

Attendance Policy

Definitions:

German School Johannes Gutenberg is the name of school provider; **CRICOS Provider ID:** 02379D

German International School Sydney is the trading name of the school

The **Principal Executive Officer (PEO)** is the "Principal".

Leave: refers to approved periods when a student is permitted to be absent from school, typically at the discretion of the principal. Leave requests must be documented and comply with regulatory frameworks such as NESA Attendance Guidelines and, for international students, CRICOS requirements. Leave must not conflict with compulsory attendance obligations.

Exemption: is a formal approval granted under *Section 25 of the Education Act 1990*, allowing a student of compulsory school age to be exempt from attendance or enrolment for specified reasons and periods. Exemptions are processed following NSW Department of Education guidelines. The PEO, under ministerial delegation, may grant or cancel certificates of exemption in prescribed circumstances.

Absence: denotes any period during which a student is not present at school, either with or without approval. Absences can be classified as 'authorised' (e.g., leave or exemption granted) or 'unauthorised' (e.g., truancy or unapproved leave), and must be recorded in accordance with NESA Attendance Guidelines.

Compulsory School Age: is defined under NSW legislation as the period when a child must be enrolled in and attend school—typically from the age of 6 until the completion of Year 10 or age 17, whichever comes first. Attendance is mandated unless a valid exemption is granted.

Variation to Attendance: refers to any approved change to a student's regular attendance pattern, such as part-time attendance or flexible arrangements. Variations must be authorised by the principal and comply with relevant policies, ensuring they do not breach compulsory attendance requirements.

Privacy: In accordance with the Australian Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), all personal information collected by GISS, including details related to student attendance, absences, and leave, will be handled in a manner that protects individuals' privacy. Information will only be used for purposes directly related to GISS' operations and regulatory compliance, and will not be disclosed to third parties except as required by law or with appropriate consent. The school is committed to safeguarding personal data and ensuring that all staff understand their responsibilities under the Privacy Act. Refer to the GISS Privacy Policy for more information.

Scope

This policy sets out the requirements for student attendance at the GISS. It applies to all employees, students (including overseas students) and parents/guardians in the School community.

1. Statement of Attendance Principles

1. In accordance with the Education Act 1990 it is the duty of parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age to either be enrolled at and attend a School or be registered for home schooling.

2. All students who are enrolled at the GISS are expected to attend the School whenever instruction is provided.

3. Parents/legal guardians are expected to notify GISS of a student's absence as soon as practicable and provide a reason for the absence via Compass.

GISS may request supporting documentation where needed (for example, for extended absences, recurring patterns, or where required for administrative or welfare reasons). A medical certificate may be requested but is not routinely required.

4. The GISS will inform all employees and parents of the School's responsibilities with respect to managing, recording, reporting and monitoring of student attendance.

5. GISS will:

- a. Monitor student attendance.
- b. Document student absence.
- c. Investigate unexplained or extended absences in School and/or class.
- d. Notify parent/caregivers of any relevant information regarding attendance in a timely manner.
- e. Where a student's non-attendance raises concerns for their welfare, the Principal will respond in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy and Procedures. If there is reasonable suspicion that the student is at risk of significant harm, a report will be made to the Department of Communities and Justice.
- f. Implement intervention strategies to improve unsatisfactory attendance patterns.
- g. Obtain relevant details in the event of the cessation of enrolment.
- e. Maintain records of attendance and all related information.

2. Exemption Requests

An exemption from school attendance or enrolment can be submitted when a student is unable to attend school for a specific reason, and the student (including overseas students) will be absent from GISS for a stated period. Exemptions may be granted by the Principal or Minister (through delegation) for circumstances such as participation in elite sporting events, employment in the entertainment industry, or other exceptional circumstances. This does not include Leave (refer to section 3).

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks an exemption from attendance at school or an exemption from enrolment, and that exemption meets the definition outlined above, the principal will process the parent's application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education.

The principal may exercise the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the *Education Act* in relation to granting and cancelling a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances as defined above.

Where granted, exemptions will be issued and recorded as a certificate of exemption (where applicable), and GISS will maintain records relating to the decision, duration, and any conditions.

3. Leave of absence

Leave of absence refers to permission granted for a student to be absent from school for a period due to reasons such as family holidays or short-term absences not covered by 'Exemption Requests'. Leave is not considered an exemption and is typically granted at the discretion of the principal and relevant guidelines, including it does not contravene compulsory attendance requirements.

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks approval for a leave of absence from attendance at GISS, the principal will process the parent's application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education Act 1990, NESAs, and CRISCOS.

All leave requests and approvals will be documented in the student's school file.

4. Enrolment and Attendance Register Management

The Principal of GISS maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by section B7 Enrolment and attendance of the NESA NSW Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools Manual.

GISS will monitor student attendance data in Compass to identify unsatisfactory attendance (including frequent unexplained absences, recurring partial attendance, and extended absence).

Student absence and variation to attendance will be recorded using the Minister's codes (Appendix A).

The School retains the enrolment register for a minimum of five years before it is archived. The attendance register is retained for at least seven years from the date of the last entry. Back-up copies of all electronic records are securely stored off-site.

5. Unsatisfactory Attendance and Interventions

Where attendance is deemed unsatisfactory, interventions may include (but are not limited to):

- Prompt follow-up of unexplained absences;
- Parent/legal guardian meeting to understand barriers and agree on an attendance improvement plan;
- Increased monitoring and scheduled check-ins with relevant staff; and
- Referral to wellbeing/learning support processes where attendance concerns indicate welfare or learning barriers

Where non-attendance raises welfare concerns, the Principal will respond in line with the GISS's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

All welfare-related attendance concerns, actions taken, and decisions to escalate will be documented in accordance with School recordkeeping requirements.

6. Overseas Students

GISS applies additional attendance monitoring, intervention and (where applicable) reporting processes for overseas students to meet relevant CRICOS/visa obligations.

These requirements are set out in the GISS's Overseas Student Visa Requirements Policy and Procedures. Staff must apply the overseas student process for overseas students in addition to this policy.

Document Management

Policy name	GISS Attendance Policy
Version	7.1
School responsible	Principal
Board portfolio	Governance and Strategy
Related documents	Attendance Procedures Overseas Student Visa Requirement Policy and Procedures
Version history	Version 7.0 - 13 July 2025 Version 6.0 – 27 July 2017
Last Review / Update	Approved on 28 February 2026
Next Review	Scheduled for February 2027
Approved by	Michael Cordes (Principal) and Tammie Christie (Board of Directors)

The information contained in this document is proprietary to the German International School Sydney. Any distribution or copying without the written consent of the German International School Sydney is prohibited.