

HIGHROAD ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Kindergarten to Grade 12

A. Rationale:

Matters of importance are covered in every class every day and a student's presence and participation in each class is vital to their education. When a student misses class, they miss something of importance that cannot be duplicated, and the student misses taking part in some type of evaluated activity. Students should endeavour to be present and on time for all classes.

This policy has been designed in accordance to the Ministry of Education's standards and protocols.

B. Definitions:

Excused Absence -

Lates:

The majority of students arrive to school on time. On the rare occasion a student is late, regardless of the reason, they must notify the office before proceeding to class, and must take their late slip to their homeroom teacher so that they may update the attendance record.

Being on time for school and for class is a life skill that will serve students well in their future, and teachers do not have time to re-teach class content for students who are late. If a student develops a pattern of tardiness, parents will be contacted by a staff member and further steps will be taken as necessary.

2. Absences

For any absence, teachers and/or administrators will advise the student and parent(s) if the absence puts the students in a precarious situation in regard to their chances of meeting the learning objectives and passing their courses.

Highroad Academy, following the Ministry of Education protocols, has two criteria for absences: excused and unexcused. Regardless of the reason for the absence, **students must still meet the requirements to receive credit for a course.**

Wherever possible, we request that families make plans to be at school while school is in session. When planning for an absence, parents and students should understand that teachers cannot pre-teach or post-teach the lessons; therefore, when students

miss classes, they lose essential instruction and their absences may lower their achievement for a course.

If a parent determines that a student will be away during school time, the parent/guardian is asked to contact the school well in advance, especially in the case of a family vacation. It is important that students plan and work ahead in order to minimize the effect of an absence on their schooling.

A. Excused Absences:

There are acceptable criteria for an excused absence; however, for any absence, parent verification via note, email or telephone is requested. Excused absences based on Ministry of Education protocols include these situations:

- Medical reasons (*medical/dental appointments and sickness*).
- Family/compassionate reasons. Every consideration will be provided to a student in the event of a compassionate leave.
- Signing into the medical room (*student must have permission from the office, and a first aid attendant will contact their teacher*).

B. Unexcused Absences:

All other reasons for absences (excluding the list above) are considered unexcused in accordance with the Ministry of Education's protocols. Although the school cannot prohibit parents from choosing to take students out of school, they must understand that absences may have an adverse impact on student progress.

Students who are on time and present for class must receive the higher priority. Teachers are required to fulfil the learning objective for the courses they teach. To this end, the teacher will use their professional discretion to determine what must be done to make up the missed work.

i. Unexcused absences for which accommodation to make up work may be made. Many of our students are involved in valuable activities outside of school that may require them to miss class time. School staff will do their best to make accommodations when parents provide **written/email notification to the school office and the high school department head at least two weeks prior**, including the reason for absence, event/location, date of departure, and date of return (see appendix below - **email to the department head is the preferred method of communication**).

- Time Commitment- student participation reflects a long-term, high level of commitment to that endeavour.
- Church/ outreach related events- if the student is able to provide documentation from their pastor/leader, this participation may qualify for volunteer hours and/or external credits for graduation.

- “N” tests- the student is expected to take only the time necessary to take the test, and return to school directly after the completion of their test.
- Family holidays- when prior notice is given for family events of a day or longer, staff will do their best to accommodate the absence.

ii. Unexcused absences for which accommodation cannot be made. These are some common examples of absences that are considered unexcused. This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

- Skipping or missing classes due to sleeping in or preparing for another class.
- Taking part in school, church, or any other activities during class time without receiving permission from the teacher whose class is being missed.

Note: Any unexcused absence from class where the student has not signed out through the office is considered a “skip” and is dealt with in accordance to our discipline policy.

Assignments given out during the unexcused absence may be completed by the student; however, it is the responsibility of the student to find out about the assignment and missed work on their own. This assignment is still subject to late marks at the teacher’s discretion.

3. Missed Tests/ Exams:

Teachers provide advance notice of tests and exams, and students are expected to be present. These standards apply in an effort to keep things fair for students who prepare and are present for scheduled tests/ exams, and in an effort to maintain the security of classroom tests:

- The student will be permitted to write the test(s) they missed within two days of returning to school, when the request to write the test is accompanied by a parent note/email to the teacher or department head to validate their absence.
- The responsibility remains with the student to arrange a time to write the test by consulting the teacher whose test they missed. If the student does not arrange a suitable time within the 48 hours specified, the test/ exam cannot be made up.
- In the case of an unexcused documented absence, students are eligible to receive 80% of the mark they score on the test.
- Students requesting to write exams early should make such requests in writing at least one month prior to the exam. Provincial exams are scheduled by the Ministry of Education and adjustments to these dates can only be made in extreme in circumstances.

4. Frequent Absences:

Students with frequent absences may jeopardize their opportunity to pass the course and graduate, even if their marks show a pass. The Ministry of Education requires students to be in attendance for a prescribed number of instructional hours. In the issue of ongoing absences, parents will be contacted to meet with the administration to discuss the issue and determine what steps should be taken to deal with the situation.

Appendix:

Request for Accommodation for Extended Unexcused Absences
Highroad Academy Attendance Policy

Name of Student(s)

Grade/Class

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Date of Request:

Event/Location

Date of Departure:

Date of Return:

Days of School Missed:

I have read the school attendance policy and understand that my student’s academic standing may be affected as a result of these absences.

Parent Name:

Parent Signature:

Attach any relevant documentation

<i>Office Use:</i>
<i>Date Received:</i>
<i>Received By:</i>
<i>Approval:</i>