

School Advisory Councils

Minutes



MELBOURNE
ARCHDIOCESE
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Purpose

Council minutes are used to record the activities and advice given by a School Advisory Council.

Minutes are one way that a School Advisory Council can demonstrate its accountability for the support and advice it gives the principal.

Format

The minutes of School Advisory Council meetings must be consistently formatted with clear item headings, regular spacing and highlighted moments of agreement by consensus.

Well-presented minutes make it easy for users to locate items of interest and identify the results of deliberations. Their structure follows the order of the agenda. Minutes should be maintained in an appropriate archive system at the school. A [suggested model](#) is available on the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) website.

After draft minutes have been checked by the principal, minutes should be distributed to each member of the School Advisory Council as soon as possible after the meeting while the business is still fresh in their mind. Quick delivery will also allow sufficient time for action items to be followed up between meetings.

The minutes should be approved by the School Advisory Council at its next meeting, as an accurate record of the meeting and the council's work.

If possible, as allowed for in the Terms of Reference, it is a good idea for the minutes to be taken by someone who is not participating in the meeting, so that those participating can focus on the meeting. Often the minutes can be taken by a school employee. The person who takes the minutes should be someone who is trusted to hear confidential information about the council's business.

Content

Minutes are not a transcript of every word that was said during a meeting or a record of members' individual contributions. Minutes are not public documents. A brief report approved by the principal may appear in the school and parish newsletters to communicate the work of the School Advisory Council to the community.

The amount of detail included in the minutes will vary between schools. Generally, minutes will include matters such as:

- what meeting was held, where and when
- the names of attendees and any apologies to ensure there was a quorum
- any conflicts of interest declared
- items discussed at the meeting as per the agenda and any new business raised
- any key discussion points and agreements by consensus made by the council.

For significant advice, it is a good idea to briefly outline any factors that were considered in the pathway taken and the amount of time allocated for discussion. This can help to establish that members have exercised proper care and diligence in their support of the principal.

