



Attendance Code Decision Tree

What's changing in 2027

The following changes will take effect from Term One 2027

- 1 **J code** (justified) has been removed and replaced by four new *Absences with an exemption* codes (**1-4**). The existing **M code** for medical absence is now grouped under *Absence with an exemption*, supported with updated guidance.
- 2 **D code** (approved external appointment) has been removed. Medical and dental appointments will use the **M code**. Other appointments will be covered by the exceptional circumstances exemption **4**, or **Q** (board approved off-site learning) if a principal is applying the appointment under section 52 of the [Education and Training Act \(2020\)](#).
- 3 **F code** (organised home learning) has been reinstated and will be for students with a structured home learning programme.
- 4 **X code** (exam leave) has been removed. Previously this was an absence code. Schools will now apply the **F code** (organised home learning) or the **V code** (study or school exam on site). Schools will not be able to remove students off the timetable during the exam period.
- 5 Attendance code sub-groups renamed:

From **'Justified'** to **'Absences with an exemption'** (exempt)

From **'Unjustified'** to **'Absences without an exemption'** (not exempt)

SMS and Ministry reporting will adopt this terminology moving forward.

Attendance Codes – 2027

Presence Codes

Present on-site

- P** Present
- L** Late to class
- V** Study or school exam on-site
- N** Present but out of class

Present but off-site

- A** Alternative provision
- Q** Board approved off-site learning
- F** Organised home learning

Absence Codes

Absences with an exemption (exempt)

- M** Medical absence
- 1** Bereavement
- 2** Cultural or religious
- 3** Recognised event
- 4** Exceptional circumstances
- U** Stood down or suspended

Absences without an exemption (not exempt)

- T** Truant
- E** Explained but not approved
- G** Holidays in term time
- ?** Unknown

Descriptions

Present for ½ day calculations

Present on-site

P Present

Student is present in class. This includes dual tuition with Te Kura.

L Late to class

Student is late to class. Individual schools set the threshold for lateness in their school policy.

V Study or school exam on-site

Student is on-site in a study class or present in an examination.

N Present but out of class

Student is present but out of class, for example due to an on-site school activity (cultural or sporting event), internal appointment, temporary removal from class, or time in the sickbay.

Present off-site

A Alternative provision

Student is present in a Ministry-approved alternative provision, such as a teen parent unit, alternative education programme, secondary-tertiary programme, health school or activity centre.

Q Board approved off-site learning

Student is present in board-approved off-site learning, including courses, school-organised trips and activities, and work experience.

F Organised home learning

Student is participating in organised home learning due to an emergency situation, exam revision, or circumstances that prevent them from attending school.

Absences

Absences with an exemption (exempt)

M Medical absence

Student is unable to attend school because of illness or medical reasons, including injury or mental health reasons. This includes where an immediate family member's illness or injury affects the student's ability to attend school.

1 Bereavement

Student is affected by the death of an immediate family member or someone closely associated with the student or their family. This may include time required to attend a tangihanga, funeral, memorial or other bereavement-related activities.

2 Cultural or religious

Student is connected to a cultural or religious commitment that is an important part of their cultural identity, including religious observance or participation in a significant cultural or religious event.

3 Recognised event

Student is participating in a recognised provincial, national or international event.

4 Exceptional circumstances

Student is unable to attend school due to a legitimate reason that does not fit another exemption reason.

U Stood down or suspended

Student is absent due to formal stand down or suspension. This code applies to the period of the stand down or suspension, excluding the day it was imposed.

Absences without an exemption (Not exempt)

T **Truant**

Student is absent without explanation or permission from a parent / caregiver. This includes a single class or an entire day of school.

E **Explained but not approved**

Student is absent, and the reason provided does not meet the school's criteria for an approved absence. This includes absence at non-approved one-day programmes or activities such as birthday celebrations.

G **Holiday during term time**

Student is absent due to a holiday taken in New Zealand or overseas.

? **Unknown reason (temporary code)**

Student is absent and the reason is initially unknown. This is a temporary code that should be updated within a week of the absence.