

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>WEARING OF KIRPAN</b>	<b>Area of Responsibility:</b> <b>SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,  INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS &amp;  STUDENT SERVICES</b>  <b>Policy No: 7.8</b>  <b>Page: 1 of 2</b>  <b>Last Review Date: 2024 07 04</b>
<b>Policy Section:</b>	<b>STUDENT SERVICES</b>	
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**7.8 WEARING OF KIRPAN**

**Purpose/Rationale:**

St. Clair College of Applied Arts & Technology (hereafter referred to as “St. Clair” or “the College”) respects the rights of those that are baptized observers of Khalsa Sikhism and those who observe the Sikh religion to wear a kirpan as a part of their religious beliefs. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for accommodating the kirpan on St. Clair’s campuses.

**Scope:**

This applies to all St. Clair students, employees and visitors to any St. Clair campus/facility.

**Definitions:**

*Kirpan*: is a small ceremonial sword approximately three (3) to seven (7) inches in length and in Sikh religion is a symbol of courage, self-sacrifice, defense of the weak and righteousness. Wearing the kirpan is a requirement of being a Khalsa Sikh.

The ceremonial knife symbolizes each individual’s duty towards other human beings, particularly the poor and oppressed, and is worn on the person. This is not a weapon, and strict rules prohibit its use as such. It is never to be removed from its sheath. For safety reasons, two (2) or three (3) clasps hold the kirpan securely in the sheath. Only Khalsa Sikhism requires that a baptized Khalsa Sikh is required to wear a kirpan.

**Policy:**

1. Kirpans may be worn on campus only by students and employees who are baptized observers of Khalsa Sikhism and those who observe the Sikh religion and are able to demonstrate that they must wear a kirpan as part of their religious beliefs. However, wearing a kirpan shall be permitted subject to the following conditions:

- The wearer must be a Khalsa Sikh (baptized) or must satisfy the College that the wearer sincerely believes as part of their religious beliefs that they must wear a kirpan.
  - Individuals may be requested to provide a letter from the Gurdwara (place of worship) confirming that they are Khalsa. In other cases where this is not appropriate or impossible, a signed declaration by the student will be sufficient. Those who are not Khalsa Sikhs will be required to submit an explanation as to why they must carry a kirpan, notwithstanding they are not Khalsa Sikhs; a determination will be made on a case by case basis in this situation.
  - The kirpan (hilt, blade and sheath) is not to be greater than seven (7) inches (17.8 centimeters) in length but smaller kirpans are preferable.
  - The kirpan is not to be worn visibly, but under the wearer's clothing.
  - The kirpan must be sufficiently secured to render removal difficult, but not impossible.
  - Modifications to student's program may be necessary, depending on the nature of the program, where wearing the kirpan could inadvertently cause physical harm to the wearer or another individual during the program activities or off campus college authorized activities.
  - That the right to wear the kirpan may be suspended if it is misused by the wearer.
2. The College reserves the right to periodically, in a private and sensitive manner, seek to verify that the limitations with respect to kirpan length, security measures and concealment continue to be met.
  3. A student/employee's right to wear the kirpan may be suspended by the College for failure to comply with the conditions noted above. For students, the process identified in the St. Clair's Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities will be utilized to resolve the issue. Situations involving employees will be administered by Human Resources.