

HIGHROAD ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Kindergarten to Grade 12

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 classes for any reason whatsoever, they miss something of importance that cannot be duplicated or retrieved and the absent student misses taking part in some type of evaluated activity. Therefore, absences of any kind jeopardize a student's comprehension, performance, success and academic standing. If we are to be accurate in our assessment and reporting of student participation, performance and achievement, a student's absence, even those which are unavoidable, will have some impact on student learning and will be reflected in their grades.

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

1. Lates

ALL of our students are expected to arrive on time for school and to attend a full day of classes. Late arrivals create unnecessary interruptions for the class and teachers do not have time to re-teach material missed by students because they 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. As a school, we are dedicated to giving students an excellent education and can only begin to achieve this goal through consistent attendance and punctuality on the part of the students.

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 should take their late slip to their homeroom teacher so that they may update the attendance record.

2. Absences

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 curriculum requirements to receive credit for a course.** The school will make every effort to provide assistance in working out a schedule for the completion of missed work in the case of excused 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.

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:

- Family crisis.
- Medical reasons (*medical/dental appointments and sickness*).
- Compassionate reasons (*a death/funeral in the family*).
- Signing into the medical room (*student must have permission from the office to sign into and out of the medical room. The office or a first aid attendant will contact their teacher prior to signing into the medical room*).

B. Unexcused Absences:

Aside from the legitimate criteria outlined above, all other reasons for absences will be considered unexcused in accordance with the Ministry of Education's protocols. Although parents may choose to take students out of school with letters of permission, they should recognize the fact that such absences, though valuable in their own right, are not sanctioned by the school and may have an adverse effect on the student's progress and standing in the class.

It is important for all concerned to understand that when teachers are asked to give out work early, change assignments, or find a time for a student to make up a test or assignment, it can place an unreasonable work load and expectation upon them. Students who are on time and present for class must receive the higher priority. Teachers are required by the Ministry of Education and by Highroad Academy to fulfil the learning objective for the courses they teach. To this end, the teacher has the authority to determine what must be done to make up the missed work.

i. Unexcused absences for which accommodation to make up missed 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 notification to the Secondary Department Head (and all teachers) at least two weeks prior to the event including the reason for absence, event and location, date of departure, and date of return.

- Time Commitment- The student's participation reflects a long-term, high level of commitment to that endeavour. Often this is reflected in a time commitment of 15-20 hours per week which can translate into external credits towards graduation.

- Church/ outreach related events- if the student is able to provide documentation from their pastor or leader to verify their participation and preparation, this may qualify for volunteer hours and/or external credits for graduation.
- “N” tests- the parent/ student must give advance notice of a booking to take their “N” level driver’s test, and the student is expected to return to school directly after the completion of their test.
- Family holidays- it is our hope that families will schedule their holidays during the pre-determined holiday dates over the school year, though we do understand there are times where work schedules make this difficult. 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 only illustrative and not exhaustive.

- Missing classes to study for a test or doing other work when the student is scheduled to be in class.
- Sleeping in, missing class time and showing up for a later class.
- Taking part in other school activities (including setting up for performances, etc.) during class time without receiving permission from the teacher whose class is being missed.
- Skipping class- 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 what the assignment is and what the requirements for the assignment are, either by consulting Engrade, the class blog, or by consulting with another student in the same class. This assignment is still subject to late marks at the teacher’s discretion.
- *Teachers will not be handing work out early to accommodate students with unexcused absences.*

3. Missed Tests/ Exams:

While we do not desire to be harsh in our dealing with students in regard to tests/ exams missed during absences, we do want to stress the importance of our students being present for scheduled tests. In an effort to keep things fair for students who are present during scheduled tests/ exams, and in an effort to maintain the security of classroom tests, this policy applies.

- 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 to validate their absence.
- In the case of an unexcused documented absence, they are eligible to receive 80% of the mark they score on the test.
- The responsibility remains with the student to arrange a time to write the test by consulting with 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.
- Students who are requesting that they be allowed to write non-provincial exams early should make such requests in writing at least one month prior to the exam week. Provincial exams are scheduled by the Ministry of Education and Highroad Academy cannot make adjustments to the specified dates.

4. Frequent Absences.

Students with frequent absences may jeopardize their opportunity to pass that course, even if their marks show a pass. Note that 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.

Request for Accommodation for Extended Unexcused Absences
Highroad Academy Attendance Policy

Name of Student(s)

Grade/Class

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Event/Location

Date of Departure:

Date of Return:

Days of School Missed:

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

Parent Name:

Parent Signature:

Date of Request:

Documentation Attached: (sports, arts, or church function)

Describe documentation:

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

Notification Form for Extended Unexcused Absences
For Which No Accomodation Can Be Made
Highroad Academy Attendance Policy

Name of Student(s)

Grade/Class

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Event/ Location

Date of Departure:

Date of Return:

Days of School Missed:

I have read the school attendance policy for unexcused absences and understand that this choice to take my student(s) out of school for this period of time will result in "0" on their missed work, tests and quizzes because these absences fall under category 3b in the Highroad Academy attendance policy, "for which accommodation cannot be made". I acknowledge that my student's academic standing may be placed in jeopardy as a result of these absences.

Parent Name:

Parent Signature:

Date of Request:

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