

Attendance Policy

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Section 1 – Background

Edmund Rice Education Australia BlendED National Ltd ('BlendED') is a Company Limited by Guarantee and is a registered not-for-profit with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission ('ACNC').

The charism of Blessed Edmund Rice expressed through the touchstones of Liberating Education, Gospel Spirituality, Inclusive Community and Justice and Solidarity, underpins our continued commitment to a safe and inclusive environment for all.

Section 2 – Purpose

This policy sets out the attendance requirements for BlendED Young People and the related expectations and responsibilities of Parents and Carers and BlendED Staff across all BlendED Schools.

Consistent school attendance is fundamental to a Young Person's educational success, personal development, and overall wellbeing. This policy, together with the associated guidelines, is designed to support Young People in maintaining regular attendance and full engagement in their learning.

The objectives of this policy, along with its supporting Attendance Guidelines are to:

- promote the value and importance of regular School attendance among our Young People and their Parents/Carers;
- ensure Young People and their Parents/Carers understand their legal obligations and shared responsibility for maintaining regular attendance;
- define consistent processes for BlendED staff to monitor, record, and respond to attendance patterns, including but not limited to unexplained absences, chronic absenteeism, and early signs of disengagement;
- provide timely intervention, re-engagement strategies and tailored support to assist Young People in returning to and remaining engaged at School; and
- promote a consistent School wide approach to attendance that is proactive, culturally responsive, and focuses on the individual needs and circumstances of each Young Person;
- ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements related to School attendance, including reporting obligations and School registration standards across relevant jurisdictions.

Section 3 – Scope

This policy applies to all Young People, Parents, Carers (including Authorised Family Members) and Staff engaged with BlendED and any of its Schools. This policy applies across all settings in which BlendED, and its Schools operate, including physical campuses, virtual learning environments, and any offsite or online activities.

By accepting an enrolment offer at a BlendED School, Young People and their Parents/Carers are deemed to have been made aware of and to have accepted the terms of this policy.

Responsibilities under this policy vary according to each individual's role and level of engagement with BlendED.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the BlendED Attendance Guidelines which provide further detail on roles, processes and expectations.

Section 4 – Definitions and Interpretations

Where the following term(s) and acronym(s) are used within this policy they are intended to have the meaning(s) as outlined below:

4.1 Definitions

Term	Definition
Authorised Family Member	means a person who is not a Parent/Carer or legal guardian but has been formally nominated in writing by a Parent/Carer or recognised legal authority to act on their behalf in limited matters relating to a Young Person's schooling. This may include collecting the Young Person from school, attending school meetings, or receiving certain communications.
BlendED	EREA BlendED National Ltd.
Board	means the BlendED Board.
Compass	Student Information System. Parents/Carers use the Compass app to record Attendance Notes.
Compassionate & Compelling Circumstances	means situations/circumstances beyond the control of a Young Person that significantly affects their ability to attend School. These may include, but are not limited to, health issues, family reasons or emergencies, or personal hardships.
Compulsory School Age	has the meaning given under the applicable legislation and registration standards of the State or Territory in which BlendED and its Schools operate. For the purposes of this policy, it refers to the age range during which a Young Person must be enrolled in and attend School full time or be registered for home schooling. The specific age range varies between jurisdictions. Refer to the Compulsory School Age section of this policy for jurisdiction specific details.
Compulsory Participation/Education Age	has the meaning given under the applicable legislation and registration standards of the State or Territory in which BlendED and its Schools operate. For the purposes of this policy, it refers to a Young Person who is no longer of Compulsory School Age, but is still legally required to participate in one or more of the following: • attending school; • undertaking full-time employment; • participating in an approved training or education program (such as a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course); • or a combination of approved training or education program and employment. Refer to the Compulsory School Age section of this policy for jurisdiction specific details.
Effective date	means the date of publication of the policy.
Explained Absence	means an instance where a Parent/Guardian/Carer, authorised family member, or independent Young Person (where permitted) provides a reason for a Young Person's non-attendance from School.

Term	Definition
An Explained Absence	is not automatically deemed appropriate. For the purposes of this policy, an Explained Absence will only be considered appropriate if the reason provided aligns with: • relevant State or Territory education legislation and registration standards; • any applicable guidance from Catholic Education authorities or non-government school regulators; and • the School's own attendance and student wellbeing policies.
Extended Absence	means any period of non-attendance by a Young Person that exceeds the number of consecutive school days defined in the BlendedED Attendance Guidelines, or that is otherwise considered extended based on its impact on the Young Person's educational progress or wellbeing.
Exemption	means a formal approval granted under the relevant State or Territory education legislation, which allows a Young Person to be lawfully exempt from attending school or an approved education or training program for a specified period. Exemptions must be approved by the Minister for Education or their authorised delegate (such as a Principal), in accordance with the procedures set out in the applicable legislation.
Guidelines	refers to the Attendance Guidelines.
Parent/Carer	means a person who has legal parental responsibility for a Young Person and includes a biological parent, legal guardian, or any other person who has been granted parental responsibility by a court order under family law, child protection law, or education legislation applicable in the State or Territory where the School operates.
Principal	means the appointed authority of a BlendedED School.
Purpose	means the purpose section of this policy.
Regional Director	means the appointed authority of BlendedED Schools within the Region.
School(s)	means the registered non-government schools located in and operating within Australia, and such other schools, as BlendedED National may establish in Australia or acquire, govern, and operate from time-to-time.
School Can't	means a pattern of non-attendance in which a Young Person is unwilling or unable to attend School due to emotional distress, anxiety, or other wellbeing-related factors, despite the expectations of their Parent/Carer that they attend.
Staff	also referred to as employee(s), means current BlendedED employees.
Teacher	means a person employed in a School who is qualified in that jurisdiction to practice as a teacher of children and Young People of school age.
Truancy	means the act of being absent from school or classes without an explanation, valid reason, and or without knowledge or permission of a Parent/Carer or School Staff.
Unexplained Absence	means any instance where a Young Person is absent from school and no explanation has been provided by a Parent/Carer or Authorised Family Member within a reasonable timeframe.

Term	Definition
Volunteer	means a person associated with BlendED or any of its Schools and who performs unpaid work for a School under an agreement or arrangement with that School.
Young Person / Young People	also referred to as a student or child, means any individual who is or was enrolled at one of the BlendED Schools.
Waterford Program	is a safe, in-person environment for selected young people to attend school full-time. Please refer to the Waterford Program Framework for more information.

4.2 Acronyms

Acronym	Full Reference
ACNC	means the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission.
CEO	means the BlendED Chief Executive Officer.
RTO	means Registered Training Organisation/s.
VET	means Vocational Education and Training.

Section 5 – Policy Statement and Principles

5.1 Effect

This version of the policy replaces all previous versions, which are rescinded from the effective date of this policy.

5.2 Policy Statement

BlendED and its Schools are committed to providing inclusive, flexible and supportive educational options for Young People who have disengaged from mainstream schooling. Grounded in the principles of radical inclusion, hope and opportunity, our Schools are designed to provide Young People with the opportunity to define what works best for them in relation to their school experience. We actively adapt our education services and programs in response to those needs, with the aim of building trust, fostering connection, and promoting long-term engagement.

BlendED and its Schools believe that regular and consistent school attendance is a critical factor in helping Young People achieve their desired educational and personal outcomes. To support this, BlendED and its Schools are committed to cultivating safe, welcoming, and empowering learning environments that foster strong relationships, promote wellbeing, and encourage meaningful engagement for our Young People to succeed.

To support our Young People to succeed, BlendED and its Schools are committed to fostering meaningful engagement through a flexible, participation focused approach to attendance. While our model is grounded in support and inclusion, we also maintain clear and consistent expectations. Low attendance and non-attendance will be managed in accordance with this policy and the relevant legislative requirements.

We recognise that ongoing or repeated absence places Young People at greater risk of falling behind in their education and missing out on critical learning, developmental, and wellbeing opportunities.

5.3 Governing Principles

This policy, and BlendED's approach to attendance management complies with relevant Commonwealth and State/Territory legislation and is guided by the following principles:

- Open and transparent management of attendance – BlendED and its Schools will make reasonable efforts to ensure that all Young People and their Parents/Carers are aware of attendance expectations, responsibilities, and how attendance will be managed at their School.
- Safe and nurturing school environment – BlendED is committed to providing school environments that are safe, welcoming, inclusive and supportive of engagement and wellbeing.
- Fostering positive relationships – BlendED and its Schools aim to build and maintain positive relationships with Young People, their families, and Staff to support a consistent and collaborative approach to attendance.
- Regular engagement and follow up – Schools will regularly check in with Young People to encourage consistent school attendance and will follow up on unexplained or extended absences in accordance with this policy.
- Accurate records – BlendED and its Schools will maintain and monitor attendance records of its Young People, in accordance with applicable Commonwealth and State/Territory requirements.

Section 6 – Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the BlendED community play a part in implementing and upholding the principles of this policy. The details of those key responsibilities are outlined below:

Role	Responsibilities
Board	• Approving this policy. • Ensuring this policy is implemented, reviewed, and updated, as required. • Reviewing attendance reporting and ensuring that legislative requirements and reporting obligations are met.
Chief Executive Officer ('CEO')	• Overseeing the development of guidelines supporting adherence with this policy. • Ensuring this policy is implemented nationwide. • Reporting to the Board on compliance with this policy, including attendance trends and reporting.
Regional Directors	• Overseeing the implementation of this policy and associated guidelines within their assigned regions / Schools. • Promoting and endorsing adherence of this policy and the governing principles relating to attendance management. • As required, review and discuss high-risk attendance issues with the relevant Principal to make decisions on interventions, continuing enrolment etc.
Principals	• Develop, implement, and publish attendance management processes in their School in accordance with this policy and any school registration and regulatory requirements of State and Territory authorities. • Promoting and endorsing adherence of this policy and the governing principles relating to attendance management and monitoring. • Monitor attendance data and implement strategies to support and intervene in instances of low attendance / repeated non-attendance. • Manage processes for enforcing parental obligations in relation to attendance and compulsory participation.

Role	Responsibilities
	Refer any high-risk attendance issues to the relevant Regional Director to discuss and make decisions on interventions, continuing enrolment etc.
Staff responsible for attendance management	- In addition to the general staff responsibilities, the School administration staff who are responsible for attendance management will be responsible for: - Monitoring absences every day after the first rolls are marked. - Ensuring that Young People who arrive late / leave early are accurately recorded in the attendance management system.
Teachers / Staff supervising classes / activities	- Adherence to and endorsement of this policy. - Ensuring rolls are marked accurately and in a timely manner. - Any known absences that have been disclosed during a class or activity are reported by creating a Chronicle Entry in the young person's record in the Student Information System (Compass).
Wellbeing Support Workers (Youth Workers)	- Undertake regular informal check-ins with Young People. - Follow-up unexplained absences with Young People and/or Parents/Carers as soon as practicable on the day of the Young Person's absence.
Young People / Young Person	- Being aware of this policy and how it applies to them. - Committing to regular attendance at school for scheduled classes, programs, and activities. - Communicating with School Staff when struggling to maintain regular attendance, or where circumstances occur which impact on ability to attend school.
Parents/Carers	- Being aware of this policy and how it applies to them and their Child or Young Person. - Working with the School and encouraging their child to attend and actively participate in their education programs. - Helping to foster open and transparent communication with the School in relation to your child's attendance, and any issues or circumstances that occur which may impact on their ability to attend school. - Being aware of their legislative obligations in relation to their child's attendance at school.

Section 7 - Attendance Management

While BlendED offers a flexible approach to learning, we maintain clear processes to monitor and manage Young People's attendance. These processes are consistent with the relevant school registration standards and comply with applicable Commonwealth and State/Territory legislative requirements.

Parents/Carers are required to be familiar with BlendED's policy and the steps for managing Young People's attendance.

7.1 Arrival Expectations

School hours at BlendED may vary between each individual School. Young People are expected to be online (or in-person at School – applicable for young people enrolled in the BlendED Waterford Program) or in-person at Gatherings, at least 10-15 minutes before the

scheduled start time to ensure they are prepared for the day. This supports a smooth start to learning and helps maintain accurate attendance records.

Upon arrival, Young People attending the Waterford Program must either sign in with the administration staff at Reception or have their name marked off by a designated Staff member.

7.2 Late Arrivals

Young People joining a class online after the official School start time must make themselves known to the teacher.

Young People arriving onsite at a Gathering after the official School start must sign in with the teaching staff.

Young People arriving at School for the Waterford Program after the official School start time must sign in with the administration staff at Reception or have their name marked off by a designated Staff member.

Where a Young Person knows they will be arriving substantially later than the School's scheduled start time, they are still required to follow the same sign in procedure and their parents/carers must submit an Attendance Note via the Compass app explaining the reason for their late arrival.

Young People who are living independently are not required to provide a written explanation but are expected to communicate directly with the School regarding the reason for their late arrival.

Late arrivals will be recorded in the School's attendance system (Compass). Patterns of lateness will be monitored and followed up with the Young Person and their Parent/Carer.

BlendED school hours can differ from school to school. For the onsite Waterford Program, each School will ensure that there are Staff onsite who can supervise arrivals half an hour before the communicated start time, and when the school day finishes Staff supervision will be made available for approximately half an hour after the end of the day.

7.3 Leaving During School Day / Early Departures

It is an expectation across all BlendED Schools that once a Young Person has joined online or arrived, and commenced the School day, they are not to leave their classes or the campus during the School's designated hours, unless the School has been notified by the Young Person's Parent/Carer, authorised family member, or by the Young Person themselves (if they are living independently).

If a young person is required to leave an online class, the Waterford Program, or a scheduled BlendED gathering during school hours, they may only do so following notification to, and approval from, their parent or carer. For young people attending the Waterford Program or an in-person gathering, the young person must sign out through Reception or with a designated BlendED staff member. Prior to departure, the School must confirm with the parent or carer how the young person will be safely collected or transported from the program.

In the rare event that a young person leaves an online class, the Waterford Program or a BlendED gathering without first consulting a BlendED staff member or without the required approval, the School will treat the matter as both an attendance and child safety concern. The parent or carer will be notified immediately, reasonable steps will be taken to establish

the young person's whereabouts and wellbeing, and a safety plan will be implemented to support the young person's safe exit from the program and ongoing welfare. Where the School is unable to confirm the young person's safety, or where there are concerns for their immediate wellbeing, the matter will be escalated in accordance with the School's Child Safety procedures.

Any early departures will be recorded in the School's attendance system.

7.4 Absences / Non-Attendance / Low Attendance

Blended Schools are committed to supporting regular School attendance and maintaining accurate records of all absences.

Blended expects Parents/Carers, authorised Family Members and/or Young People (if they are living independently) to notify the School when the Young Person is absent or intends to be absent from School.

7.5 Attendance Monitoring and Recording

Blended will monitor and record attendance at its Schools on a daily and weekly basis, in line with the Blended Records Management Policy and applicable Commonwealth and State/Territory legislative requirements.

Blended Schools will provide clear and transparent communication to its Young People and their families in relation to attendance data.

7.5.1 Follow-ups

Unexplained, repeated, or Extended Absences will be followed up with the Young Person (where they are living independently) and/or their Parent/Carer. Appropriate notes and records will be recorded in the School's attendance system.

Cases of repeated Explained, Unexplained or Extended absences will be forwarded onto the relevant Principal for consideration and further management. The relevant Principal will determine when and how to respond to attendance concerns, in accordance with the Tiered Approach to Young Person's Attendance section in the Blended Attendance Guidelines.

7.5.2 Informal check-ins

Blended Schools will conduct regular informal check-ins with Young People to help identify any underlying challenges that may be impacting their ability to maintain regular attendance. These check-ins provide a safe and supportive space for Young People to discuss and raise concerns and enable our Staff to offer early intervention and support, where needed.

7.5.3 Attendance Improvement Plans

Where non-attendance or low attendance becomes a recurring concern, or the Young Person is displaying School Can't, the School will work collaboratively with the Young Person, their Parent/Carer (where appropriate), and relevant Staff to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan which is a formal plan including:

- Current attendance data;
- Clear, staged goals;
- Adjustments and supports;
- Defined roles;
- Review timeline

These plans aim to restore or improve regular attendance by identifying barriers to school participation, including issues such as School Can't, mental health challenges, cultural challenges, or other personal circumstances impacting the Young Person's ability to attend.

Attendance Improvement Plans are tailored to each individual and must be approved by the relevant School Principal. Attendance Improvement Plans will be reviewed and updated in accordance with the Attendance Guidelines to ensure they remain relevant to the support of the Young Person.

7.6 Holidays

BlendED and its Schools encourage families to schedule holidays during designated school holiday periods to avoid disrupting the Young Person's learning and engagement.

Where holidays during term time are unavoidable, families or independent Young People are expected to notify the School in advance. These absences will be assessed in line with relevant attendance and registration standards.

To support continued engagement, BlendED Schools may offer holiday programs to encourage continued engagement or to increase engagement. Participation in these programs is encouraged, especially for Young People requiring additional support or connection to the School community.

Section 8 – Compulsory School Attendance / Participation

In each State and Territory there are legislated compulsory attendance and participation phases that differ slightly. As BlendED operates Schools nationally, the following outlines the relevant legislative provisions applicable in each jurisdiction.

8.1 Queensland

In Queensland, school attendance is governed by the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) and Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld).

8.1.1 Compulsory School Age and Attendance

A child is considered to be of Compulsory School Age in Queensland, if they are:

- at least 6 years and 6 months old; and
- under 16 years old.

However, a child is no longer of Compulsory School Age, if the child has completed Year 10 before turning 16 Years old.¹

During the Compulsory School Age, Parents/Carers are required by law to ensure their child is enrolled in and attends a registered school or an approved education program on a full-time basis, unless they have been granted an Attendance Exemption.²

8.1.2 Compulsory Participation Phase

Young People who are aged between 16 years and 17 years (or younger if they have completed Year 10) are in the Compulsory Participation Phase and are legally required to continue attending a registered school unless they are engaging in one of the following eligible options:

¹ Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) s9.

² Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) s176.

- participating in another approved education or training program (such as a VET/TAFE or university program);
- undertaking a traineeship or apprenticeship;
- employed full-time;
- undertaking a combination of approved studies and employment; or
- in receipt of an attendance exemption.

The Compulsory Participation Phase ends when the Young Person:

- gains a certificate of achievement, senior statement, certificate III or certificate IV;
- has participated in one of the eligible options above for 2 years after the Young Person has stopped being of Compulsory School Age; or
- turns 17 years old.³

Note: While the legislated compulsory requirements do not apply to Young People over 17 years old, all Young People enrolled at a BlendED School, regardless of age, are expected to maintain regular attendance in accordance with this policy and their enrolment agreement.

8.2 Northern Territory

In the Northern Territory, school attendance is governed by the Education Act 2015 (NT) and the Education Regulations 2015 (NT).

8.2.1 Compulsory School Age and Attendance

A child is considered to be of Compulsory School Age in the Northern Territory, if on 1 January of the year in which, as at 30 June, the child is 6 years of age, and is under 17 years old.⁴

However, a child is no longer considered to be of Compulsory School Age if they have completed Year 10 before turning 17.⁵

During the Compulsory School Age, Parents/Carers are required by law to ensure their child is enrolled in and attends a registered school or Distance Education Centre each school day, or each part of a school day, unless they are:

- participating in an approved home education program, or
- subject to special arrangements or exemptions under the Education Act 2015 (NT).

Young People who are living independently during this phase carry the same legal responsibility for their own school attendance.

8.2.2 Compulsory Participation

A Young Person who has completed Year 10 but is not yet 17 years old is in the Compulsory Participation Phase and is required to continue attending school unless the Young Person completes year 10 of secondary education and participates on a full-time basis in one of the following options:

- an approved education or training program (e.g. VET, TAFE, university, apprenticeship or traineeship);

³ Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) s231.

⁴ Education Act 2015 (NT) s38(1)(2)(c).

⁵ Education Act 2015 (NT) s38.

- full-time paid employment of at least 25 hours per week (if the Young Person is 15 years or older), or
- a combination of part-time education/training and paid employment (also applicable from age 15).

The Compulsory Participation Phase ends when the Young Person turns 17 years of age.

Note: While the legislated compulsory requirements do not apply to Young People over 17 years old, all Young People enrolled at a BlendED School, regardless of age, are expected to maintain regular attendance in accordance with this policy and their enrolment agreement.

8.3 New South Wales

In New South Wales, school attendance is governed by the Education Act 1990 (NSW) and Education Regulation 2017 (NSW).

8.3.1 Compulsory School Age and Attendance

A child is considered to be of Compulsory School Age in New South Wales, if they are:

- at least 6 years old; and
- below the minimum school leaving age, which is the earlier of completing Year 10 or turning 17 Years old.⁶

However, a child is no longer of Compulsory School Age, if the child has completed Year 10 and is enrolled in an approved education program or training.⁷

During the Compulsory School Age, Parents/Carers are required by law to ensure their child is enrolled in and attends a registered school or an approved alternative education program on each school day, unless:

- they are participating in a registered home-schooling program; or
- an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted by the principal of the Secretary of the NSW Department of Education.

Young People who are living independently during this phase carry the same legal responsibility for their own school attendance.

8.3.2 Leaving School

A Young Person can leave school when they either complete Year 10 or turn 17 years old, whichever comes first.

A Young Person who has completed Year 10 but is not yet 17 years old is required to continue attending school unless they are:

- participating in another approved education or training program (such as a VET/TAFE or university program);
- undertaking a traineeship or apprenticeship;
- employed full-time; or
- undertaking a combination of approved studies and employment.

⁶ Education Act 1990 (NSW) s21B(1)(2).

⁷ Education Act 1990 (NSW) s21B(3).

If a Young Person intends to leave school after completing Year 10 to pursue one of these options, formal notification must be provided to the school by the Parent/Carer, or by the Young Person (if living independently).

Note: While the legislated compulsory requirements do not apply to Young People over 17 years old, all Young People enrolled at a BlendED School, regardless of age, are expected to maintain regular attendance in accordance with this policy and their enrolment agreement.

8.4 South Australia

In South Australia, school attendance is governed by Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA) and the Education and Children's Services Regulations 2020 (SA).

8.4.1 Compulsory School Age and Attendance

A child is considered to be of Compulsory Education Age in South Australia, if they are:

- at least 6 years old; and
- under 16 years old.⁸

During the Compulsory Education Age, Parents/Carers are required by law to ensure their child is enrolled in and attends a registered school on every school day, unless:

- they are undertaking an approved learning program; or
- they have been granted an exemption under the Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA).⁹

Young People who are living independently during this phase carry the same legal responsibility for their own school attendance.

8.4.2 Compulsory Education Age

A Young Person aged between 16 years and 17 years is of Compulsory Education Age and is required to continue attending school unless they are:

- participating in another approved education or training program (such as a VET/TAFE, or an accredited course offered by a registered training organisation);
- undertaking a traineeship or apprenticeship;
- undertaking a university degree, diploma or other university aware course;
- employed full-time;
- undertaking a combination of approved studies and employment; or
- a combination of the above.

Compulsory Education ends when the Young Person turns 17 years of age, or until they have achieved a qualification under an approved learning program, whichever comes first.

Note: While the legislated compulsory requirements do not apply to Young People over 17 years old, all Young People enrolled at a BlendED School, regardless of age, are expected to maintain regular attendance in accordance with this policy and their enrolment agreement.

8.5 Tasmania

In Tasmania, school attendance is governed by Education Act 2016 (Tas) and Education Regulations 2017 (Tas).

⁸ Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA) s3 (definition of 'child of compulsory school age')

⁹ Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA) ss68 and 133.

8.5.1 Compulsory School Age and Attendance

A child is considered to be of Compulsory School Age in Tasmania, if they are:

- at least 5 years old; and
- under 18 years old.

During the Compulsory School Age, Parents/Carers are required by law to ensure their child is enrolled in and attends a registered school on every school day, unless they are:

- provided with home education by a registered home educator;
- participating in an approved individual education program; or
- exempt from attendance or enrolment under the Education Act 2016 (Tas).¹⁰

Young People who are living independently during this phase carry the same legal responsibility for their own school attendance.

8.5.2 Leaving School

A Young Person can leave school when they either complete Year 12, receive a Certificate III or turn 18 years old, whichever comes first.

A Young Person who has completed Year 10 and is not yet 18 years old is required to continue attending school unless they are:

- participating another approved education or training program (such as a VET/TAFE, an accredited course offered by a registered training organisation, or university program);
- undertaking a traineeship or apprenticeship;
- employed full-time;
- being home educated;
- undertaking a combination of approved studies and employment; or
- a combination of the above.

Note: While the legislated participation requirements may end once a Young Person turns 18 or completes Year 12 or a Certificate III (whichever occurs first), all Young People enrolled at a Blended School, regardless of age, are expected to maintain regular attendance in line with this policy and their enrolment agreement.

8.6 Western Australia

In Western Australia, school attendance is governed by the School Education Act 1999 (WA) and the School Education Regulations 2000 (WA).

8.6.1 Compulsory School Age and Attendance

A child is considered to be of Compulsory School Age in Western Australia, if they are:

- at least 5 years and 6 months old; and
- under 18 years old.

During the Compulsory School Age, Parents/Carers are required by law to ensure their child is enrolled in and attends a registered school on every school day, unless they are:

- undertaking an approved alternative learning program;

¹⁰ Education Act 2016 (Tas) s13.

- provided with home education by a registered home educator; or
- exempt under the School Education Act 1999 (WA).

Young People who are living independently during this phase carry the same legal responsibility for their own school attendance.

8.6.2 Compulsory Education Period

A Young Person who has completed Year 10 and is not yet 18 years old is in the Compulsory Education Period and required to continue attending school unless they are:

- participating another approved education or training program (such as a VET/TAFE or university program);
- undertaking a traineeship or apprenticeship;
- employed full-time;
- undertaking a combination of approved studies and employment; or
- a combination of the above.

The Compulsory Education Period ends when the Young Person either completes an approved secondary graduation qualification, or reaches the end of the year in which they turn 17 years and 6 months, or when they turn 18 whichever comes first.

Note: While the legislated compulsory attendance requirements under Western Australian law cease to apply once a Young Person has either completed secondary graduation requirements, turned 18 years of age, or reached the end of the year in which they turn 17 years and 6 months (whichever occurs first), BlendED still expects all enrolled Young People to maintain regular attendance in accordance with this policy and their enrolment agreement.

Section 9 – Employment and Attending School

Given the flexible approach to learning at our Schools, we encourage our Young People to seek opportunities for employment if that forms part of their learning or life goals. In each State and Territory there are legislated exemptions and rules that apply to Young People who are of Compulsory School Age and engage in employment, whether that is leaving school to work full-time, or working part-time alongside their schooling. As BlendED has Schools across the country, those are outlined below:

9.1 Queensland

BlendED recognises that in Queensland there are legal limitations regarding Young People who are in the compulsory school age phase (under 16 years), working in paid employment during school hours.

As a part of the Compulsory Participation Phase, Young People in our Queensland Schools who are over 16 years (or younger and have completed Year 10) may leave school to move into full-time employment. Full-time employment is a job that is at least 25 hours a week. Noting that there may be a requirement to provide supporting documentation to the School to ensure BlendED, its Schools, as well as Parents/Carers can comply with their legislated obligations.

9.2 Northern Territory

In our Northern Territory Schools, BlendED will consider granting an exemption to Young People who are 15-16 years and seeking to leave school to move into full-time employment. Full-time employment is a job that is at least 25 hours a week. Noting that there may be a

requirement to provide supporting documentation to the School to ensure BlendED, its Schools, as well as Parents/Carers can comply with their legislated obligations.

If the employment finishes before the Young Person turns 17 years, the Young Person must return to attending school or another approved learning program, in accordance with the Compulsory School Attendance or Compulsory Participation requirements for the Northern Territory.

9.3 New South Wales

In our New South Wales Schools, BlendED will consider special circumstances exemptions for Young People who are of compulsory school age (under 17 years and who have not completed Year 10) and who would like to leave school to move into a traineeship or apprenticeship. Our New South Wales Schools will consider granting enrolment exemptions for Young People who have completed Year 10 but who are under 17 years to leave school to move into full-time employment. Full-time employment is a job that is at least 25 hours a week. Noting that there may be a requirement to provide supporting documentation to the School to ensure BlendED, its Schools, as well as Parents/Carers can comply with their legislated obligations.

If the employment finishes before the Young Person turns 17 years, the Young Person must return to attending school or another approved education or training program, in accordance with the Compulsory School Attendance or Leaving School requirements for New South Wales.

9.4 South Australia

In our South Australian Schools, BlendED will consider granting an exemption to Young People who are 15-16 years and seeking to leave school to move into full-time employment. At 15 years old full-time employment is a job that is at least 30 hours a week. At 16 years old full-time employment is a job that is at least 25 hours a week. Noting that there may be a requirement to provide supporting documentation to the School to ensure BlendED, its Schools, as well as Parents/Carers can comply with their legislated obligations.

If the employment finishes before the Young Person turns 17 years, the Young Person must return to attending school or another approved learning program, in accordance with the Compulsory School Age or Compulsory Education Age requirements for South Australia.

9.5 Tasmania

In our Tasmanian Schools, BlendED will consider granting an exemption to Young People who have completed Year 10 and seeking to leave school to move into full-time employment. Full-time employment is a job that is at least 35 hours a week. Noting that there may be a requirement to provide supporting documentation to the School to ensure BlendED, its Schools, as well as Parents/Carers can comply with their legislated obligations.

If the employment finishes before the Young Person turns 17 years, the Young Person must return to attending school or another approved learning program, in accordance with the Compulsory School Attendance or Leaving School requirements for Tasmania.

9.6 Western Australia

In our Western Australia Schools BlendED will consider granting an exemption to Young People who are in their final two years of their compulsory school period and are seeking to leave school to move into full-time employment. Noting that there may be a requirement to

provide supporting documentation to the School to ensure BlendED, its Schools, as well as Parents/Carers can comply with their legislated obligations.

If the employment finishes before the Young Person turns 17.5 years, the Young Person must return to attending school or another approved learning program, in accordance with the Compulsory School Age or Compulsory Education Age requirements for Western Australia.

Section 10 – Attendance / Enrolment Exemptions

BlendED recognises that there may be compassionate and compelling/extenuating circumstances which prevent a Young Person from meeting the attendance expectation required.

An exemption from the attendance expectations may be requested when a Young Person cannot attend school, or when, considering their circumstances, it would be unreasonable for them to attend school.

If a Young Person is unable to attend school on a full-time basis the school may grant a partial exemption in the form of an engagement plan. All Attendance Improvement Plans are added as a Chronicle Entry in Compass with the Young Person's Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

Exemptions may be requested for absences due to circumstances including, but not limited to:

- diagnosis of a serious medical condition;
- severe illness, or hospitalisation, for a prolonged period of time;
- mental health issues;
- First Nations cultural obligations and practices;
- cultural or religious reasons; and/or
- family reasons.

Parents/Carers and Young People (where they are living independently), must follow the Attendance Guidelines requesting an Exemption. BlendED will consider an application for an Exemption in line with any applicable legislation.

BlendED will also consider attendance/enrolment exemptions for Young People who are wanting to enter full-time employment as part of their personal learning plan, in accordance with the relevant State/Territory requirements.

Young People or their Parents/Carers should contact their Principal to discuss this option and should note that there may be a requirement to provide supporting documentation to ensure BlendED and its Schools can comply with their legislated reporting requirements.

Section 11 – Compliance and Accountability

11.1 Implementation

It is the responsibility of BlendED and each of its Schools to ensure that their Staff, Young People and their Parents/Carers, are made aware of and where relevant, trained in accordance with this policy. This policy will be made available to parents and guardians through the BlendED websites and to staff through the BlendED Policy platforms.

On occasion where this policy undergoes major/key changes and updates, the National Risk and Compliance team will communicate those changes with the relevant School level managers who will then be responsible for disseminating that information to their Staff, and

where relevant, Young People and their Parents or Carers. Where major policy change makes it necessary, policy training modules will be developed by the National Risk and Compliance team and will be made available to all relevant Staff via SharePoint.

11.2 Record Keeping

All records pertaining to this policy will be managed and maintained in accordance with the Records Management Policy and related Retention, Archival, and Disposal Schedule.

When managing attendance data, BlendED and its Schools will keep and maintain those records as required in compliance with school registration standard and legislated requirements.

The National Risk and Compliance team will keep records, in accordance with the Records Management Policy, of all policy review processes related to this policy, including records and notes from policy audits, feedback and consultation processes, and any subsequent changes.

Section 12 – Associated Information

This policy aligns with, and is supported and complemented by, the following Commonwealth and State/Territory legislation, standards, regulations, BlendED policies and procedures, and other supporting forms and documentation:

Related Legislation, Policies and Procedures	
Section 12 – Associated Information This policy aligns with, and is supported and complimented by, the following Commonwealth and State / Territory legislation, standards, regulations, BlendED policies and procedures, and other supporting forms and documentation:	Commonwealth • Australian Education Act 2013 • Australian Education Regulations 2023 • National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
	New South Wales • Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 • Education Act 1990 • Education Standards Authority Act 2013 • Industrial Relations (Child Employment) Act 2006 • NSW Registered & Accredited Non-Government Schools Manual
	Northern Territory • Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 • Education Act 2015 • Education Regulations 2015 • Non-Government School Registration Standards
	Queensland • Child Employment Act 2006 and Regulation 2016 • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 • Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 • Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 • NSSAB Guideline for educational programs for non-state schools
	South Australia • Education and Children's Services Act 2019 • Education and Children's Services Regulations 2020 Standards for Registration / Review of Schools
	Tasmania • Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997

Related Legislation, Policies and Procedures	
	• Education Act 2016 • Education Regulations 2017 • Non-Government Schools Registration Board Guidelines
	Western Australia • Children and Community Services Act 2004 • School Education Act 1999 • School Education Regulations 2000 • Registration Standards for Non-Government Schools
Relevant BlendED Policies and Procedures	• Attendance Guidelines • Attendance Decision Marking Guide • How to Notify Parents of Unexplained Absences • How to Create an Outreach Chronicle Entry and Mark Attendance in Compass • How to Prepare Daily Absences Report for Wellbeing Check-ins • Complaint Handling Policy • Enrolment Policy • Privacy Policy • Records Management Policy • Enrolment Agreement (Parent/Guardian/Carer Code of Conduct) • Young Person Agreement (Young Person Code of Conduct)
Other Relevant Reference Documents, Websites and Forms	• QLD Education website – School attendance • QLD Education website – Enrolment age requirements • NSW Education website – Compulsory school attendance • NSW Education website – School attendance • NT Education website – Stages of Schooling • NT Education website – School attendance • SA Education website – Attendance at School • SA Education website – Legal responsibilities for sending your child to school • TAS Education website – School starting and leaving • TAS Education website – School attendance • WA Education website – Compulsory Schooling • WA Education website – School attendance

Section 13 – Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, and amendments and updates made as required. Reviews may occur more regularly where legislative or regulatory change requires it. Any related procedures, guidelines, or forms are also reviewed at least annually, or more regularly as required by change to legislation.

The National Risk and Compliance team is responsible for ensuring that the annual review of this policy is undertaken, which includes applying any relevant legislative and/or regulatory changes, thorough consultation with relevant stakeholders, and having the policy reviewed and approved by the BlendED CEO and Board.

Section 14 – Further Assistance

Policy queries should be directed to the Chief Operating Officer.

Document Control

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Version Number	Description	Date
1.0	Document created.	16/07/2026

Policy Administration

Status	Document Owner	Approver	Approval Date	Version Number	Last Reviewed Date	Review Frequency	Next Review Date
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