

**POLICY 5.16
Attendance**

Ratified Board Meeting	26 May 2022
Next Review Due	2025

RATIONALE:

It is the legal responsibility of parents, caregivers, guardians and schools to monitor and make sure that all students are attending school. Aquinas College aims to foster student engagement and attendance and take all reasonable steps to make sure students attend school when it is open.

GUIDELINES:

- Absences should be notified as per the guidelines published on the [school website](#).
- Parents / guardians should seek permission from the Principal for planned absences of three or more days.
- When a student is absent without notification, priority will be given to follow up to ensure the student is safe.
- Absences are recorded and reported in line with MoE Guidelines. Attendance codes E (Explained but Unjustified) and J (Justified) are applied as follows:
 - An absence is considered Justified when the absence is unplanned and could not be controlled. Examples include, but are not limited to, a bus breakdown, accident or road closure. A planned and approved absence such as national/local representation in a sporting or cultural event in New Zealand or overseas, bereavement, visiting an ill relative or exceptional family circumstances is also considered Justified.
 - When a student's absence is explained but does not meet the guidelines for a Justified absence, the absence will be E (Explained but Unjustified). Examples include, but are not limited to, when a student is on a New Zealand or overseas holiday during the school term or, when a student has been required to stay home to help with childcare or work. A parent's note does not provide justification.
 - These guidelines do not preclude the Principal from using discretion over any specific student absence.

DELEGATIONS:

The Board delegates to the Principal:

- responsibility for the day to day management of student attendance including recording, monitoring and following up on absences in line with MoE Guidelines.
- fair and consistent application of Attendance Codes (as provided by MoE).
- discretion over any specific student absence not referred to in the Attendance Code list.

EXPECTATIONS AND LIMITATIONS:

The Principal must ensure:

- student attendance is fostered and monitored to improve student achievement
- systems are in place to follow-up attendance concerns with pastoral staff and parents
- systems are in place to follow up unexplained absences and ensure student safety
- compliance with all general legislation about attendance
- Student safety is not compromised as a result of inaccurate reporting of attendance

Employment must not prevent or interfere with attending school.

Year 13 students who leave the College before the end of the academic year are not considered eligible to participate in graduation activities. Exceptions may be made on application and at the Principal's discretion providing the student:

- has met all requirements for NCEA Level 3
- has met a level of attendance for the year deemed appropriate by the Principal.

ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION AND RESOURCES:

[Education and Training Act 2020](#)

[Ministry of Education Guidelines for schools on attendance](#)