention for students at risk of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress;

- d. process for determining the point at which the student has failed to meet satisfactory course progress; and
 - e. procedure for notifying students that they have failed to meet satisfactory course progress requirements.
- 3.3 The School will assess the course progress of the student in accordance with the School's Assessment Policy at the end point of every study period.
- 3.4 The School has a documented intervention strategy, which must be made available to staff and students, that specifies the procedures for identifying and assisting students at risk of not meeting the course progress requirements. The strategy must specify:
- a. procedures for contacting and counselling identified students;
 - b. strategies to assist identified students to achieve satisfactory course progress; and
 - c. the process by which the intervention strategy is activated.
- 3.5 The School will implement the intervention strategy for any student who is at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements. At a minimum, the intervention strategy must be activated where the student has failed or is deemed not yet competent in 50 per cent or more of the units attempted in any study period.
- 3.6 Where the School has assessed the student as not achieving satisfactory course progress, the School will notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student for not achieving satisfactory course progress. The written notice must inform the student that he or she is able to access the School's complaints and appeals process and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so.
- 3.7 Where the student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period, withdraws from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the the School, the School will notify the Secretary of Commonwealth Department of Education (CDoE) through Provider Registration of International Student Management System (PRISMS) of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress as soon as practicable.