



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's Senate approved *Attendance at Class and Debarment Policy* which states:

Regular attendance is expected of all students in all courses. An instructor can initiate procedures to debar a student from attending classes and from final examinations where unexcused absences exceed three hours of scheduled classes in any one 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.

If you are absent for extenuating medical or compassionate circumstances, religious observance, a registered disability with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), or employer demands your absence will be excused. 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). If you are absent for any other reason (e.g., vacation, professional or community service), you will not be excused and your instructors are not under any obligation to accommodate your learning. Note that absences cannot exceed 20% of class time 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 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 or field-based course. This protocol aligns with the expectations of teaching professionals when reporting absences from school.

If you miss one evening class in a course or part of a class scheduled during the daytime (3 hours or 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 accumulate two missed evening classes in a course or 6 to 7 hours of a class scheduled during the daytime or the equivalent (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, may constitute grounds for debarment.

If you accumulate three missed evening classes in a course or 8 hours or more of a class scheduled during the daytime or the equivalent (20% or more): 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 normally beyond instructors' abilities to accommodate in ways that maintain the academic integrity of the course. This level of absenteeism may 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 hours absent.

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 two 3-hour classes or the equivalent (6-7 hours, less than 20%), 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, consult further with the Department Head and Associate Dean Undergraduate.

FAQs

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

Your 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. These reasons are similar to the ones that would justify a teacher's absence from school.

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 two days of missed classes in any on-campus or field-based course over the term (6 to 7 hours, less than 20%) or more that is unexcused, contact the relevant Department Head, and the Office of the Associate Dean Undergraduate.***

Instructors are usually 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) may 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 in 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 arranging for a place to stay overnight with a friend, family member, or in a hotel when weather is a problem. Always carry an overnight bag.

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.