



UM | Faculty of Education

FACULTY OF EDUCATION ATTENDANCE AT CLASS/WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Regular attendance is expected for all students in all courses, including practicum. An instructor or Associate Dean Undergraduate in consultation with the instructor, will initiate procedures to withdraw a student from a course where unexcused absences exceed 10% of the scheduled instructional class hours for a course, or where absences (excused or unexcused) reach 20% or higher of the scheduled class instructional hours for a course in any one term.

Students must contact instructors regarding absences. Students may be required to complete alternative professional learning activities.

The Director of Practicum & Partnerships will initiate procedures to withdraw a student from a practicum course where absences from required practicum days, excused or unexcused, cannot be made up within the term.

[Note: Please check the Faculty of Education's website to review the applicable procedures document for further clarification on the implementation of this policy. For B.Ed. students, see the *After-Degree Bachelor of Education Attendance Procedures*. For PBDE students, see the *Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Education (PBDE) Attendance Procedures*.]

Passed by Faculty Council, June 2019.

Revisions passed by Faculty Council, June 15, 2020.

POST-BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

This Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Education (PBDE) Attendance Procedures document is supplementary to Section 6.5 of the Undergraduate Calendar which outlines the Faculty of Education Council's approved Attendance at Class / Withdrawal Policy revision (June 2020), which states:

Regular attendance is expected of all students in all courses, including practicum. An instructor or Associate Dean Undergraduate in consultation with the instructor, will initiate procedures to withdraw a student from a course where unexcused absences exceed 10% of the scheduled instructional class hours for a course, or where absences (excused or unexcused) reach 20% or higher of the scheduled class instructional hours for a course in any one term.

Students must contact instructors regarding absences. Students may be required to complete alternative professional learning activities.

The Director of Practicum and Partnerships will initiate procedures to withdraw a student from a practicum course where absences from required practicum days, excused or unexcused, cannot be made up within the term.

ATTENDANCE POLICY RATIONALE

The PBDE Program provides teachers, administrators, and other professionals with opportunities for ongoing professional development and career advancement. This program is recognized by Manitoba Education and Training for salary classification purposes. Teachers can follow courses of program study that lead to certification in a number of areas such as school leadership, special education, and school counselling. Alternatively, teachers can design their own program of study tailored to their unique interests from a wide selection of regular and special courses offered annually across a range of content areas. A number of different formats are used for scheduling PBDE courses such as three-hour evening classes, full days on weekends, or daytime classes of various durations during the summer months. Courses range from 36 to 39 instructional hours.

As an intense, demanding, and highly participatory program of advanced studies, PBDE students are expected to demonstrate high levels of academic integrity and professionalism. Such professionalism is demonstrated in part by a commitment to and attendance at all on-campus or field-based classes. It is important that PBDE students understand and value the efforts of all who contribute to their learning (e.g., instructors, field partners, peers, and staff). Regular attendance and punctuality are professional

commitments and essential to success in ongoing teacher professional learning and development. Absenteeism and tardiness have a negative impact on the breadth and depth of professional learning as well as on the relationships established with others in the program.

Your absences will be excused for extenuating medical or compassionate circumstances, religious observance, a registered disability with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), or employer demands. You are, however, responsible for contacting your instructor in a timely manner. In addition, you are fully accountable for all the learning experiences and content you missed and for completing the learning accommodations that your instructor assigns (e.g., additional reading or make-up assignments). Absences for any other reason are unexcused (e.g., vacation, professional or community service), and your instructors are not under any obligation to accommodate your learning for unexcused absences. Note that absences cannot reach or exceed 20% of the scheduled instructional hours for a course in any one term for any reason, excused or unexcused (e.g., 7 hours of a 36-hour course; 8 hours of a 39-hour course).

PBDE STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING ATTENDANCE

Be sure that you fully understand the attendance requirements and processes for all on-campus, practicum, and field-based courses.

Attend class regularly and contribute to a respectful and supportive learning environment: Regular attendance and respectful contributions to your class learning community is expected. In practice, this means arriving on time to each class, staying in class for the full duration of the class, and actively participating in all learning experiences. It also means restricting your use of digital devices (e.g., cellular phones, laptops) during classes to learning experiences that are a part of the course as facilitated by your instructor.

Informing school or divisional leaders: It is expected that you will inform your school or divisional leader about your advanced study schedules and make arrangements that will enable you to attend all classes as scheduled. If, however, you must miss a class because of your professional responsibilities at work, this type of absence will be excused, and you will be provided with reasonable learning accommodations.

Professional protocol: Regardless of the nature of your absence, you are expected to follow professional protocol when you need to miss any time from an on-campus, practicum, or field-based course. This protocol aligns with the expectations of teachers or other professionals when reporting absences from school.

If you miss scheduled instructional class hours in a course (less than 10%): Advise your instructor(s) as the soon as you can that you will be absent and provide the reason for your absence. Instructors will not penalize you for excused absences, but you are responsible for any parts of the course you miss and you may be assigned make-up work.

If you miss more scheduled instructional class hours in a course (less than 20%): Advise your instructor(s) and provide them with a written explanation of your circumstance—medical, compassionate,

or employee demand. In case of an emergency, you can contact an Academic Advisor in our Student Services Office so that information can be communicated in confidence to your instructor(s) on your behalf. Upon returning to classes, you must speak directly to your instructor(s) about make-up work. Problematic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of course time, and if unexcused, constitutes grounds for withdrawal.

If your absences reach 20% or higher of the scheduled instructional class hours in a course: Contact the Associate Dean Undergraduate for direction, decision, and program planning moving forward. You will be required to meet with the relevant Department Head and/or Associate Dean. Missing 20% or more of course time, excused or unexcused, is considered excessive and beyond instructors' abilities to accommodate in ways that maintain the academic integrity of the course. This level of absenteeism will require a PBDE student to withdraw from a course(s) for the term.

If you arrive late or leave early, missed time can accumulate into instructional class hours absent.

Consult the course outline and practicum guidelines for any 5000 level practicum course you are taking for information related to absences from practicum and requirements for punctuality. Inform your Practicum Advisor, Cooperating Teacher/Counsellor, practicum site office, and the Director of the Practicum and Partnerships Office as soon as you can on any day that you will be absent. You will need to arrange to make up all missed practicum days.

INSTRUCTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING ATTENDANCE

Provide learning accommodations: PBDE students are not to be penalized for missing a class because of extenuating medical or compassionate circumstances, a registered disability, religious observance, or employer demands. Use your discretion to provide reasonable learning accommodations, which will allow the student to satisfy missed coursework, even if it is not exactly the same as the work completed in class by other students. Instructors should check that make-up work is completed satisfactorily and returned, but are not obliged to mark it.

Document and consult: Document the attendance of students in your course. If you become aware that a student has missed 10% or more of the scheduled instructional class hours, contact the student by email expressing your concern and direct them to provide you with a written explanation for the absence. In the case of excessive absences where absences reach 20% or higher of the scheduled instructional class hours (excused or unexcused), consult further with the Department Head and Associate Dean Undergraduate. In consultation with you, the ADU will initiate procedures to withdraw a student from your course where unexcused absences exceed 10% of scheduled instructional class hours, or where absences (excused or unexcused) reach 20% or higher of the scheduled instructional class hours.

FAQS

What if I have a really good reason for being absent?

Instructors, the Department Head, or Associate Dean Undergraduate will not excuse you from classes for any reason other than medical or compassionate circumstances, registered disabilities (SAS), religious observance, or employee demand. Your Cooperating Teacher/Counsellor, Practicum Advisor, or Director of Practicum and Partnerships will not excuse you from practicum days for any but these reasons which are similar to the ones that would justify a teacher's or counsellor's absence from school or clinical site.

What if I feel I have to be absent and it is not excusable? If at some point during your program you feel you *must* be absent—because of a surprise birthday party, for example—or you *choose* to be absent—because you want to attend your child's soccer game, **you must take responsibility for that absence.**

The procedure to follow is this:

- *before the absence or immediately after, contact your instructor(s), in person or by e-mail;*
- *if you accumulate absences (more than 10%) that are unexcused, contact the relevant Department Head, and the Office of the Associate Dean Undergraduate.*

Instructors, administrators, practicum advisors, and cooperating teachers/counsellors are understanding and flexible. Nevertheless, none of them is under any obligation to plan learning accommodations for you, and you must be prepared for the fact that almost any absence (other than for excusable reasons) will be perceived as a lack of commitment on your part.

What if I have family responsibilities? We are committed to making the PBDE program accessible to educators working full-time. We also recognize that many of our students will also be caring for children or elders. It is expected that you will arrange ongoing, dependable care providers so that you can attend your classes as scheduled. In exceptional circumstances, we also recognize that our adult professional learners may be unable to attend a class because of an unavoidable familial responsibility. It is expected that such absences will be justified and if so, will be excused and accommodated on compassionate grounds.

What if the weather is bad and I live outside the city? Should the weather suddenly turn bad, highways close, and travel is not recommended, your safety comes first. Your absence will be excused and accommodated on compassionate grounds. Some of your instructors live out of the city and some courses are held out in the field and rural communities. Instructors and students should monitor the weather and make special arrangements to be sure they can get where they have to be if bad weather is coming. If you live outside of the city or town where the course is taking place, consider making alternative arrangements to avoid missing classes or practicum commitments.

What if I have to go to a medical appointment? When scheduling any personal appointments, including routine medical, dental, or eye care, students are expected to make arrangements that do not conflict with scheduled classes. Excused absences for non-routine appointments for yourself or your children can be negotiated and accommodated.

What if I have to conduct parent-teacher conferences, direct the school musical, or coach a sports team for a provincial competition? We recognize that you may have a professional obligation that you must fulfill, one that can't be rescheduled or be assigned to another school colleague even after doing your best to problem solve the scheduled class time conflict with your school or divisional leader. If you find yourself in this situation, your absence will be excused due to employer demands.

If you are experiencing a challenge in your life that may be affecting your attendance and/or academic progress, please make an appointment with the Associate Dean Undergraduate to discuss your circumstances so that we can help you by exploring available supports.

Notes: This attendance procedures document is modelled after one recently developed for the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education's After Degree Bachelor of Education Program and York University's attendance policy for post-baccalaureate professional programs.

Revisions passed by Faculty Council, June 15, 2020

Document updated June 20, 2020.