

# Youth Inc. STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND LEARNING PARTICIPATION



## Policy Statement

The purpose of Youth Inc. is to re-engage young people aged 17-24 years (post-compulsory school age) who have disengaged from formal educational and employment pathways and who are at-risk of long-term unemployment and chronic socio-economic disadvantage.

The School will operate requiring students to attend full time. For each student, this will look different, but will total at least 30 hours a week. Not all of this time will be spent 'on campus' but students must comply with instructions in relation to recording their attendance at their School commitments.

If a student attends less than 80% of the time required by the School over a four week period, this will trigger an "Attendance Review" by their Learning Coordinator. Relevant assistance will be offered to help resolve any issues that are impacting on attendance. This does not include non-attendance that the School has been informed of, or that has been explained by way of Sick Certificate etc.

If a student is deemed by their Learning Coordinator to be not sufficiently participating in their learning program (ie they are attending, but their effort is insufficient), this will trigger a "Learning Participation Review" with their Learning Coordinator. Support structures and other assistance will be offered to encourage the student to engage more with their learning at the School, and help remove any barriers to this engagement.

If attendance or learning participation does not improve, students will be placed into the 'Non-active Student Stream' of the School's enrolment. Students in this stream will still have access to the support structures of the School for the duration of their enrolment period. The School will also work with the student to suggest other learning or employment opportunities that may better suit their situation.

All students will be informed of these expectations from their earliest interactions with the School, and they will be reinforced through the induction program.

*NB: This policy does not apply to student behaviour that is a breach of the Student Misconduct Policy*

## Policy Considerations

Youth Inc.'s educational philosophy is rooted in the principles of holistic and progressive education, and is concerned with the development of each student's intellectual, emotional, social, physical and creative potentials. It aims at helping students to make the most of who they are, and what they want to become. It is accepted that this process will be different for every student, and will not always have an upward trajectory. It is also accepted that students in the School's target demographic can have complicated lives for a variety of reasons, and this can impact on their attendance and their engagement with learning. The School aims to overcome all that it can to assist students on their learning journey.

## Purpose of this Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure outlines the expectations for the attendance and learning participation for students at Youth Inc. It also gives a clear progression as to what is to happen if these expectations are not met, through Attendance and Learning Participation Reviews. This policy and procedure also explains the progression of a student into the 'Non-active Student Stream' if the outcome of the Review is not an improvement.

# Youth Inc. STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND LEARNING PARTICIPATION



## Student Attendance

Youth Inc. creates individualised programs of study, employment and other courses for each of its enrolled students. The common expectation, however, is that all students will have an attendance commitment of 30 hours a week minimum. This attendance will include time away from the School, and for these commitments, students must lodge their attendance via the method determined by their teacher.

Each student's attendance will be monitored by their Learning Coordinator. If attendance becomes an issue, the Learning Coordinator will engage the student in a constructive, strengths-based framework. Where possible, engagement with the student would occur informally concerning their attendance, as soon as the Learning Coordinator formed an opinion that there may be an issue.

If the informal engagement does not result in improve attendance, or the student attends less than 80% of their program over a 4 week period, then this will trigger an "Attendance Review".

## Attendance Review

An Attendance Review is conducted by the Learning Coordinator of the student, and another staff member. The Learning Coordinator is responsible for

- Liaising with other staff members to find out whether the student is currently experiencing any difficulties in their life outside of the school, or in other areas of the school.
- Requesting a meeting with the student via email or telephone, or on the next attendance of the student at School.
- Keeping a record of the issues that have led up to the Attendance Review being triggered, as well as the outcome of the meeting and any plans put in place. This is to be kept on the student's file.

The main objective of the Attendance Review is to ascertain what is causing the student to have poor attendance. The Learning Coordinator is to assist the student to address the issues which are causing their lack of attendance, on a case-by-case basis, with a personalised plan to be put in place. Issues that may arise could include:

- *Medical*

The Learning Coordinator is to discuss the medical condition, and what strategies can be put in place to assist. It may be that the student is referred to medical services for further assistance.

- *Personal*

This could cover a wide variety of issues that affect a student. The Learning Coordinator is to provide support, and refer the student to appropriate services.

- *Learning*

It may be that the student expresses that they are finding the work load difficult, or the nature of the work challenging. The Learning Coordinator will discuss strategies to deal with the specific issue that the student is finding challenging, and provide ongoing support to the student.

- *Employment*

It may be that the student's employment hours are interfering with their attendance at school. The Learning Coordinator will discuss any accommodations that can be made for the student to continue working the hours they desire; however, all students are required to meet their attendance requirement.

# Youth Inc. STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND LEARNING PARTICIPATION



At the conclusion of the Review, the student is to be reminded of their obligation to attend at least 80% of their scheduled program. A follow up meeting is scheduled for a mutually agreed time within the next month for the Learning Coordinator to touch base with the student about the plan that has been put in place.

## **Final Attendance Review**

If the student continues to not meet the expected attendance requirement, a Final Attendance Review will be scheduled for the student to meet with the Learning Coordinator and the Principal. At this meeting, the issues and plan put in place at the initial review will be reviewed and discussed, as well as the reasons for the student's continued lack of attendance.

Two outcomes of this Final Attendance Review are possible:

1. The student agrees to a new personalised plan, discussed at the meeting, and a follow up meeting is scheduled for a mutually agreed time within the next month for the Learning Coordinator to touch base with the student about the new plan that has been put in place.

If at that meeting, the student's attendance has not improved, they will automatically be moved into the 'Non-active Student Stream' of the School.

2. It is decided by the Principal and the Learning Coordinator that the student is to be moved to the 'Non-active Student Stream' of the School. See **Non-Active Student Stream** below

If the student is under 18 years of age, and not living independently, their parent or guardian will be informed of the outcome of the Final Attendance Review.

## **Learning Participation**

Youth Inc. has expectations around the participation and engagement of students. This is not based around 'achievements', 'grades' or 'results', but rather seeing behaviours and attitudes that start students on a life-trajectory that is based on a clear understanding of who they are (identity), what they are good at (aptitude, skill), what they are passionate about (purpose), and where they want to go (personal & vocational goals). Self-belief requires a positive expectation, resilience, effort and persistence – and it is built upon a scaffold of incremental success.

A Learning Coordinator will work with each individual student, based on the above philosophy, to engage them in a meaningful program of study, employment and other courses. The School understands that each student's participation in their learning will look different, but some key indicators would be:

- Positive attitude towards work, tasks set and other expectations
- Completing tasks by agreed due dates
- Working in a constructive way within groups
- Keeping commitments made to Learning Coordinators and fellow students
- Keeping commitments and showing a good work effort with employers
- Accepting constructive criticism and making positive change

Each student's learning participation will be monitored by their Learning Coordinator. If the Learning Coordinator notices an issue with a student's lack of learning participation, they will engage the student in a constructive, strengths-based manner. Where possible, engagement with the student would occur informally concerning their learning participation, as soon as the Learning Coordinator formed an opinion that there may be an issue.

# Youth Inc. STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND LEARNING PARTICIPATION



## **Learning Participation Review**

If the informal engagement does not result in improve learning participation, then this will trigger a "Learning Participation Review".

A Learning Participation Review is conducted by the Learning Coordinator of the student, and another staff member. The Learning Coordinator is responsible for

- Liaising with other staff members to find out whether the student is currently experiencing any difficulties in their life outside of the school, or in other areas of the school.
- Requesting a meeting with the student via email or telephone, or on the next attendance of the student at School.
- Keeping a record of the issues that have led up to the Learning Participation Review being triggered, as well as the outcome of the meeting and any plans put in place. This is to be kept on the student's file.

The main objective of the Learning Participation Review is to ascertain if there are any contributing factors that can be address by School support that is causing the student's poor learning participation. The Learning Coordinator is to assist the student to address these factors, on a case-by-case basis, with a personalised plan to be put in place to help remove any barriers to effective engagement by the student.

At the conclusion of the Review, the student is to be reminded of their obligations under the plan, and a follow up meeting is scheduled for a mutually agreed time within the next month for the Learning Coordinator to touch base with the student.

## **Final Learning Participation Review**

If the student continues to not meet the expected learning participation standard, a Final Attendance Review will be scheduled for the student to meet with the Learning Coordinator and the Principal. At this meeting, the issues and plan put in place at the initial review will be reviewed and discussed, as well as the reasons for the student's continued lack of learning participation.

Two outcomes of this Final Learning Participation Review are possible:

1. The student agrees to a new personalised plan, discussed at the meeting, and a follow up meeting is scheduled for a mutually agreed time within the next month for the Learning Coordinator to touch base with the student about the new plan that has been put in place.

If at that meeting, the student's learning participation has not improved, they will automatically be moved into the 'Non-active Student Stream' the School.

2. It is decided by the Principal and the Learning Coordinator that the student is to be moved to the 'Non-active Student Stream' of the School. See **Non-Active Student Stream** below

If the student is under 18 years of age, and not living independently, their parent or guardian will be informed of the outcome of the Final Learning Participation Review.



### Non-Active Student Stream

It is key to the principles of Youth Inc. to assist students in the place that they are, and it is understood that for some young people, the educational program that the School is offering may become, for a variety of reasons, something that they cannot manage. In these cases, a student will be moved out of the educational program and its requirements, and into the Non-Active Student Stream.

Once a student has been placed into this stream, they will have a meeting with the Principal and the Support Coordinator, and an individualised plan will be put in place to support them for a period of 6 months.

This could include, but is not limited to:

- Referral to other learning opportunities
- Counselling and other support
- Life-coaching

These students will not be considered to be 'enrolled students' for the purposes of funding.

If a student does not wish to be placed into the Non-Active Student Stream, they will be released from any connection to the School.