

ST EUPHEMIA COLLEGE



Student Leave For Travel Policy

Status	APPROVED by Executive
Date of Approval	21 January 2025
Owner	Principal
Contact	Director of Primary/Director of Secondary
Review Cycle	Two years
Date for Review	21 January 2027

Introduction and Purpose

St Euphemia College values regular student attendance as critical to ensuring academic, social and personal growth. While students are expected to attend school every day during term time, the College recognises there may be instances where leave from school is necessary. From 2015, under changes to the legislation, **any family holiday taken during term time will be counted as** absence unless there are exceptional unavoidable circumstances as defined by the criteria below:

- Funeral of a close family member e.g. grandparent, parent, sibling
- Religious ceremony such as rites of initiation or wedding of an immediate family member e.g. grandparent, parent, sibling
- Travel associated with elite sport, State or Federal representation, or extension programs.

Students at the College already enjoy generous holiday periods throughout the year. However, the College also recognises that there are circumstances where it may be necessary for parents to request time away from school (leave) for their children. The following outlines the process for applying for, and providing evidence of, Leave/Exemption.

Key Principles

1. Parents may request leave for their child of **up to SEVEN school days**. Approved leave greater than this amount would only be granted in the rarest of circumstances.
2. Where requests for leave for these periods are made for family travel, families should demonstrate some cultural or family significance for such leave. Leave requests for general holidays should not be made. All absences from the College for leave for travel will be marked on attendance registers as Code 'L' and will be counted in attendance statistics.
3. Parents who do not work with the College according to the details contained in this policy may have unapproved leave recorded as unjustified by the College and may place their child's ongoing enrolment at the College in question.
4. Parents should not ordinarily request leave or an exemption from attendance for their child where it conflicts with major College events (e.g. Assessment Blocks, whole College Divine Liturgies, Speech Day, Greek Independence Day, sports carnival or other significant events). Parents are encouraged to consult the College Calendar or seek advice from their child's Year Advisor or Dean prior to making travel arrangements.
5. If Leave/Exemption has not been granted, and a student misses an Assessment Task, a mark of zero will be recorded. Missing Assessment Tasks in Stage 6 poses a significant risk to satisfy NESA course requirements.

Procedures for Extended Leave

- ◆ Requests for leave for a period of up to **one or two days** should be directed in writing to the Director of Primary School or the relevant Year Advisor.
- ◆ Requests for leave **greater than two days** should be directed in writing to the Deputy Principal, accompanied by the *Application for Extended Leave - Travel*.
- ◆ Requests for leave for travel should in normal circumstances be made **at least FIVE weeks** in advance. The College reserves the right to decline requests made under this time frame.
- ◆ The Deputy Principal will liaise with key members of staff prior to finalising the application. When processing the application for leave request, the following will be taken into consideration:
 - the student's overall attendance rate,
 - previous periods of leave,
 - potential impact on learning and assessments,
 - behaviour record,
 - the family's financial status at the College.
- ◆ The College reserves the right to decline Applications for Leave or Exemption from Attendance. The Principal, when necessary, will make direct decisions in relation to student leave or exemptions and has the final decision in relation to all student leave or exemption from attendance matters.
- ◆ If leave is approved, a *Certificate of Extended Leave* will be issued and emailed to parents. Parents will also be notified by email if leave is not approved.
- ◆ A separate *Certificate of Extended Leave* will be issued for each child.
- ◆ A copy of all Leave documents will be kept in a student's file. The copy of the *Certificate of Extended Leave* is to be kept by parents in case it is requested by border control or other authorities (Department of Home Affairs, Police, Home School Liaison Officers).

Procedures for Exemptions

An application for a *Certificate of Exemption* is required for all non-holiday related requests for Leave. These include:

- exceptional domestic circumstances,
- other exceptional circumstances – for example, a specialist appointment that cannot be made at any other time,
- direction under Section 42D of the Public Health Act, 1991
- participation in elite sports or elite arts programs,
- employment in the entertainment industry
- school representation in a sporting, cultural or educational event.

Parents need to submit an **Application for Exemption from Attendance at School** form to the Deputy Principal for approval at least 2 weeks prior to the requested Exemption period. If the reason for requesting an exemption is in keeping with the requirements under the Education Act and considered to be in the student's best academic interests, the Deputy Principal (after consultation with key staff) will accept the request and an Exemption will be granted and the absence will be recorded as 'L' (Leave/Absence). If the request for an Exemption or Leave is declined and the student is absent, it will be recorded as 'A' (Unexplained or Explained but Unjustified Absence).

The *Application for Extended Leave – Travel and Exemption from Attendance* can be found on the College's website.