



Mountain District Community College

Attendance Policy

Purpose

To ensure students' attendance at Mountain District Community College (MDCC) and engagement is monitored and that there are procedures in place to ensure accuracy of enrolment details and attendance records. To support and assist all students to remain engaged and to achieve the 80% minimum attendance requirement for the Vocational Major (VM) Certificate.

Scope

This policy applies to all students at MDCC. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [School Attendance Guidelines](#) where applicable. The school attendance guidelines do not replace or change the obligations of MDCC, parents and guardians under legislation or the college attendance guidelines.

Definition

Parent- includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child, including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

Policy

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance for scheduled classes is important for all young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. College participation maximises life opportunities for young people by providing them with education and support networks. MDCC helps its students to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Students are expected to attend MDCC during normal college hours everyday of each term unless there is an approved exemption from college attendance for the student.

Both MDCC and parents/guardians have an important role to play in supporting students to attend every day.

MDCC will identify students or cohorts who are vulnerable and whose attendance is at risk and/or declining and will work with these students and their parents to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports.

Students are committed to attending the college for every scheduled class, arriving on time and are prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged to approach MDCC staff and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

MDCC parents and guardians are committed to ensuring their young person attend the college on time every day when instruction is offered, to communicating openly with the college and providing valid explanations for any absence.

Parents and guardians will provide a reasonable explanation for their child's absence from MDCC and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments, and other activities outside of the college hours.

Supporting and promoting attendance

MDCC supports its student attendance through a modified timetable with a 9:30am start. Attendance Officer checks in daily with students not in attendance by 10:00am each college day. Students are offered wellbeing support for any reasons that may hinder college attendance and in some circumstances, a college absence plan may be created for students who may be absent for an extended period of time.

The college also promotes student attendance through breakfast clubs, youth worker support, educational support and other college specific programs such as the Wellbeing Framework.

Recording Attendance

MDCC must record attendance for every class. This is necessary to:

- Meet legislative requirements
- Discharge MDCC's duty of care for all students
- Meet Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority requirements for VCE students

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher at the start of each session using Compass.

If students are in attendance at an MDCC approved activity (incursions, excursions or camps), the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent or guardian must provide an explanation on each occasion to the college.

Parents should notify MDCC of absences by:

- Logging the absence on Compass
- Contact the Attendance Officer via phone or email.
- Email your young person's teacher.

If a student is absent on a particular day and the college has not previously notified by a parent or guardian, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, MDCC will notify parents by SMS, email or phone. MDCC will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the college will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the students' file held by the college, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence. Families will be reminded via termly newsletters to update any changes to contact information.

MDCC will keep a record of the reasons given for each absence. The Principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** in regard to the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent for a student's absence. The Principal will generally excuse:

- Medical and dental appointments, where out of hours appointments are not possible or appropriate.

- Bereavement or attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend of the students, including a student required to attend Sorry Business
- School refusal, if a plan is in place with the parent to address causes and support the student's return to college.
- Cultural observance if the parent/carer notifies the college in advance.
- Family holidays where the parent notifies the college in advance.

If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 college days of absence, it will be recorded as an 'unexplained absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days, MDCC will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- Establishing an Attendance Student Support Group (SSG)
- Implementing a Return to College Plan
- Implementing an Individual Education Plan
- Implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
- Arranging for assistance from relevant student wellbeing staff
- Arranging for external wellbeing parties to offer student assistance where relevant

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the students and their family, the college will endeavour to provide this support when it is required.

Associated Documentation

- [School Attendance Guidelines](#)
- [Family Law Act 1975](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#)

Terminating Enrolment

If MDCC decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, we may terminate the student's enrolment. If the student is exited, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian by the Principal. Students under the age of 17 years will be supported to enrolled in an alternative school or an alternative education pathway.

Policy Last Reviewed:	January 2023
Consultation:	Policy and Compliance Committee
Endorsed by:	MDCC Board
Endorsed on:	
Next Review date:	November 2025