



1. Rationale

- 1.1 The requirement for the participant to complete all learning requirements of an Australian Rural Leadership Foundation (ARLF) leadership program is emphasised during the selection and acceptance process and is specifically set out in the Contract/ Acceptance of Offer signed by the participant upon accepting a place.
- 1.2 Due to the financial investment by and for each participant, and the importance of each session to the overall educational process, attendance in all learning opportunities is mandatory. Full attendance and active participation in this program directly relate to the value of the experience for all participants. Participants are selected not only for their own abilities and strengths, but for their contribution to the diversity of the group. ARLF leadership development programs are experiential, designed to rapidly build trust in cohorts of participants and explore diverse perspectives. As such an absence can compromise this experience for an individual participant and entire cohorts.
- 1.3 Where scholarships are an aspect of joining an ARLF Program, the generosity of sponsors and donors who believe in the value of investing in leadership for rural Australia makes this program possible. Sustained absence in the program compromises the participant's and the ARLF's relationship with the sponsor and can place funding at risk.

2. Definitions

ARLF	Australian Rural Leadership Foundation
Program	A leadership program of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation
Sponsor or donor	An individual or organisation that provides a scholarship to support a participant to undertake the Program
CE	Chief Executive

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 Attendance for all stipulated days is compulsory for all participants.
- 3.2 Non-attendance may force a re-evaluation of the participant's place on the program.

- 3.3 Participants are required to arrive on time for planned learning and to stay until the completion to avoid disruption to other participants and others.
- 3.4 Non-attendance, tardiness and early departures that result in expenses incurred by the ARLF on the participant's behalf will be billed to the participant.
- 3.5 Failure to attend without a valid reason may lead to termination from the Program.
 - 3.5.1 Regardless of the reason, if stipulated learning is missed, the participant is required to discuss with the Manager, Learning.
 - 3.5.2 The Manager Learning is responsible for managing participant attendance.
 - 3.5.3 All decisions will be made in consultation with a delegate of the Partnerships team and may include the scholarship sponsor or funding partner.
 - 3.5.4 In the event, a resolution is not reached with the Manager Learning, the Director Learning will decide. Depending on the circumstances, the participant's place on a program may be terminated.
- 3.6 In the event of an extreme and unforeseen family or work-related emergency, the participant may gain permission to miss the session and be eligible to complete a make-up session or other learning requirements if this is possible and if:
 - 3.6.1 The participant gives adequate notice of the intended absence to the Manager Learning prior to the scheduled session. The day before is not considered adequate as bookings will be locked in and often paid for.
 - 3.6.2 The participant gains permission to miss the session and agrees to complete a make-up session or other requirements. In the case of a short-course program, there are no make-up sessions, so the participant is advised to communicate their intention to be absent to their sponsor. The sponsor may impose costs on them at this point.
 - 3.6.3 The participant agrees to personally meet any additional costs associated with the make-up session.
- 3.7 Permission to undertake a make-up session remains at the complete discretion of the ARLF.
- 3.8 If the Manager Learning or the Director Learning gives the participant approval to miss a session, the participant:
 - 3.8.1 Must undertake to make it up during the following program with the subsequent course group (if this is an option). This is not possible if the participant misses the commencement of the program. In this instance, an alternative set of learning activities will be provided for the participant.

- 3.8.2 Must complete the session within one program year and be eligible for graduation with the subsequent course group. The participant may request exemption to complete the program with another program cohort if the period for completion is too long and causes personal or professional disadvantage.
- 3.8.3 Deferral of a place on a short-course program must be negotiated with the ARLF and the sponsor in the first instance and deferral is not a guaranteed option for all programs.
- 3.9 Participant financial contributions are non-refundable.
- 3.9 All learning requirements of the Australian Rural Leadership Program must be completed to graduate, receive a certificate of completion and become a fellow of the ARLF.

4. Scope and application

This policy applies to all participants undertaking an Australian Rural Leadership Foundation leadership program.

5. Responsibilities and ownership of this policy

Policy approval	Chief Executive
Implementation	Chief Executive; Director: Learning
Review	Chief Executive, Director: Learning
Improvement	Director: Learning

6. Resources

No additional resources will be needed, although some changes in work practices may be required.

7. Review schedule

Initially	June 2014
Periodic	Every two years

Recent review	August 2021 (V4)
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8. **Related documentation**

Participant Handbook, Participant Contract