

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

Policy name	VCAL Attendance Policy and Procedure
Responsible person	VCAL & Youth Manager, CEO
Staff involved	VCAL staff, Support team
Frequency of performance	2019
Related documents	<p>Legislation: Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)/ 2017 Education & Training Regulations (Vic), Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic), Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic), Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic), Disability Act 2006 (Vic), Disability Regulations 2007, Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic), Health Records Act 2001 (Vic), Privacy Act 1988 (Com), Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic), Ministerial Order 870 Child Safe Standards</p> <p>Policies: Student Well Being and Duty of Care in VCAL Policy & Procedure (includes procedures for under-18s), VCAL Student Selection, Enrolment, Induction & Delivery - Policy & Procedure , VCAL Discipline Policy & Procedure, Excursions Policy & Procedure, Record Management & Record Keeping Policy & Procedure, VCAL Assessment Policy & Procedure, Decision Making Responsibilities for VCAL & Youth Policy & Procedure, Establishing Decisions for Satisfactory Completion (including Delay of Satisfactory Completion and Reasonable Adjustment in Assessment)</p> <p>Other: Class Rolls, VCAL Rolls folder, VCAL Student Electronic Attendance Rolls, CVCAL Rolls, VCAL Attendance Slip, VCAL Student Handbook, VCAL Student Package, VCAL Student Contract, VCAL Leaving Early/Late Arrival Book, VCAL Teacher Package, VCAL Admin follow-up re non-attendance, warning letters, Skills First VET Funding Agreement 2018, CVCAL Contracts with schools</p>

Context

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc. (Wyndham CEC) believes that student attendance and student achievement are closely connected. Students who develop patterns of good attendance are more likely to successfully achieve their VCAL certificate.

This document was reviewed and accepted by the Board of Governance of the Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc on 27/04/18 and supersedes all previous versions.

Version: 2018 v1

Document number: 397

Page 1 of 10

G:\2018\2018 Compliance_P&P_AQTF\Policies\VCAL\Attendance\VCAL Attendance Policy and Procedure 2018.doc

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc

Policy and Procedure

Legal Requirements in Victoria

Students of compulsory school age (six years to seventeen years), resident in Victoria, are required to meet the National Youth Participation Requirement agreed by the Council of Australian Governments in July 2009. The agreed participation requirement includes a mandatory requirement for all young people to participate in full time (minimum of 25 hours per week) schooling. As a registered senior secondary provider in a community education setting, Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc. recognises the importance of attendance daily so that students succeed in the education program they are enrolled in and take advantage of the opportunities that regular attendance provides.

Policy

Students in a VCAL course at Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc. (Wyndham CEC) are required to attend all time-tabled classes and excursions in order to maximise their learning opportunities and ensure satisfactory completion of all assessment within the VCAL course. Students will attend full-time for a minimum of 25 hours per week.

Wyndham CEC acknowledges that the young people it works with have disengaged from mainstream schools and in most cases have developed poor attendance patterns over a period of time. In acknowledgement of this, Wyndham CEC expects a minimum 80% attendance rate from students but is committed to working with students, families and support workers towards increasing attendance rates to 90% - 100% during the course of student re-engagement in a program at Wyndham CEC.

Attendance includes all approved activities such as VET programs, excursions, industry placements, work experience, Structured Workplace Learning (SWL). Explained absences will not be considered as non-attendance.

Student attendance and conduct will be monitored throughout the program. Attendance expectations are clearly communicated to enrolling students and their parents/guardians if (students under-18) through the Pre training assessment and enrolment interview, the VCAL student handbook & Student Contract and, the VCAL student package issued at enrolment.

Wyndham CEC will:

- identify and support all students at risk of non-attendance. This will include various forms of intervention. There is an acknowledgement that many students have developed poor attendance patterns while at a mainstream school. Wyndham CEC will work with students and their families to breakdown and improve entrenched patterns of poor attendance and remove barriers to attendance.

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Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

- support student attendance by liaising with and utilising the expertise of
 - Wyndham CEC staff and support services
 - school staff (as required for CVCAL)
 - locally based support agencies
 - individual student case workers/support services
- recognise that late attendance and/or early departure may impact on student's learning. Wyndham CEC will develop and implement strategies to support students and their families to arrive on time each day and to remain at Wyndham CEC for the day.
- clearly communicate with parents/guardians about their obligation to inform Wyndham CEC of the reason for a student's absence and of the processes that will be followed where an absence occurs.
- ensure that accurate data is collected in relation to attendance and participation so that follow-up of non-attendance can be undertaken promptly.

The following procedures outline the steps and strategies for monitoring attendance and dealing with student absences and lateness.

Attendance Guidelines and Procedures

1. Students sign a VCAL Student Contract at enrolment agreeing to abide by Wyndham CEC policies and procedures including procedures for attendance.
2. All student absences require an explanation and/or a medical certificate. For students under-18, phone confirmation, email, text or note from a parent / guardian is required.
3. VCAL course attendance rolls will be taken manually by teachers twice daily for morning and afternoon classes.
4. This information will be submitted to admin staff by 10.20 AM for a morning class and by 1:00 PM for an afternoon class for follow up of any non-attendance
5. Parents/guardians of students aged under-18 will be notified of any unexplained absences or lateness.
6. Student absences of 2 or more consecutive days will require a medical certificate.
7. Wyndham CEC expects **minimum** initial attendance of 80% to timetabled classes and scheduled activities and expects students to be working towards 90-100%

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Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

attendance within 3 months of commencing. Wyndham CEC will support students and families in this process.

8. Students whose attendance is poor may harm their chances of success in the VCAL program because students need to attend regularly to complete coursework and assessment tasks. Students who do not attend at least **80%** of timetabled classes for a unit, may receive an 'N' (Not Yet Complete) result. A delay of satisfactory completion can occur if a student misses too many classes because of poor attendance.
9. It is the responsibility of any student who is absent to find out what course work or assessment was covered in missed classes and any work that may have been set during that time and complete or arrange to complete the work.

Student Absences:

1. Students should ring or text if they are going to be away on the VCAL absence mobile: **0449 055 096** or via head office on **9742 4013**. A message can be left if out of hours or if no-one answers the phone.
2. Accurate class rolls are taken by teachers twice a day – morning and afternoon. These rolls are handed in to the VCAL Admin office as per step 4 above.
3. Attendance Slips are used to track student lateness and leaving early, and are used in conjunction with the class hardcopy roll.
4. Daily roll entries are transferred onto an electronic roll maintained by VCAL Admin Staff. Details of medical certificates, notes and any telephone contact in relation to attendance are entered onto the electronic roll and then filed in the VCAL rolls folder. Attendance Slips are also used for recording on the electronic attendance and participation reports.
5. Student attendances and absences are analysed through via electronic roll which calculates attendance percentages for each student on a weekly basis. These weekly attendance rates are used to follow up on student absences and to improve attendance rates. The electronic Student Attendance Roll can be filtered into groups based on VCAL class, age, attendance percentage, start date, VCAL level, CVCAL school and/or by individual student.

The following codes are used:

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Version: 2018 v1

Document number: 397

Page 4 of 10

G:\2018\2018 Compliance_P&P_AQTF\Policies\VCAL\Attendance\VCAL Attendance Policy and Procedure 2018.doc

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

- P (Present), E (Explained), I (Illness), MC (Medical Certificate), NR (Not Required) and PS (Private Study) do not impact attendance.
 - LE (Left Early) and L (Late) may lower attendance, depending on the reason for the lateness or for the student leaving early. If the late arrival or early leaving is approved, then attendance rate is not impacted.
 - U (Unexplained) lowers a student's recorded attendance rate
 - CC (Completed Course), EX (Exit), NS (No Start) and NE (Not Enrolled at this Date) result in N/A (Not Applicable) on the electronic roll and do not affect attendance rates
 - VET (Student undertake VET program with a provider other than Wyndham CEC)
6. A note, email, text or a phone call must explain an absence for any student under-18 from a parent/ legal guardian.
 7. A medical certificate should be provided for any single absence if possible. An absence with a Medical certificate is considered an approved absence. Approved absences do not affect a student's attendance rate and include illness with a medical certificate, bereavement, a statutory declaration regarding illness, approved excursions and activities as outlined in the codes above.
 8. For an absence of more than two days, a medical certificate must be provided.
 9. If a student is absent for a third consecutive day without making contact with Wyndham CEC, the VCAL & Youth Manager or her delegate, VCAL Admin Staff will make contact with the student using the phone details or email address/es provided to Wyndham CEC. A message will be left if no contact is made.
 10. A letter will be sent to the student or parent/guardian, if no contact or explanation has been received after a school week.
 11. If a student does not make any contact within a period of (10) school days after the letter is sent, the student will be exited from the program according to the requirements of Wyndham CEC's Skills First Funding Agreement. For CVCAL students, discussion with the home-school will occur.

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Version: 2018 v1

Document number: 397

Page 5 of 10

G:\2018\2018 Compliance_P&P_AQTF\Policies\VCAL\Attendance\VCAL Attendance Policy and Procedure 2018.doc

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

12. Students and their parents/guardians (if required) will be counselled for ongoing absences in order to ensure their safety and well being, and to ensure success in the VCAL program.
13. Attendance and absences are reported on student reports: mid-year and end of year.
14. The electronic attendance roll is finalised weekly on Mondays and Fridays analysing student attendance percentages for the week.
15. Any attendance issues are followed up by the VCAL & Youth Manager and/or the VCAL Admin staff as delegated by the VCAL & Youth Manager.
16. Attendance is discussed with students and their parents/guardians if required according to the following guidelines:
 - 80 -100% attendance – the student is meeting the attendance requirements
 - 71 - 80% attendance – the student is reminded of the attendance requirements and continues to be monitored
 - 50 – 70% attendance –
 - the student is required to attend a meeting about their poor attendance.
 - The parent/ guardian of a student under-18 is notified. In some instances, a parent / guardian of a student 18 or older, may be notified depending on the circumstances.
 - The student is counselled on attendance requirements. If the VCAL & Youth Manager has concerns about the student’s safety or well-being, appropriate follow up/ referral will occur.
 - If there is no improvement in the following week, a further meeting will be held and parents invited to attend.
 - If no improvement occurs following the second meeting, a warning letter will be issued.
 - If there is no improvement following the warning letter, a second warning letter will be sent after two weeks.
 - On receipt of a third warning letter, the student will be exited from the program.
 - At all times during the process, any concerns about the student’s safety or well-being will be acted upon.

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Version: 2018 v1

Document number: 397

Page 6 of 10

G:\2018\2018 Compliance_P&P_AQTF\Policies\VCAL\Attendance\VCAL Attendance Policy and Procedure 2018.doc

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

- In some cases, there may be valid reasons for the student to have a staggered attendance because of mental health /medical issues or other issues. In these cases, the VCAL & Youth Manager will work with the student, the family and any support or medical services engaged with the student.

 - Under 50% attendance –
 - the student is required to attend a meeting about their poor attendance with a parent and / or caseworker (if applicable).
 - The student is counselled on poor attendance and strategies to improve attendance are agreed upon by all. If the VCAL & Youth Manager has concerns about the student’s safety or well-being, follow up will occur.
 - A follow up meeting will be held after two weeks to report back on the success of the strategies or otherwise.
 - If no improvement has occurred, an agreed process of intervention is developed.
 - A first warning letter is issued at this stage.
 - If there is no improvement following implementation of the intervention strategies and the warning letter, a second warning letter will be sent after two weeks.
 - On receipt of a third warning letter, the student will be exited from the program.
 - At all times during the process, any concerns about the student’s safety or well-being will be acted upon.
 - In some cases, there may be valid reasons for the student to have a staggered attendance because of mental health/medical issues or other issues. In these cases, the VCAL & Youth Manager will work with the student, the family and any support or medical services engaged with the student. In these cases, warning letters will not be issued while ongoing strategies and willingness of the student to co-operate are undertaken.
17. The CEO will receive all attendance rolls weekly and will liaise closely with the VCAL & Youth Manager. Any serious student concerns, particularly in relation to any duty of care or legal issues identified, must be reported to the CEO as they arise.

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

Community VCAL Students (CVCAL)

1. CVCAL rolls are created based on the attendance data collected twice daily and have their weekly attendance recorded in the same way as other Wyndham CEC VCAL students as outlined above.
2. CVCAL student attendance is sent to the nominated contact person at the CVCAL Home School on a weekly basis with an average of the week's attendance recorded. A progressive calculation of the whole term is included at the end of the roll.
3. Rolls are emailed each Tuesday (or as soon as possible thereafter) to the nominated contact people at the CVCAL Home schools.
4. If a student does not make contact with Wyndham CEC for a period of three (3) days then the student is contacted.
5. If the student does not return to Wyndham CEC following contact, the nominated contact person at the CVCAL Home School is notified.
6. The student is sent a warning letter at this stage and the nominated contact person at the CVCAL Home School informed.
7. If a student does not make contact or return within a period of ten (10) school days, Wyndham CEC will seek guidance from the nominated contact person at the CVCAL Home School on how to manage the next steps.
8. The VCAL & Youth Manager will maintain close contact with the nominated contact person at the CVCAL Home School regarding attendance issues.
9. At all times any concerns about the student's safety or well-being will be discussed with the nominated contact person at the CVCAL Home School.
10. In some cases, there may be valid reasons for the student to have a staggered attendance because of mental health issues or other issues. In these cases, the VCAL & Youth Manager will work with the student, the family, the nominated contact person at the CVCAL Home School and any support or medical services

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Version: 2018 v1

Document number: 397

Page 8 of 10

G:\2018\2018 Compliance_P&P_AQTF\Policies\VCAL\Attendance\VCAL Attendance Policy and Procedure 2018.doc

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

engaged with the student. In these cases, warning letters will not be issued while ongoing strategies and willingness of the student to improve are undertaken.

Student Lateness:

1. Students should ring, email or text if they are going to be late on the VCAL absence mobile: **0449 055 096** or via head office on **9742 4013**. A message can be left if out of hours or if no-one answers the phone.
2. Students record their late arrival in the **‘VCAL Late Arrival / Early Leaving Book’** in the VCAL office if they arrive more than 10 minutes late.
3. The reason for lateness is discussed and recorded.
4. Students are given a VCAL Attendance Slip to present to their teacher on entering the classroom.
5. Late attendance is monitored daily and teachers record the time of arrival on their daily roll. If the student arrives late, the late time of arrival is recorded onto the roll.
6. Students will be counselled for ongoing lateness.
7. A Parent/ guardian will be contacted for unexplained lateness of students under-18.
8. If a student receives ten (10) late attendance slips, a meeting about their ongoing lateness will occur. If the student is under-18, a parent/guardian will be notified and invited to attend. If applicable, a student’s caseworker will also be invited to attend.
9. The student’s lateness will be discussed and strategies to improve it will be developed and agreed upon. If the VCAL & Youth Manager has concerns about the student’s safety or well-being at any stage, follow up will occur in response.
10. If there is no improvement in the following week, a further meeting will be held.
11. If no improvement occurs following the second meeting, a warning letter will be issued.
12. If there is no improvement following the warning letter and the meetings, a second warning letter will be sent after two weeks.

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Version: 2018 v1

Document number: 397

Page 9 of 10

G:\2018\2018 Compliance_P&P_AQTF\Policies\VCAL\Attendance\VCAL Attendance Policy and Procedure 2018.doc

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Policy and Procedure

13. On receipt of a third warning letter, the student will be exited from the program.
14. At all times during the process, any concerns about the student's safety or well-being will be acted upon.
15. In some cases, there may be extenuating circumstances that explain the student's ongoing lateness such as mental health/ medical issues or other issues. In these cases, the VCAL & Youth Manager will work with the student, the family and any support or medical services engaged with the student to improve lateness. In these cases, warning letters will not be issued while ongoing strategies and willingness of the student to improve are undertaken.

Early Leaving

1. Students under-18 are required to bring a note signed by a parent/guardian with an explanation if leaving early for the day
2. All students are required to explain a request to leave early with the VCAL & Youth Manager or the VCAL Officer/VCAL admin staff.
3. If it is to attend an interview or appointment, an appointment card or letter should be provided. Please note: Students are encouraged to make appointments outside of their timetabled classes.
4. Students leaving early must sign the '**VCAL Late Arrival / Early Leaving Book** in the VCAL office before leaving Wyndham CEC. They should provide a VCAL attendance slip to the office, signed by their teacher.
5. If a student is to leave the classroom, outside of nominated break times they are required to obtain an attendance slip from their teacher indicating that they are permitted to leave. The time will be reflected on the student roll.
6. Students asked to remove themselves from a classroom by a teacher, must come to the VCAL office with a VCAL attendance slip signed by a teacher.