

Royal Ontario Academy (ROA) offers flexible asynchronous learning. Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, attendance and participation are also a formal, graded component of every course, in keeping with the Ontario Ministry of Education's Grade 9-12 assessment and evaluation requirements. This policy explains how attendance is defined, tracked, and graded, and what happens when a student stops engaging.

Attendance and Participation as Part of the Final Mark

Attendance and participation count toward every student's final mark: 15% of the mark in Grade 9 and 10 courses, and 10% of the mark in Grade 11 and 12 courses. This weighting is fixed by the Ministry and applies to every course.

Definition of Attendance in an Asynchronous Course

Attendance is demonstrated through regular engagement, not physical presence. ROA measures engagement on a weekly basis and looks at engagement across a student's whole program rather than course by course, so a student active in any of their ROA studies during a given week is considered present for that week. Course load and pace are never penalized, whether a student is full-time or part-time, or taking one course or several at once.

Weekly Engagement Expectation

Students are expected to be active in their studies at least once every seven days during the active phase of a course, and to show genuine course activity such as progressing through lessons, submitting work, completing tasks, attempting assessments, taking part in required check-ins, responding to feedback, or communicating with the school. A login with no activity does not count as engagement.

How Attendance and Participation Are Assessed

Attendance reflects consistent weekly engagement across a student's program, and participation reflects the quality of that engagement within each course. The seven-day engagement window is ROA's equivalent of the Ministry's measure of classes missed. Both attendance and participation are assessed using the Ministry's mark ranges: Level 4 (80 to 100%), Level 3 (70 to 79%), Level 2 (60 to 69%), Level 1 (50 to 59%), and Below Level 1 (under 50%).

Attendance is based on the number of seven-day windows missed without an excused reason: 0 to 1 missed windows is Level 4, 2 missed is Level 3, 3 missed is Level 2, 4 missed is Level 1, and 5 or more missed is Below Level 1.

Participation is assessed on: completing graded and ungraded activities while moving through the course (interactive tasks, reflections, quizzes, assignments, and the learning log); contributing helpful, respectful posts and feedback in discussions; taking part in optional school activities when offered; responding when a teacher or the school reaches out; and using feedback to improve work on rewrites and going forward. Each is rated from Consistently (Level 4) down to Does Not (Below Level 1).

The teacher considers the participation criteria together with the tally of unexcused attendance windows to determine the level and mark. The mark is reported twice: at the midterm, reflecting engagement to that point, and at the final, reflecting engagement across the whole course. A student who begins slowly and then engages consistently is assessed on that improvement.

Tracking

ROA monitors engagement through course access and last-access records, activity and assignment completion, participation in required discussions and check-ins, progress through learning activities, and the student's Learning Log. Course progress percentage alone is not used to measure attendance, since it reflects pace rather than presence.

Learning Log

Students complete a Learning Log on an ongoing basis, adding a dated entry each time they complete a unit or a work session, recording the unit, brief notes, and the hours spent. The log captures effort completed offline as well as online, is reviewed at both the midterm and the final, and informs the attendance and participation mark for each reporting period. Entries should be made as the student progresses rather than reconstructed later.

Excused Absences and Approved Interruptions

Approved reasons include illness and other unavoidable circumstances, a family emergency, a technical difficulty, inclement weather, cultural or holy days, and other reasons approved by the Principal, consistent with Ontario's enrolment register instructions. Students should notify the school in advance where possible, and as soon as possible for unforeseen absences, providing documentation if requested.

Students with an IEP

Where a student has an Individual Education Plan or an approved accommodation, the accommodation is applied first and the student is assessed against their accommodated expectations.

Non-Engagement and Re-Engagement

This process applies where a student stops logging in or progressing in a course and has not contacted the Principal to request an excused absence. Every step assumes a student who is not responding and has not had an absence approved. The aim is always to re-engage the student, and any restriction on access is temporary and lifted once a re-engagement plan is in place.

1. At seven days of inactivity, an absence is recorded and the school follows up directly with the student.
2. If the student does not respond within 72 hours of that follow-up, the Principal emails the parent or guardian, where the student is under 18.
3. If the student still does not respond or return to the course by the third week, their online access is temporarily disabled until they arrange a virtual meeting with the Principal to set a re-engagement plan.

Once the student meets with the Principal and a re-engagement plan with clear timelines is in place, online access is restored and the student is supported in getting back on track. Separately, each week of unexcused, unresponsive absence is recorded as an absence and counts toward the student's attendance and participation grade, in line with the levels set out above.

Student Supports

ROA offers tutoring and academic support, technical support for platform access, and academic guidance for time management and study strategies. See the Tutoring and Academic Support Policy for details.

This policy is reviewed periodically to ensure clarity, fairness, and alignment with Ontario Ministry of Education requirements and ROA operational needs, and is updated as needed. Final decisions on interpretation and application rest with the Principal. Questions may be directed to Royal Ontario Academy at info@royalontarioacademy.com. Last updated July 2026.