

FOR TEACHERS



HANDBOOK



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Your introduction to the handbook is your opportunity to welcome new and existing staff members to a new year, semester or role at your studio. We've kept the template below short, sweet and simple so it is easy to read and sets a warm tone for the whole guide. If there are any specifics you'd like to add, feel free to pop anything more in but remember - the longer the text, the less likely your busy teachers will be to read through it all.

It's our absolute pleasure to warmly welcome you to the <INSERT STUDIO NAME> faculty. We know that our teachers and staff are the heartbeat of the studio and we are looking forward to a great collaborative and creative relationship. This handbook will be your survival book when it comes to learning and clarifying all of our policies and processes so please make sure you take the time to read it attentively. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch and we can happily chat further about what is outlined in our book. Please keep in mind that our handbook contains confidential information about our business and is not to be shared with any individuals or businesses outside of <INSERT STUDIO NAME>

QUICK REFERENCE STUDIO INFORMATION

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

MOBILE / CELL NUMBER:

EMAIL:

FAX:

WEBSITE:

PRINCIPAL/S:



Your studio manifesto should reflect your core beliefs, the heart and soul of your studio and the values you expect your staff to uphold. Take your time to really think about what your studio stands for and spend some time getting this just right. You are setting the tone of your business in this manifesto. Below we have suggested some topic sentences to get you started (we recommend using about 6-8 of these or your own to create your own manifesto).

Many studios may already have a 'Mission Statement' that you wish to include, which is also a perfectly good alternative to a manifesto.

To start us off, it's important to us at <INSERT STUDIO NAME> that all faculty members share our vision, our purpose and the philosophy that encompasses everything we do both in and outside of our classes. This is a vision that is shared and demonstrated by the directors, teachers and staff members at our studio and it is the driving force behind every interaction with our students and their families.

<INSERT STUDIO NAME> is place where kids of all ages shapes and sizes learn to dance, sing and perform. This is a studio where creativity, individuality and self-expression is encouraged and has a community of teachers, students and families who are passionate about performing arts. Our goal is to create a positive and happy experience for all of our students. We strive to nurture and develop talent, celebrate the achievements of all students and inspire a love and appreciation of all styles of dance and the arts. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment in which all students can feel empowered, comfortable and free to express themselves.

USE THE BELOW STARTERS FOR SOME INSPIRATION IN DEVELOPING YOUR OWN MANIFESTO

WE ARE COMMITTED TO...

WE LISTEN TO...

WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT...

WE PRIORITIZE...

WE CARE ABOUT...

WE PROMISE TO...

WE LOVE...

WE VALUE...

WE EMBRACE...

WE FOCUS ON...

WE STAND FOR...

WE SHARE...



Sharing your goals for the studio is often overlooked or not communicated to the teaching staff effectively. Don't forget that your teachers are the heartbeat of your studio - in order for you to achieve your studio goals your teachers need to know what your goals and expectations are. Be specific and quantifiable in your aspirations and use your goals as a motivational tool to drive your staff throughout the year. Refer to this and measure along the way how you are tracking in terms of achieving your goals. Below are some examples of goals for you to edit to suit your studio.

ENROLLMENT

At the end of last year, we had 200 families enrolled in classes of all ages. By the same time this year, it is our goal to have over 250 families enrolled - therefore increasing our enrollments by 25%. As a member of our teaching staff, your role in helping to achieve this goal is by promoting our enrollment campaigns and creating hype within class. For example, chat with your students about our referral program and encourage them to bring their friends for 'bring a friend week.' Keep in mind that we always offer free trial classes for all ages so if members of the community ask you about the studio or dance classes, this is a great talking point to drive enrollments.

RETENTION

Student retention can be one of our biggest challenges. We put a lot of time and effort into building a student base and we share in your disappointment and frustration when families leave. The key to a growing, thriving and successful studio is to have students that come back year after year. Based on last year's numbers, we retained 70% of our enrolled students. This year, our goal is to boost that rate to 80%. In order to achieve this goal, our teaching staff needs to remain engaged, enthusiastic and connected with every student. All students need to feel welcomed and appreciated and look forward to attending your classes. You also need to maintain open communication with your students and their families to address any issues that may come up throughout the year. At times you may be asked to make phone calls to families as part of your role in retaining our students.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is a priority of ours and we have promised our clients that no call or email will go unanswered - and this applies to our faculty as well. To keep communication clear and open, please ensure you check and answer your emails, messages and phone calls from us. If clients address any questions or concerns to you that you are unable to answer straight away, please bring them to our admin staff immediately.

SAFETY

The physical, mental and emotional safety of all students and staff members is our number one priority at all times. We are very serious about upholding Child Protection laws and policies within the studio as well as at public performances and in the online arena (website and social media). All of our teachers and staff members must undergo official checks allowing them to work with children. We strive to minimise physical injury by adhering to and promoting safe dance practices. It is our goal to reduce the frequency and severity of injuries of our dancers.

ADMINISTRATION

Admin is a hugely influential aspect of running our studio efficiently and we are always looking for ways to improve and simplify our administrative duties. It is our goal to automate our admin processes as much as possible and will often consult with faculty members for feedback on our systems.

MARKETING

Our online marketing strategies are about to really change the game for our studio. In this highly competitive market, we will be focusing on our online presence to really take **<INSERT STUDIO NAME>** to the next level. Our online conversion rate currently hovers around ____%. By this time next year we aim to have increased that to ____%. Once those students are through the doors for their free trial, it is time for our rock star teachers to ensure they have a great experience and come back for more.

MORE CLASSES

As we edge closer to meeting our enrollment and retention goals, we want those dance classes to be FULL! We aim to increase our classes and sessions in all ages with more hours becoming available for our current faculty to educate even more aspiring dancers.

4.

YOUR ENTITLEMENTS



There are various ways to pay or employ your staff, whether as a full-time employee, part-time employee or contractor. Below we have provided a variety of entitlement information for you to choose from.

Your rate of pay is \$25 per hour, to be paid weekly/bi-weekly/fortnightly into your nominated bank account.

You will not receive payment for any classes that have been cancelled due to illness, weather or public holidays.

Please email your invoice to **<INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS>** and it will be paid within 14 days.

<INSERT STUDIO NAME> is responsible for payment of income tax, Medicare levy, social security levy and superannuation in compliance with industry standards.

As part of your part-time / full-time employee status, non-teaching paid hours at the studio may be spent fulfilling administrative duties, cleaning or marketing.

Your hourly teaching rate is inclusive of any choreography, music selection, music editing and preparation done outside of your teaching hours.

It is expected that you arrive to your scheduled classes at least 10 minutes before they commence, prepared with classwork, music and any equipment needed.

As a valued member of our staff, it is our pleasure to offer your immediate family a 50% discount on all classes attended at **<INSERT STUDIO NAME>**

An end-of-year bonus may be awarded to staff members at the discretion of the principal and will be communicated to you personally before the payment is made.

A music allowance of \$50 per term / season may be claimed by each faculty member so please ensure you retain your receipts for music purchases in order to claim this allowance.

All staff members are required to attend a weekly/bi-weekly/monthly staff meeting and will be compensated at their regular rate of pay.

All staff members are expected to attend the recital / concert and rehearsals and will be awarded the hourly pay rate for this event.

If you are involved in any other dance projects - including competitions, performances, films or shows - we will be more than happy to promote the event to our clients and their families provided it does not present a conflict of interest (for example, a performance for a competing dance studio).

It is a condition of your employment that any equipment or areas used in the studio are returned to their original state at the end of your sessions.



Teachers calling in sick - it happens ALL the time and can be one of the most stressful parts about being a Dance Studio Owner. For this reason, it's vital to have your policies clear and in place right from the beginning.



We understand that sometimes unavoidable emergencies or illness can occur at the last minute. However, we do ask that in the event of sickness or inability to fulfil your teaching obligations to please call the studio at least 12 hours before your class is scheduled. Text message, social media or emailing is not an acceptable way to inform of your absence so ensure you call us as soon as you know that you will not be coming to class.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to arrange a qualified substitute teacher and provide them with adequate handover including music and instructions for your class.

If you have any upcoming obligations, holidays or events that will mean you are unable to teach for one or more classes, please let the studio know at least 2 weeks ahead of time and ensure you have organized a substitute teacher in advance.

Full-time and Part-time employees are required to provide a medical certificate / Doctor's note for absences due to illness over 2 or more consecutive days.

Please understand that last-minute absences place a large strain on the studio, particularly if there is not enough opportunity to arrange and hand over to a substitute teacher. In all cases of absence, we prefer to be notified with as much time as possible.

Feel free to contact us if you need some suggestions and contact details for substitute teachers as we do have a list on hand of recommended and reliable teachers to refer to.

Great communication is so important in the effective running of your studio and it is important that you maintain the same open lines of communication for your staff that you promote for your students and their families. Choose from the below options the best channels of communication for your staff members.

By now you have probably noticed that we are BIG on communication here at [<INSERT STUDIO NAME>](#). It is our promise to respond to all enquiries within 24-hours and we will never leave a query unanswered. Our friendly office staff can be contacted on [<INSERT STUDIO PHONE NUMBER>](#) between [<INSERT OFFICE HOURS>](#), or on mobile/cell number [<INSERT MOBILE/CELL NUMBER>](#) between [<INSERT PREFERRED HOURS>](#).

For convenience, our primary means of communication is via email. You will receive regular newsletters and important information via email, so please ensure you have provided the studio with an up-to-date email address that is regularly checked.

We are also proud to provide staff and clients with information round-the-clock via our very own Dance Studio app. You can download [<INSERT APP NAME>](#) at [<INSERT APP LINK>](#). Just follow the prompts to install our app on your mobile device and you'll receive alerts as they happen.

Facebook is a great way for us to keep in touch with all of our faculty members at once so we will add you to our closed [<INSERT STUDIO NAME>](#) faculty Facebook group. This group can be found at [<INSERT LINK TO CLOSED STUDIO GROUP>](#). You may also be interested in joining our Studio closed Facebook group at [<INSERT LINK TO CLOSED GROUP>](#) where our dance families interact and receive information regularly.

We always display important information, dates and studio details on our noticeboard in reception so please have a quick look when you arrive for your teaching in case there is anything you may have missed.



With the safety of our staff and families a number one priority, <INSERT STUDIO NAME> is very serious about upholding Child Protection laws and policies within the studio, as well as at public performances and in the online arena (website and social media).

It is your responsibility as a teacher to let us know immediately of any hazards (such as spills, leaks or sharp objects) within the studio that may result in an accident or injury.

Students and staff must leave any food or drink (other than bottled water) in the staff / student waiting area and not into the performance space.

Any high-risk activities, such as acrobatic tricks, aerial stunts or cheerleading tosses may only be performed under the full supervision of the class teacher and must use protective equipment such as crash mats, harnesses or padding. It is your responsibility as an educator not to allow students to attempt dangerous tricks that are beyond their capabilities.

Safe dance practice must always be observed in classes of all ages. This includes a sufficient warm-up and stretch session even when you may feel pressed for time.

We discourage our faculty and staff from privately transporting students to and from classes, rehearsals or performances at any time except in an emergency. If you do need to transport students for any reason, it must be with the permission of the director and written consent from parents/guardians.

If a student is sick or injured during class, you need to stop your class and attend to the affected student. The studio director and the child's parents should be notified immediately. If necessary, an ambulance may be called. All injuries and illnesses will need to be recorded in an incident report.

The directors and staff at <INSERT STUDIO NAME> are educated in the negative impact of inappropriate music and costume selection when it comes to performing dance routines and are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring children in all of our dance routines are not subjected to any inappropriate songs or costuming. We recognise that songs with sexist, explicit, violent, racist, homophobic, or criminal content may influence our dancers and/or audience and will strive to avoid using such music.

We are committed to restricting costumes that project sexuality or contain explicit graphic or textual content. Our staff members have all been trained in first aid. We enforce a nut-free policy at the studio to ensure the safety of any students or parents with allergies to nuts or nut products and encourage gluten and dairy free foods when involved in fundraisers or studio events.

<INSERT STUDIO NAME> takes no responsibility for any stolen or misplaced property on the studio premises. We encourage our families and faculty members to avoid bringing valuable items into the studio where possible.

SAMPLE INCIDENT REPORT

Please see below a sample incident report that you can adapt for your own studio. A copy of completed accident reports need to be both kept at the studio and given to the parent/guardian of your student.

INCIDENT REPORT

NAME AND POSITION OF STAFF MEMBER COMPLETING THIS INCIDENT REPORT:
SIGNATURE OF STAFF MEMBER COMPLETING THIS INCIDENT REPORT:
DATE OF REPORT:

INCIDENT

DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT:
NAME/S OF PERSON OR PEOPLE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT:
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT (CONT'D):
NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS OF WITNESSES:
FOLLOW-UP ACTION
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:
NAME OF STUDIO MANAGEMENT STAFF IMMEDIATELY NOTIFIED OF INCIDENT:
MANAGEMENT'S SIGNATURE:
DATE:

While your teachers and staff members may not be required to attend all events, it's important that they are given your studio's important dates as early as possible in the year to allow them time to plan for them. It also keeps them up-to-date with studio happenings and allows them to come to class and be able to follow up with clients about the events they have been involved with.

Below we have listed some of our most important "Save the Dates" that we have sent to all families this year. Please let us know which of these dates you are able or unable to attend to represent the studio and help with the running of things. More information (including times, locations) will be communicated to all staff and

clients via (choose) [email/Facebook/app/notes](#) as we get closer to the events.

Some examples of important events set out in an easy-to-digest table can be found below - please add your planned dates as applicable with descriptions of your events and who is required to attend

DATE	EVENT	DESCRIPTION	WHO IT INVOLVES
01/01/2016	Registration Day	Register for your 2016 classes	Everyone
01/28/2016	Student Disco	Fundraising event	Students aged 10+
02/04/2016	Parent Meeting	Parents and Teachers meet at the studio to chat about upcoming events and studio happenings	All parents (no children please)
02/28/2016	Costume Fitting	Bring your child to the studio to be measured/try on for their recital/concert costumes	All students performing in recital/concert
03/05/2016	Payments Due	All upfront payments due today	Families who pay upfront (not via direct debit)
04/05/2016	Competition	"Don't Stop Moving" Dance Competition	Elite troupes
07/18/2016	Exams	Ballet and Tap exams	Exam students
08/14/2016	Recital / Concert	End of season recital/concert	All students

SOME OTHER DATES TO INCLUDE MAY BE:

WORKSHOPS

EXCURSIONS

FUNDRAISERS

REHEARSALS

CONCERTS

IN-STUDIO COMPETITIONS

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

SEMESTER BREAK

HOLIDAY SHOWCASE

Your studio's code of conduct is basically your set of rules that all attending families and staff members must abide by when they are enrolled with you. It is important to be very clear about the rules and expectations you set for your students and teachers so that they fully understand what is or isn't acceptable. Below we have covered most areas that your code of conduct may encompass and recommend you choose which ones to include and which ones you will not include in keeping with your studio's policies.

To ensure the smooth, safe running of **<INSERT STUDIO NAME>** and an enjoyable experience by all, below you will find our code of conduct as it pertains to both staff and students. Please ensure you read this carefully so that you also have a clear understand of what we expect from your students and their families. As always we are open to feedback, so if any of the requirements outlined below are unclear or concerning, please give us a call to discuss further. Following a formal meeting, we do reserve the right to dismiss or take disciplinary action on any staff members, students or parents who breach our studio's code of conduct.

All teachers must arrive at the studio at least 10 minutes prior to the commencement of class and must be prepared with class plan, music and equipment where needed. Teachers must dress in neat, clean dance attire. Revealing or restrictive clothing is not appropriate, nor is any clothing with offensive slogans or branding. Teachers are to be neatly groomed and wear appropriate footwear for their dance style.

Staff members must always arrive to class with a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards their class, colleagues and the studio. Teachers are not permitted to sit down for long periods while teaching (unless injured) and must start and finish all classes on time.

Any conflict that arises between a teacher and a client must immediately be brought to the attention of the director.

All client information (including personal, medical and financial information), employee records, financial and operating data of the studio and any other information of a private or sensitive nature are considered confidential. Confidential information should not be read or discussed by any employee unless pertaining to his or her specific job requirements. Examples of inappropriate disclosures include:

- Discussing or revealing confidential information to friends or family members.
- Discussing or revealing confidential information to other employees without a legitimate need to know.
- Disclosing a client's presence in the Studio or at a Studio event without the consent of the client or their legal guardian to an unauthorized party without a legitimate need to know.

The unauthorized disclosure of confidential information by employees can subject each individual employee and the studio to civil and criminal liability and is grounds for immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Contracting teachers may be employed by other Dance Studios provided they are located no closer than 5km/ mi from **<INSERT STUDIO NAME>**. When working for another employee at a Dance Studio, it is strictly prohibited for teachers to replicate choreography, costuming or creative content of any kind.

Should any faculty members decide at any time to open a Dance Studio of their own, it must not be within a 5km/mi radius of <INSERT STUDIO NAME>

No classes (including private lessons) or teachers are to be disturbed unless it is an emergency. Parents are not to approach teachers or students during class. If messages or food/drink/medication needs to be passed on to a student, it must be done through a <INSERT STUDIO NAME> staff member. All parents must wait in the waiting areas or outside of the studios until classes have been dismissed.

We are unable to take responsibility for our students before or after their scheduled classes and it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure their child is picked up and dropped off on time. In the case of an emergency or unavoidable delay, please contact the studio immediately to inform us of the situation so we can keep your child calm and safe until they can be collected.

Any questions or complaints must go through reception – parents and students are not permitted to contact <INSERT STUDIO NAME> teachers via phone, in person, or via email / social networking with studio issues unless it has been broached with the principal first. Personal meetings with the studio principal can happily be arranged via reception.

When attending performances, rehearsals, public appearances or recitals / concerts, <INSERT STUDIO NAME> staff members are expected to represent the studio in a responsible, enthusiastic and courteous manner. Explicit language, inappropriate attire, offensive clothing and criminal behaviour will not be tolerated. Consuming alcohol and smoking are not permitted at events where you are representing the studio.

In the rare case of a parent or student showing disrespect or defamation to any parent, staff member or student, a meeting will be called immediately and dismissal may be considered at the discretion of the

principal. Physical, mental, emotional or cyber bullying by parents, staff or student will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the studio.

<INSERT STUDIO NAME> takes no responsibility for any stolen or misplaced property on the studio premises and we encourage our families to avoid bringing valuable items into the studio where possible.

Only private lesson students are permitted to enter solo competitions and it must be with the permission of their teacher and choreographer.

<INSERT STUDIO NAME> management reserves the right to change teachers or timetabling when necessary at any time throughout the year.

Choreography, costuming and studio policies remain the intellectual property of <INSERT STUDIO NAME> and may not be reproduced or sold by any students, parents or staff without permission of the principal/s. Your relationship with parents, students and other faculty members is a unique and important one. We want you to foster positive and empowering relationships within the studio, however, please remember to keep your interactions at a professional level. While you are welcome to build friendships with your colleagues and clients, it must not be at the expense of your professionalism or ability to treat your students fairly.

Harassment - either physical, verbal, emotional, sexual or cyber - will not be tolerated. If you ever feel harassed by a co-worker, student or parent you must contact the director immediately. If you feel harassed in any way by the director, we encourage you to contact the police right away.

It can be such a great tool for Dance Studios in terms of establishing a presence and marketing, but Social Media can also be a minefield for Studio Owners when it comes to regulating the behaviour of their faculty and clients. Social Media policies for studios will vary greatly depending on size, vision and demographics so below we have created a buffet of options for you to carefully mould the right Social Media policy for your studio.

<INSERT STUDIO NAME>'s Social Media Policy refers to all social networking sites, video/photo sharing sites, blogs, micro-blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, instant messaging and geo-spatial tagging (for example, Facebook check-ins). Please see below for our regulations regarding Social Media and feel free to contact our office staff if you have any questions.

- Please remember that your anonymity on Social Media is never guaranteed and to exercise particular caution when posts, images or videos identify children in your care.

- Remain mindful that your behaviour on Social Media remains in keeping with <INSERT STUDIO NAME>'s code of conduct as outlined in chapter 6 of this handbook.

- Any comments or posts perceived to be obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful towards <INSERT STUDIO NAME> staff, students or families may subject the owner to disciplinary or legal action.

- Should you wish to engage on Social Media while identifying as a studio volunteer or employee, you may only do so with integrity, respect, and adhere to privacy and confidentiality policy.

- Any content revealing or referring to sensitive studio information is not allowed to be shared online.

- Intellectual property laws (for example, costume design and choreography) must be observed by all studio patrons when posting online.

- While affiliated with our studio, (for example, images of your child in <INSERT STUDIO NAME>) we will not tolerate any posts that are racially, sexually, physically or religiously offensive.

- All matters pertaining directly to the studio - whether it be fees, scheduling, placements or performance opportunities - may not be communicated via Social Media. We have an open door policy and encourage all communication, complaints and feedback to be communicated to the principal directly.

- We discourage parents / students and teachers from becoming 'friends' or 'followers' on Social Media, unless there is an existing relationship. We consider all studio members to be family and as such feel the obligation to respect and monitor personal boundaries.

- Families found to be engaging in 'hidden' or 'private' groups formed for the specific purpose of discussing studio matters will be encouraged to join our closed Facebook group for public discussion and warned against discussing Studio matters in their private online groups.

- Photos or Videos taken from performances or rehearsals may NOT be posted online.

- You may not post photographs / videos that feature <INSERT STUDIO NAME> dancers other than your own online without the proven consent of their parent/guardian.

- Identifying information of any featured minors - including names, ages or location

- must be removed when posting on Social Media.

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