

Section:	Academic/Student (AC)
Subject:	Student Performance and Behaviour
Legislation:	
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APPROVED: _____
President and CEO

POLICY

The policy of the Board of Governors is to expect student attendance in all scheduled activities of every course.

PROCEDURE

DEFINITIONS

Add/Drop The period of time that registration adjustments can be made within specified start and end dates. Courses dropped do not appear on transcripts.

Business days Monday through Friday, excluding statutory holidays and other days when SAIT may be closed.

Excused absence A student's absence that the instructor or academic chair has determined to have been for a valid reason such as, for instance, illness, a court appearance, bereavement or significant extenuating circumstances.

Sponsorship A formal arrangement where a third party such as an employer, government agency, Indigenous organization or funding body supports a student's enrollment in a SAIT program. The sponsor may set specific requirements as a

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condition of support, including minimum attendance, that the student must meet in addition to SAIT's requirements.

Unexcused absence

A student's absence that the instructor or academic chair has determined was not for a valid reason.

GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

1. There is a direct correlation between attendance and course performance. When students are not in class, they miss important instructional content and valuable opportunities to engage with the instructor, other students and the course material, which can negatively impact their course marks. Even if a school/department does not set mandatory attendance and punctuality requirements, students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes.
2. In their first term of studies, students must be present at their in-person and online classes as of the fifth business day following the start date of the term so that they are positioned for success in their programs. Student requests for an extension of this deadline must be forwarded to their academic chair/coordinator. Requests will be managed and responded to on a case-by-case basis. In the absence of an approved extension of the deadline, and dependent on the amount and nature of the content that the student has missed during the first week of classes, SAIT has the discretion to withdraw those students from SAIT. If a student is unable to meet this deadline, due to late admission to a program and/or registration in a course after the deadline but prior to the end of an applicable add/drop period, academic chairs/coordinators will work collaboratively with students and instructors to manage these situations.

Note that some schools/programs may also have specific attendance requirements that will apply to the student's absence; such requirements must be communicated to students in advance of their start date in the program.

PROCEDURE

1. Each school/department shall set its own attendance and punctuality requirements, as well as the consequences for not complying with those requirements, for students enrolled in courses and/or programs within that school/department. Note that these attendance requirements must take into consideration add/drop periods, as applicable, and may be needed to comply with external program accreditation requirements,

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regulatory body requirements, health and safety requirements and/or sponsorship requirements. These requirements and consequences may vary from program to program within a school/department and from course to course within a program.

2. Where instruction in a course is delivered by a program or a school/department other than the student's program, the attendance and punctuality requirements for that course will be determined by the program or school/department delivering the course in consultation with the student's program. Depending on the nature of the service course, the program delivering that course may either set its own attendance/punctuality requirements for that course or may adopt the requirements set by the student's program.
3. Students enrolled in dual-credit programs are required to attend their dual-credit classes based on the schedule outlined between SAIT and the school board partner and are exempt from SAIT's attendance requirements.
4. Attendance and punctuality requirements for a program, including applicable accreditation and/or sponsorship attendance requirements, shall be communicated in writing to students through school/department and/or program processes and guidelines and/or other means.
5. Course outlines are the primary method of communicating course specific attendance and punctuality requirements to students. Other means should only be used when a course outline is not feasible, provided that the requirements are communicated in writing and are readily accessible to students.
6. It is the student's responsibility to comply with established attendance and punctuality requirements.
7. Instructors shall record student attendance in sufficient detail so as to satisfy course and/or program attendance and punctuality requirements.
8. Instructors shall notify their academic chairs/coordinators when a student breaches course attendance and/or punctuality requirements in situations where the student is at risk of being withdrawn from the course and/or is non-compliant with applicable accreditation and/or sponsorship attendance requirements.
9. Consequences for breaching attendance and/or punctuality requirements will be applied as set out in course outlines or in school/department and/or program guidelines.
10. Absence from gradable course assessments:
 - a) The instructor, acting in accordance with school/department and/or program guidelines, shall determine if a student's absence from an assessment is excused or

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unexcused. Valid reasons for an absence may include illness, court appearances, bereavement or significant extenuating personal circumstances.

- b) SAIT recognizes that it has a duty to accommodate absences related to a variety of protected grounds. These include, for instance, documented disability/medical condition, medical time away from SAIT for reasons involving gender identity or gender expression, religious observance, etc.
 - i) Students are required to work with Accessibility Services for absences relating to current medical accommodations. Accessibility Services is responsible for storing the student's documentation related to that accommodation, as per the requirements of procedure [AD.3.2.1 Records Management](#).
 - ii) SAIT recognizes that a student may not be able to attend classes and/or complete assessments on days of religious observance. Students must work with the InterFaith Centre and follow the process and meet the timelines set out in Schedule A, Process to Accommodate Religious Observances, an Associated Document to this procedure, if they wish to be considered for a religious accommodation. Failure to do so will result in the student's absence being considered an unexcused absence. For further information, students may refer to <https://www.sait.ca/student-life/get-involved/interfaith-centre>.
- c) A student may be required to provide documents or other evidence to academic chairs/coordinators, instructors or designates on request that corroborate the reason for the student's absence. Employees receiving such documents or other evidence shall review them as part of their decision as to whether a particular absence is excused and shall generally delete them/return them to the student after making their decision and after the student's deadline to appeal that decision has passed, as per paragraph 10 of this procedure. Note that an employee may retain such documents or other evidence, for the purposes of a related academic misconduct proceeding as per [AC.3.4.3 Student Academic Conduct](#). Schools and departments are responsible for securely storing such documentation in accordance with policy [AD.1.1 Privacy](#) and its associated procedures and must comply with the retention and disposition requirements outlined in SAIT's [Retention and Disposition Schedule](#).
- d) If a student's absence is excused, it is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to find an effective and reasonable way to complete the work or assessment missed due to that absence. SAIT will use reasonable efforts working with the student to enable the student to complete the work or assessment. However, in some situations, depending on the nature and/or amount of the work or assessment that has been missed, completion of the missed work or assessment may not be possible and this may affect the student's final grade in that course.

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11. A student who disagrees with an instructor's decision pursuant to paragraph 10 of this procedure shall:
- a) Meet with the instructor to informally resolve the situation, within five business days of the disagreement arising. Where an in-person meeting is not practical, the student's instructor will establish an alternate communication method.
 - c) If the situation cannot be informally resolved, the student may formally raise the issue within five business days of that meeting in writing to the academic chair/coordinator or designate.
 - d) The academic chair/coordinator or designate shall meet with the student within seven business days of receiving the student's communication and shall advise the student in writing of the decision within five business days of that meeting. The student is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by another individual for advice and support. In the case of a student who is a minor or who is an adult student with an appointed guardian, the student is also entitled to bring the student's parent or guardian. In general, only the student speaks on the student's behalf.
 - e) The decision of the academic chair/coordinator or designate is final and binding.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Schedule A [Process to Accommodate Religious Observances](#)

POLICY/PROCEDURE REFERENCE

AC.3.8 [Attendance Requirements policy](#)
AC.3.8.2 [Attendance Requirements – Apprentices procedure](#)

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