



Attendance Code Webinars

Questions & Answers

SEPTEMBER 2025



Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education



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Background

During July and August 2025, a series of Attendance Codes webinars were provided to school leaders and school administrators responsible for recording student attendance. The purpose of the webinars was to support school leaders and administrators with the use and consistent application of attendance codes.

This document provides a summary of questions (and answers) received during the webinar series, and is being shared to help provide a consistent understanding around the use of codes.

Please note: Guidance and requirements may change over time. Please refer to the latest information available [here on the Ministry's website](#), for the latest information related to the application of attendance codes.

References used in this set of Questions and Answers

- [Opening and closing for instruction - public guidance.pdf](#)
- [Attendance codes - Ministry of Education](#)
- [Education and Training Act 2020 No 38 \(as at 01 July 2025\), Public Act Contents - New Zealand Legislation](#)
- [Stepped attendance response - STAR - Ministry of Education](#)
- [Attendance plans if your child needs reduced hours at school - Ministry of Education](#)
- [Attendance: Getting Back to School - A guide for parents and whānau](#)
- [Student attendance guide - Ministry of Education](#)
- [Alternative Education - Ministry of Education](#)
- [Northern Health School](#)
- [Southern Health School](#)
- [Central Regional Health School](#)

QUESTION	RESPONSE
Parent/Teacher days	
1 Please provide clearer guidelines around how to mark Parent/Teacher days, Teacher-only days, and school conferences (e.g. students may only be required to attend for an hour or not attend at all).	<p>A school is open for instruction when compulsory organised teaching and learning is taking place for all year levels.</p> <p>Teacher-only days should be removed from the calendar in your SMS as no attendance should be marked on those days.</p> <p>The opening and closing for instruction guidance also provides advice for Paid Union Meetings, and lawful strike days.</p>
Overseas travel and holidays	
2 Can we change for March/July returns to the appropriate code (e.g. G) for funding purposes?	If students are overseas on holiday, then it is appropriate to use G for the entire time they are absent. If for longer than 15 weeks, then student type NA student type can be used.
3 If a child travels overseas for a funeral and it takes more than five days, do we need to change it from J to E after five days?	Yes. Principals may use J for no more than five days. Section 45 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act) covers this.
4 If we change a student to NA , should we use the ? code.	No. A ? code is temporary, NA student types do not have attendance recorded. Please remove their timetables.
5 We have families going overseas for six weeks or longer. How should we code them?	<p>Code them as G.</p> <p>Holidays in term time are not endorsed. See section 36 of the Act. Students at registered schools are required to attend whenever schools are open.</p>
6 If a student is overseas for family reasons for a significant time and attending school in another country, how do we code them?	Treat this as an exchange. Use the student type NA – and do not record attendance for that student. Please ensure that all timetables/classes are removed for the student during this period.

7	If a family is overseas for a term, and the school has provided school work, what are they marked as?	If this sits within school policy and there is evidence of engagement in the school work provided, consider using Q – board approved offsite learning.
8	For families who advise us they are going overseas due to a critically ill family member or death, what code is used?	Use J , and then after five days, this changes to E , as we would for cases in New Zealand.
9	Can taking a student out of school for a family holiday in term time, be justified by a school's policy, and coded as J ?	No, use G. Holidays in term time are not endorsed in legislation. See section 36 of the Act. Students of registered schools are required to attend whenever schools are open. It is inappropriate for a school to have this practice in their school Attendance Policy. G should be recorded for all holidays in New Zealand or overseas. If it is an odd day here and there with no explanation that should be T for truant – unjustified absence.

Every Day Matters – EDM reports

- 10 The school should inform everydaymatters@education.govt.nz that they have a designated attendance contact for the school and provide a name and email address. The EDM team will then load this contact for the school. The EDM report will be sent to the Attendance Contact and copied to the school Principal, so that both receive the report. Note that only one Attendance Contact can be added (in addition to the Principal).

J code – a period of up to five days

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| 11 | Is five-day threshold for J per term, or annual? | Section 45 of the Act states a period of no more than five days, indicating a block of no more than five days, not per term or annual. With new Attendance Management Plans and absence thresholds in place from the start of 2026, students with five or more days absence within a term (even if all are justified), will be identified quickly and appropriate action will be required from the school. |
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12	Student's parent has passed away or in palliative care, and student is absent. Should this be J ?	J is appropriate in this case, for a maximum of five days. You could also consider M (illness/medical) if there is a mental health reason. As described on page 10 of the Guidance, mental health issues are included under the M code. The response the school makes will be guided by its knowledge of the underlying reason.
13	Does J affect attendance?	The J code is a justified absence code. All J codes would decrease both daily attendance and termly regular attendance.
14	Does the J code require Principal approval?	The J code can only be used by a Principal for the exemption of no more than five days. The Principal can delegate this responsibility for single days but they are responsible under section 45 of the Act. Boards give principals delegation to use the correct codes, so it is a management decision rather than a governance decision. Refer to STAR guidance and the development of the Attendance Management plans for further information.

Changing codes

15	Can attendance codes be amended for attendance or absence in previous days, weeks or school terms?	Amendments of attendance codes can occur at any point in time. However, changes should be made as soon as possible and ideally within three school days. If you make changes for an earlier term, then you may request an amended EDM report. Any historical changes to attendance statistics will be reflected in later reports.
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Health schools

16	How do we treat Health School provision?	Health Schools are considered to be an Alternative Provision which is Ministry approved. Use A , which is a presence code (page 7 of the Guidance). The Health School should provide the school with the actual attendance/absence of the student on a regular basis, and the school should amend the A code accordingly. This also applies to Alternative Education.
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<p>17 If someone is absent as unwell for more than five days, how should we record this? Do they always need to be referred to the Health School? If they provide a medical certificate, can their M leave be extended?</p>	<p>If a student is unwell then M is used, and this can be extended. Admission or enrolment at a Health School can be made on application by parents/caregivers, health specialists, GPs and other health providers provided the application meets the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Parent/caregiver consent is required, as well as support from a medical practitioner specialising in the condition which is preventing the student from attending school.</p> <p>Current policy is that it is up to the school to state in its attendance policy whether, and at what point, a medical certificate would be required.</p>
<p>18 We have a medically frail student who can be absent for more than a few days. Do we still refer them to the Health School?</p>	<p>See advice above for Health School admissions or enrolments. You can also consider what support you are able to provide to these students and whether they are able to participate in on-line learning or other off-site programmes.</p> <p>Schools may also develop a Transition Attendance Plan (TAP) for these students.</p> <p>The aim should be whatever will maximise the student's opportunity for learning, progress and achievement. That will depend on the circumstances. Ideally, the student would be supported by both the health and education systems to get them back to regular attendance at school. If the student has a chronic health condition, then the Health School would be more appropriate.</p>

Full day / half day counts

<p>19 Can you explain how half days are calculated in terms of attendance?</p>	<p>Each half day is counted in blocks of 120 minutes.</p> <p>As long as a student has attended for at least 120 minutes in one day, that will count as a half day of attendance. If the student has attended for at least 240 minutes in one day, that will count as two half days.</p> <p>Most schools are timetabled for more than two blocks of 120 minutes, and students are required to attend for the full timetabled day, even though the half-day attendance is recorded as above.</p> <p>Both the school and the Ministry record all the time the student has been timetabled for the day and use that to calculate whether the student can be counted as present for one or two half days.</p>
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20	Our school runs a six-period day of 50 minutes per period. Does that mean we need to run five periods before we can close early for parent interviews as we won't be running two x two-hour sessions?	If your school has been open for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon, yes . And if your students have attended five x 50 minutes of classes, that will fulfil two half days of 120 minutes for each half day.
21	We have one 75 minute lesson followed by four 55 minute lessons – making 240 minutes before lesson 5 – is this a full day?	Your full day is the number of periods that you teach in each day, with students expected to attend all classes. The attendance of each student is calculated as two half days of 120 minutes. The times you have mentioned would fulfil two half days attendance for each student.
22	What afternoon code would you suggest for a child who is picked up every day at 2pm, when the teacher does the roll at 1.45pm and the child is marked as P ? What about children who are picked up early from school regularly - how should this be coded?	If the child has not fulfilled 120 minutes in the afternoon, then the code should be changed to being absent . Most primary schools' SMSs only allow one code to be used in the morning and one in the afternoon. It depends on the time they are collected early as to whether you change to an absence code. If no reason is provided, T is an option. The parent needs to be aware that their child is being recorded as absent each day if they are collected early.

Te Kura

23	For students who are applying / waiting for Te Kura, do we code them as NA ?	<p>Note that NA is a student type, not a code.</p> <p>If the student is still on your roll and not present, they should be marked as absent. If the reason given is "waiting for Te Kura", use E. If the student has been absent for 20 days, they should be unenrolled with an Attendance Service referral.</p> <p>These students are absent if they are making an application for Te Kura. If unsure speak to your local Education office.</p>
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24 Is Te Kura alternative education?
We have two students who are dual enrolled. Are they **A** or **Q**?

Full-time enrolment with Te Kura is not Alternative Education.

If the students are enrolled at your school but receiving tuition in some subjects from Te Kura, they are called 'dual registered' and are receiving 'dual tuition'. They cannot be enrolled in two schools at once.

Under Te Kura's Dual Tuition policy ([Dual Provider Partnership Agreement \(DPPA\) | Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu](#)) the school at which the student is enrolled retains all legislative accountabilities, including for attendance, while a student is registered for supplementary dual tuition from Te Kura. **Students registered with Te Kura must attend the school that they are enrolled in on a full-time basis.**

This means **Q** can only be used for these students in one specific circumstance:

- "Some learning may occur offsite where an ākonga is registered using the reintegration gateway where an agreement for learning/reintegration plan with Te Kura is required. This outlines how supervision will occur and how ākonga engagement will be measured." [[2025-DPPA.pdf](#)]

ORS students

25 If an ORS student leaves early (arranged with school) as they are unable to cope with a full day, what would the code be, as we are unable to use **J** for more than five days?

If these students are attending some of the day, **J could be used for the time they are not present. This would not be counted as five days as it is part-time only.**

Are these students engaged in other forms of learning while they are not at school, or attending other programmes? **Q** code could be applied to situations where the school is providing learning activities for the students, or they are attending programmes such as Riding for the Disabled.

26 As a Special School, where all our students are ORS funded, can we still only use **J** for five days in a row, or can we use it for a longer period?

If the Special School is receiving staffing and funding for the ORS student, then the school is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure the student attends regularly.

If the student cannot attend regularly the school should investigate the underlying reason and try to address that. Each case would be considered individually. Is there a medical or illness reason for the absence? Special School attendance is the same as other state and state-integrated schools. See the previous response to consider support for students if they are unable to attend. Another option would be Te Kura.

<p>27 ORS funded student - due to diagnosis of irregular sleep. Not at school due to lack of sleep. Should this be M or J? Also, the same with anxiety and subsequent school refusal or dysregulated and unable to attend?</p>	<p>It is the discretion of the school if M or J or E code is used. The bullet points under M cover mental health as well as illness. If it persists, there is an underlying issue that needs attention or escalation. It may be a health issue and they need medical support. If it is a parenting issue (e.g. parent cannot stop them being online late at night), they need appropriate help from parenting support. For an example of this see: Multi Systemic Therapy: Kelsey's story - Ka Puta Ka Ora Emerge Aotearoa.</p> <p>Attendance Services can also sometimes help with this (e.g. Palmerston North and Invercargill both have services that have helped parents having issues with teenagers). If school is not suitable for the student, then other options such as a Special School or Te Kura should be considered.</p>
<p>28 If a disabled student can only attend half a day - so present for the morning and then they go home for the afternoon - what is the best code to use?</p>	<p>As the school is receiving staffing and funding for this student, it is responsible for the student engaging in learning provided by the school in the afternoon or attending programmes such as Riding for the Disabled or similar. Q could be applied if this activity meets the criteria. J could be used only if the school states in its publicly available attendance policy that this is what it does for disabled students in such circumstances. It can only be for five days, however.</p>
<p>29 Specialist school all ORS funded students - parent unwell and unable to get student to school - what code should we use?</p>	<p>If the school approves of this reason, J is appropriate to use. As noted elsewhere, the use of J is limited. If this persists, the school should try to find a solution so that the student does not miss out on schooling – e.g. other transport.</p>

Study leave

<p>30 Our Year 13s have a line of study. Should we mark that as Q or leave it blank? Does this impact the attendance statistics?</p>	<p>If the line of study is on the timetable your SMS may require attendance to be recorded. If you leave it blank it may generate a ? code, which is temporary and counts as Absent if left unchanged.</p> <p>If the study is on-site and supervised, use V. If it is off-site, use X or remove the student from the timetable for that period.</p> <p>Use Q – board approved off-site learning - if the school's policy includes this reason.</p>
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Medical leave and / or appointments

<p>31 I've noticed that students can take a mental health day, which is coded M. However, at what point do we request a medical note if the number of mental health days increases or becomes a pattern?</p> <p>Does a mental health issue have to be medically diagnosed? Often parents say 'mental health' without any diagnosis.</p>	<p>Mental health is a bullet point in the code guidance but that does not imply students can take mental health days per se. Using M does not require a Medical Certificate, however schools may include this in their own Attendance Policy, with a threshold. The Ministry does not determine this.</p> <p>If a parent keeps telling the school the student is absent for mental health reasons, there is an underlying issue that needs to be addressed. Either the student needs medical help, or the parent needs support to help get the student to go to school (e.g. anxiety – for which the best solution may be getting them to work back towards regular attendance through a transition programme). If the school cannot resolve it, the student/parent can be referred to the Attendance Service. It doesn't matter if the student has no unjustified codes and all/mostly M.</p>
<p>32 If a student is away due to anxiety or mental health issues but this has not been diagnosed, just reported by parent - would you use M or E?</p>	<p>You may use M for a period of time, but this student would need a plan of support to enable them to return to school. If you use E this becomes unjustified absence. The parent needs to be aware of this decision.</p>
<p>33 Medical - how long is too long to allow the use of this with no medical documents/doctor's slip provided?</p>	<p>Whilst the code guidance indicates that a medical certificate is not required, a school board can decide to include a request of one in their attendance policy. This is an example where a student could also be referred to the Attendance Service as a chronically absent student.</p>
<p>34 Can a student stay on M for a term?</p>	<p>No. The school is required to take all reasonable steps to ensure the student attends. The school should take some sort of action after 10 school days of medical absence - if not sooner. A student who has been marked M for half a term and seems likely to continue, should be supported to another form of education – e.g. Te Kura or Health School – or unenrolled and referred to the Attendance Service.</p>

35 We have been asked to do a deep dive into our **M** coding – e.g. is it the child who is unwell, sick, or in hospital, or is it their parent or caregiver? Is there a code we can use for the family member unwell (as to why they are absent)?

M is specifically for a student who is unwell, however there is a note in the guidance under **M** (page 10) that covers mental health. This may be the reason why a student is absent if it is a parent or caregiver who is unwell.

Often a student is kept at home to be the caregiver - which is not **M**.

Ideally this would be recorded in the student's notes (either pastoral care or in the SMS attendance notes). This helps to inform next steps if the issue persists.

If the reason the student is not at school is because the family member is unwell, the student's needs should still be at the centre. How can the student be supported to get to school – e.g. can another family member, friend or neighbour pick them up and bring them? Otherwise, the student is being disadvantaged because of this one barrier which should be resolvable.

36 If a parent lets you know their child won't be at school because the parent is sick, that they are unable to get the child to school because of transport or parental health issues how should we record this?

The school needs to determine if they use **J** or **E**. The child may not have transport to get to school due to the parent being unwell.

If transport is the barrier, query if there are other sources of support such as MSD or the local Attendance Service. See previous answer.

37 We have been transparent about attendance codes with our school community, and some parents are now telling us their children are at doctor's appointments rather than sick. Can you explain the difference between **D** (present code) and **M** (absent code)?

D should only be used for part of a half day. The student arrives at school, leaves for an appointment and then returns. Or they notify they will arrive late because they have a doctor's appointment. **D** counts as present, so should only be used if the student was absent for part of the morning or afternoon. If they are absent for 120 minutes or more over the course of the day, then mark them as a half day **M** or **J**.

Half day **M** is when they are absent more than 120 minutes. If absent more than 240 minutes, then two half days **M** or **J**.

38 If they have a dentist appt at 10am but they don't return to school, is this **D** for all day, or **D** in the morning and **M** for afternoon?

If a parent collects their child for a dentist appointment during the day and then does not bring them back, should we use **E**?

If a student leaves for doctor/dentist/medical appointment early in the day and the parent advises will not be returning, or the parent advises will be away for the whole day at appointments, what code is used as **D** records as present.

D should only be used for part of the day, so using **M** for the afternoon could be an option. It also depends on whether you have been notified. If not, it could be **E** – or even **T** for Truant.

If the student was at school in the morning before going to the appointment, **D** could be used, but then **E** for the rest of the day is appropriate.

39 If a child has a doctor's appointment and we mark them with a **D** and then they turn up at 11am, do we change the attendance to **L**?

Leave as **D**. **D** and **L** are both present codes. Travel time may need to be considered. But if the appointment and travel time take longer than 120 minutes then count it as **M**.

This is not a judgement on the student or parent, it is simply to record that the student missed a half day of learning so cannot be marked **D** which counts as present.

40 If travel requirements mean a student is absent for an entire day to attend a medical appointment, how should we code this?

This needs to be **M** as the student is absent all day even though it is for an appointment.

41 What is the code for recuperating after an operation?

This is a medical reason so use **M**. If the student can engage in on-line learning prior to returning to school, then **Q** (if it is structured and the teacher is available for questions and checks in on them regularly) could be considered for some of this recuperation time.

42	Does D need to be backed up by some medical note or the appointment note to justify the absence	A school may ask for this evidence in their attendance policy and / or procedures for attendance at appointments. At least, the parent should have notified the school in advance of the start and expected end time of the appointment and the associated travel time. Just as you would for your own employer.
43	We only use D code for doctor/dentist/counsellor etc. If parents ring and they don't specify what for, we use E . Is this correct?	Your school attendance procedures should indicate that a reason for absence needs to be provided. This would allow you to use the appropriate code for absence.
44	We have a student whose parent has a serious health condition. We received a medical certificate from the parent's doctor asking us to allow the student to be absent to be the caregiver. How do we mark attendance?	This is a challenging situation. Supporting the student with an on-line programme would be one suggestion and then C could be used. M does not cover being a caregiver so it would need to be J for five days if the school approves, then E. Importantly, this is not acceptable unless alternative arrangements are made that fully meet the student's education needs. The doctor has no right or authority to ask this. The student cannot be caregiver and be engaged in schooling. We also want to avoid the student leaving school early to do this. If the parent has no one other than their child to be caregiver, it is the responsibility of other agencies to provide caregiver support. Use E if this situation can't be resolved, and refer to Attendance Service to engage the agencies if school can't resolve it earlier (much preferable).
45	Please clarify the coding used for students off site for dance/speech/drama exams, and those attending cultural events supporting their whānau, but not actually involved themselves.	You can use J, with discretion (i.e. only occasionally), but you should also consider whether these examinations cannot be scheduled outside of school hours. The school has the discretion to apply D for an approved external appointment, otherwise should be J . D is present, so should be used sparingly and only for very short absences.
46	If appointments are an hour's drive away (in town), and the student's family advise they are not returning after the appointment because they have other tasks to complete while in town, should we mark part day as D and the rest J ?	Use D for the time of the appointment and travel time, E for the rest of the time they are absent.

47	Is Riding for Disabled a D code, even if not in IEP?	No. Your school could apply Q under section 52 of the Act if this is deemed to be tuition outside of school, if it is not parent-funded.
48	The attendance guidance says non approved extra-curricular activities and hobbies are E , but you've said dance exams would be J . Can you clarify? We used to mark dance exams J and then changed it as after reading the advice, thought it should be E .	<p>It is at the discretion of each school to decide if it is approved or not approved.</p> <p>In the webinar there was a conversation about appointments that are unable to be scheduled outside of school hours. D was suggested – or J – rather than E, although some schools do use E. There is a difference between exams, and tuition during school hours.</p> <p>It's not D for the latter. This is for short absences for short appointments where the student is mostly present for the half day. Otherwise, it's J or E.</p>

Oranga Tamariki queries

49	How should we record OT referrals and those students that are awaiting to be accepted at Te Hikoi?	These students must remain on your school roll. In the best interest of each student, it would be good if they continue to attend each day, or have an on-line programme that is monitored. In the latter case it is Q. Otherwise J or E.
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Unique circumstances

50	How do you code Emergency Housing? Family is no longer living in the area and unable to make it to school. It's more than five days, it can be weeks, months.	These children need to be at school. They either need transport to their current school or enrol in a new school. There is the risk of relocating again so keeping them at the same school is in their best interest. Consider funding from MSD, Kaianga Ora, or the Attendance Service. The school is required to un-enrol these students if they have not attended for 20 days.
51	What if a student can't attend school in New Zealand because of Visa issues, but is attending school online with their country of origin?	<p>If a student is not attending your school for tuition, then they must be withdrawn from the roll, including in ENROL.</p> <p>Principals do have the discretion to allow an international student to continue to attend for tuition for no more than 28 days while visa issues are resolved – please refer to the 28 day-waiver information available here: Education Circular 2020/08 - Ministry of Education.</p> <p>Because individual circumstances can vary considerably, we recommend you contact your local Ministry of Education office for advice and support with queries of this nature.</p>

52 Sometimes we have students being picked up early due to bad weather, what code should we use for that?

If it is a secondary school, **J** could be used. If the student has attended two half days of 120 minutes, then the early departure will not impact on attendance.

If a primary school, it depends on the time, as the code would change for the entire afternoon and become a half day absence. The student is not present.

This is likely to happen rarely, so **J** won't impact significantly on student's overall attendance rate. If it happens regularly, there is something that needs addressing.

53 Would a child be marked **L** or **E** if they turn up at 12pm due to a parent struggling to get child to school due to child's neurodiversity?

L for a full morning is not appropriate. It would be a school decision whether this is **J** or **E**. If it happens regularly, it needs addressing as a health or parenting issue or referral to Attendance Service.

One-Day Schools and programmes

54 Are students who attend a private tutoring service coded the same as 'day school/forest school/nature school'?

How should 'one day school' be marked (e.g. if they go to an alternative school for one day per week)?

Day Schools are either **E** - explained but not approved, or **C** - board approved offsite learning, as covered in section 53 of the Act.

Representative / sports leave

55 If a student is representing at a National or International sporting level, can they be marked as **J** if approved by the school, or should it be **E**?

This is at the discretion of the school as the Ministry does not determine this early departure. Both codes are absence so have the same effect on a school's daily and termly attendance.

56 What is considered to be national or representative level? Parents want us to mark students as **J** for leaving early for training, and we've so far marked as **E**. Is this correct?

This is at the discretion of the school as the Ministry does not determine this early departure. Both codes are absence so have the same effect on a school's daily and termly attendance.

Board approved off site learning

57	What is deemed board approved off site learning (e.g. if student is visiting university as part of transition to next steps)?	One of the points in the guidance under Q (page 8) includes visits and orientation activities. This should only be for a limited number of individual days – e.g. not for a week at a time. Otherwise, E .
58	Can we use Q for driving tests, because students can get NZQA credits for this?	Yes, that is appropriate as part of your school programme.
59	If a student has a driving test (we don't know the time), and they are away all day, should we use Q or E ?	If you want to use the Q as indicated above, the school could ask for evidence of the appointment and time frame. If you do not have this evidence and the student does not attend at all on that day, then E is appropriate.
60	We are a Special School - up to 21 years. Can we use Q for Work Experience?	See the guidance section for Q (page 8) where it lists work experience as another learning experience (section 53 of the Act is primarily intended for work experience).
61	Do board approved cultural and sporting events have to be individually approved at a board level, or can the Principal make this decision on behalf of the board?	There should be an over-arching attendance policy statement and minuted board decision about the use of L , Q , J and E codes, that give the Principal the delegation to apply the code.
62	If a whole class or year group is off-site on a school trip for the day, is this coded as Q ? Is this the same for a sporting team participating in interschool sport for the day - Q as they are off-site?	Yes, it is the same. The code guidance includes this example related to the use of Q (page 8).

63	How should we code activities such as parent-funded swimming lessons or ballet lessons during school time?	If these are standard lessons, then you need to verify why they cannot occur outside of school hours. If these activities form part of an IEP for some students, then Q could be applied.
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64	I have a student whose family want him to have time off school (several times and each time a few days duration) to take part in different sports competitions (being held a significant distance away). Which attendance code do I use?	Refer to the Guidance about J (page 11). Your school needs to determine whether this is explained and approved (J), or explained and not approved (E). Both are absence codes.
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Overseas exchange

65	How do we code a student that goes on an exchange during the year for ten weeks?	Refer to page 6 of the guidance. Student type changes to NA and no attendance or code should be recorded. The student should be removed from the timetable for the time they are on exchange. This will ensure your daily and termly attendance data are not affected.
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Orientation/transition

66	Which code for a student who has a transition to school plan developed with whānau and Learning Support (i.e. they leave school at 1:30pm each day for a set period of time)?	There are two types of transition plans – Graduated to School plans for those beginning school as a new entrant, and TAPs – Transition Attendance Plans. The guidance indicates using J – Explained and approved. Schools are also encouraged to consider support for these students. What are they doing when they are home? Is there any on-going learning programme or activity they are attending that is part of their IEP?
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Truancy

- 67 Student is absent without explanation or permission from a parent / caregiver, e.g. skipping class. We have communicated with parents via text, letter, phone call (no pick up) and online messaging through school systems. What code do you use for truant, refusal to give reason following more than one attempt at contact?

Continue to use **T** – Truant, if you do not have a reason.

Also consider a threshold, if this is on-going, for when these unexplained absences should generate an Attendance Service referral, especially if your school has tried everything possible to return the student to school.

SMS issues

- 68 Our SMS doesn't seem to have the **NA** code – can you explain?

NA is not a code but a student type. Look for a drop-down box on your SMS for Student Type – then look for **NA** – not attending option. Students usually have a student type of **RE**.

- 69 Can you retrospectively change student type to **NA**, even if they have since returned?

NA is not a short-term remedy. It should be used for excluded students, those on exchange overseas and students who are absent for longer than 15 weeks. You can amend retrospectively, which will update your attendance data reports that your SMS generates.

Other

- 70 Can school policy include that if a student is late due to late running of SESTA transport (out of student/whanau control) it is coded as **J** rather than **L**?

If a student is late and this is out of their control, then use of **L** code is appropriate. This is a presence code whereas **J** is an absence code.

- 71 For students older than 16 (or Specialist School students up to 21yrs), what pressure is there around attendance and codes?

When a school is open, and a student (regardless of age) is enrolled as a full-time student, it would be expected they attend all classes in their timetable.

72	Guidance counsellor has asked if N is sufficient or are they required to put back to class time? There are concerns around confidentiality.	N is the correct code in this situation. No time frame is required. This is an onsite appointment. No students can see these attendance codes. If the guidance counsellor has concerns that any of the staff who have access to the attendance codes might share this information inappropriately, they should raise it with the principal and ask for those staff to have their access blocked, or for the principal's assurance of their integrity.
73	Noting that both schools and ākonga/whānau are key to making this work well, what are some best practice examples you've seen in schools that have helped educate ākonga/whānau on the expectations and consequences of their attendance activity?	There are some links on the website to support whānau, including advice from ERO. Many schools have an attendance communication plan that covers what information is conveyed to boards, staff, student and whānau – when and how. Schools can also include information for parents about the expectations and consequences of their child's attendance activity in their enrolment pack and initial conversations when their child starts school.
74	What code do we use if a student is absent due to taking on extra work shifts that is not approved through the school or careers advisor?	Employers are not permitted to employ students during school hours, unless the student is over the age of 16 and is classified as a part time student. Use E and if the absence persists, it should be addressed with the student or referred to Attendance Services.
75	When a student is late, does the timetable classroom teacher adjust a ? to L ? Or should the attendance administrator change this ? to L later in the day?	This may be different for each school. A primary school teacher should amend to L . If a secondary student signs in at the office, the administrator could amend the code.
76	Is documentation needed from a provider (e.g. Riding for the Disabled) to support a student riding in school time? Does it need to be written into the IEP?	This can be considered similar to EOTC. If there is an outside provider, there needs to be RAMs forms and / or an MOU between the school and the provider.

77	Where can we find out if a provider is Ministry Approved Alternative Education provider?	Information can be found here on the Ministry's website: Alternative Education - Ministry of Education . Also consider Activity Centres, Teen Parent Units, Regional Health Schools and Secondary / Tertiary programmes.
78	If the Ministry's Learning Support team and the school build a private provider into a special needs plan (e.g. e Kahu Tōi Intensive Wraparound Service), can Q be used (assuming the board has not specifically already approved it)? Or would it be best to get an approval from the board for all MOE/RTLB planned interventions put in place that use private providers?	If this is part of a plan generated by the Learning Support team and the school, use of Q is appropriate. The board should have an over-arching statement that delegates responsibility to the principal. This can only be approved if parents are not expected to pay fees.
79	If students are going on a school trip leaving at 9.30am but present at school first, do we use P or Q ?	If they are in their usual class, use P . If they are on-site preparing to depart on the school trip, then N is appropriate. Q covers the school trip as soon as it becomes off-site learning.
80	Does justified absence get added to overall weekly percentages as present?	No. Both Justified and Unjustified absence are deemed to be absent and contribute toward the calculations of daily and termly attendance data. Regular attendance is calculated from the presence codes. The fewer presence codes you have the lower your attendance rate will be. Justified absence reduces a student's attendance rate in exactly the same way as unjustified absence does.
81	If a student is suspended (U), when would you change their student type to NA ?	Change to the NA student type from the day following the board suspension meeting where they make the decision to exclude the student.

82 Are there official times the roll must be taken?

For secondary schools it is for each class.

For primary schools it is morning and afternoon, but up to each school to determine a time.

For Health and Safety reasons the roll should be taken as early as practicable in each session of primary school, in case a child has goes missing on the way to school or at lunchtime.

83 If a child goes home sick one day and is not at school the next day, is it ok to assume they are sick?

Parents should notify the school each day their child is not attending school, and provide a reason. Each school should have readily accessible procedures to cover this.

A parent can indicate that their child may be absent for longer than one day due to the illness, however, as with a workplace, it is expected that parents let the school know each day that the child continues to be ill.



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