

Sydney Distance Education High School

Student Attendance

Distance education is governed by the same policies as apply to all NSW government schools, including policies on student attendance. Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential and meet the requirements of the law. Schools and parents share responsibility for promoting regular attendance.

The NSW Department of Education School Attendance Policy requires that Principals of NSW government schools ensure:

- that when frequent absences are explained as being due to illness that:
 - consultation occurs with parents regarding the health care needs of the student
 - medical certificates are sought for the absences
 - where there are ongoing concerns, approval is sought from parents to contact the student's doctor so that the school has all the relevant information regarding the student's health care needs.

Sydney Distance Education High School measures attendance by the amount of work completed. On enrolment, students are expected to complete the SDE Launchpad Program (Student Induction), as preparation for learning at SDEHS.

As outlined by the NSW Distance Education Procedures. Attendance is monitored in a number of ways, including records of student engagement in learning activities, student reviews, and regular contact between students and subject teachers. Distance education schools will maintain a register of interactions that take place between the student and the teacher and use these interactions to assess satisfactory attendance. All students enrolled in distance education must meet standards of engagement and participation set by the distance education school to satisfy the compulsory attendance requirements of the Education Act 1990.

Examples of interactions that may indicate satisfactory attendance include, but are not limited to:

- the regular return of allocated work
- engagement in synchronous remote teaching sessions such as phone lessons and web lessons
- engagement in synchronous face-to-face teaching sessions such as lessons and study days at learning hubs
- asynchronous remote teaching practices such as email, authenticated online learning and learning management systems
- field services such as camps and workshops, home visits and excursions.

The Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures (2015) includes that parents or carers of children of compulsory school age are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school every day. Children must commence school by age 6 and then complete Year 10. After Year 10 and until they turn 17, students must be:

- in school, or registered for home schooling, or
- in approved education or training (eg TAFE, traineeship, apprenticeship) or
- in full time, paid employment (average 25 hours a week) or
- in a combination of work, education and/or training.

For students younger than 17 whose attendance is identified as being less than 50%, the Head Teacher Welfare will ensure that a broad range of strategies are put in place to support the student. These may include:

- a Years 7–10 part program ie a student does some of the required courses in a year
- a Years 11–12 Pathways program ie a student completes Stage 6 over more than 2 years
- ongoing communication from class teachers eg phone, emails
- referral to Year Advisers, Faculty Head Teachers, Head Teacher Welfare or Head Teacher Secondary Studies for follow up.

Refer also to The Enrolment of Students in Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy (1997) and Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy and Procedures