

Attendance Policy

IES Vienna requires attendance at all class sessions, including course-related trips, internship meetings, rehearsals, and all tests and exams. Attendance will be taken every class. Students must attend at least 60% of their class sessions to qualify for a passing grade, regardless of whether their absences have been excused or not. Your attendance is required in-person unless otherwise noted in the syllabus or with explicit written permission from the Academic Dean.

Under certain circumstances, students are allowed unpenalized, unexcused absences. These may be used at the student's discretion, but they are primarily intended for absences related to physical or mental health.

Students are highly encouraged to communicate absences as soon as possible, to their professors and for excused absences using the processes described below. Absences will only be excused under the direction of the academic department, though professors should be informed of the absences by the student in all cases as soon as possible.

ABSENCES AND THEIR PENALTIES

Excused Absences:

Pending approval of the academics department, excused absences are permitted due to 1) illness or other health related issues; 2) observance of a recognized religious holiday; 3) grave incident affecting family members or 4) conflicting academic commitments. Documentation must be provided in a timely manner as outlined.

Unexcused Absences:

All other absences constitute unexcused absences. Unexcused absences may carry a penalty to the final grade. Absences due to travel or travel complications will not be excused. Traveling before midterms and exams is therefore highly discouraged.

Only excused absences entitle students to make up assignments, tests, quizzes, and exams. Excessive unexcused absences will lead to an Academic or Administrative Review.

The Regular Semester

The following rules pertain to any class sessions following the regular semester schedule, specifically the fall and spring terms. Class sessions that meet in an intensive format will be covered in a separate section.

Penalties for Unexcused Absences:

Students may miss up to a week's worth of regular semester classes (one tenth of the regularly planned meetings) unexcused without penalty.

For each missed class session for which a student is penalized, the final grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade (for example, A- to B+, B+ to B, etc.). Longer class meetings may count as multiple sessions, leading to higher grade reductions.

Class Credit	Meeting Frequency	How many regular semester class meetings can be missed unexcused before penalties	Penalty for each additional unexcused absence (in letter grades)
2 Credits	Once a week (time varies)	1	1/3
3 Credits	Once a week (3h15m)	1	2/3
3 Credits	Twice a week (1h30m each)	2	1/3
4 Credits (German)	Three times a week (1h15m each)	3	1/3
4 Credit	Varies	Varies	1/3 for every 1h30m missed
Internships (credits vary)	Once a week for class	1	1/3 (further penalties may apply for missed work time, see internship policies)

We hope this chart is helpful, but it is not meant to be all-encompassing. You may come across a situation that deviates from these examples. Please seek clarification before making any decision that may affect your ability to attend class.

Minimum Participation:

Students must attend at least 60% of their class sessions in the regular semester to qualify for a passing grade, regardless of whether their absences have been excused or not. Failure to attend at least 60% of a course's class sessions will result in a failing grade for the class (F).

Intensive Periods

Courses or designated portions of courses may be held in an intensive format, most often meeting at least four times a week for longer class sessions. The following rules pertain to any class sessions using an intensive structure.

Penalties for Unexcused Absences:

Students may miss up to one session unexcused for every ten sessions planned, without penalty. Only excused absences entitle students to make up assignments, tests, quizzes, and exams.

For each missed class session for which a student is penalized, the final grade will be reduced by two-thirds of a letter grade (for example, A- to B, B+ to B-, etc.). Penalties are adjusted based on the length of the class session.

Minimum Participation:

Students must attend at least 60% of their class sessions in the intensive period to qualify for a passing grade for the course, regardless of whether their absences have been excused or not. Failure to attend at least 60% of a course's class sessions will result in a failing grade for the class (F).

Exceptions to the 60% minimum participation rule may be considered by the academic department in consultation with the corresponding department head or the Academic Dean. Exceptions will only apply to the intensive portion of courses.

Special Class Sessions

Exams:

Midterms, finals, and other designated exams are mandatory class sessions. An unexcused absence from an exam period prohibits students from retaking the missed exam. Students will therefore receive a failing grade (F) on the exam.

At the professor's discretion, students may be admitted late to an exam if no other student has yet left the exam room. Students not allowed into the exam will receive a failing grade (F) on the exam.

Attendance will be recorded at exams but penalties for an unexcused absences from the exam will not be applied directly to the course's final grade.

Absences from exams due to unforeseen travel circumstances or any other travel-related issues will not be considered as extenuating circumstances.

Course-Related Trips:

Some classes may plan mandatory trips outside of regular class hours, even on Fridays and Saturdays. Attendance on trips held outside regular class hours is mandatory. Students will be made aware of the specific dates of such trips by the end of the first week of class. Missing a mandatory course-related trip held outside of regularly scheduled weekly meetings will automatically reduce the final grade by a third of a letter grade.

Program Trips:

Program trips are mandatory. A trip may be made mandatory for a program or a similar segment of the student body.

DOCUMENTATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences due to Illness

What to do:

Fill out the excused absence request form either on the app or at <https://guide.iesvienna.org/absence/>. You must upload one of the following documents within two weeks of your absence—but no later than the day before the end of the program—using the form for your request to be considered.

Acceptable Forms of Documentation:

- **A Note from a medical professional:** This note must include a start and end date for your medical leave. Ask for this note excusing you from class while at the doctor or with any other appropriate medical professional. Make sure that a date range is included on the note before leaving their office.
- **A *Zeitbestätigung* for an important appointment:** If you are not sick but must miss class for an important appointment with a medical professional, please ask for a *Zeitbestätigung*. This is a note that confirms that you were at the appointment, and when it took place.
- **PCR Test:** A positive PCR test may be submitted instead of a doctor's note.

You do not have to explain the reason for your absence as long as your doctor's note states the time period for which you are exempt from class.

Notes from medical professionals must come from a healthcare provider located in Austria that you saw in-person (excluding PCR tests). Notes from non-Austrian healthcare providers are accepted at the discretion of the IES Vienna academics or health and safety departments. Exceptions are generally only made during emergency situations while students are traveling outside Austria. We may require students in this situation to follow up with a medical professional in Austria upon their return.

For questions and/or support with chronic conditions, please contact the Health and Safety Coordinator, Maeve Plunkett.

Contacts:

- Benjamin Wyatt, Academic Advising and Information Specialist: questions about absence policy
 - bwyatt@iesabroad.org
- Maeve Plunkett, Health and Safety Coordinator: questions about finding healthcare professionals
 - mplunkett@iesabroad.org

Absences Due to Religious Holidays, Family Incident, or Conflicting Academic Commitments

What to do:

Email Benjamin Wyatt at bwyatt@iesabroad.org. Include the following based on your reason:

- **Recognized religious holiday:** Please list any religious holidays you plan to observe in writing by the end of the first week of the semester.
- **Grave family incident:** Submit a note from the attending doctor or comparable documentation of incident.
- **Conflicting academic commitments:** You must petition the Assistant Dean of Academics, Jennifer Ebner-Daigle (jdaigle1@iesabroad.org). Write her an explanation stating the conflict and why your choice of action represents the best alternative under the circumstances. Only with explicit written permission is the excused absence granted.