

Student Attendance & Punctuality Policy

POLICY / DOCUMENT PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to set out and maintain a culture of regular attendance and punctuality among our learners, recognising that consistent engagement is critical to academic success, personal development, and future progression. This policy sets out clear expectations and responsibilities for learners and staff, ensuring that attendance issues are monitored, identified and addressed promptly and supportively, using the appropriate systems and processes. This policy also helps maintain a positive and professional learning environment that reflects workplace standards and prepares learners for progression, employment and further education.

APPLICATION

The policy applies to all students participating in learning delivered by the college

INTERPRETATION

Further guidance on the use or interpretation of this policy may be obtained from the Curriculum Manager

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

Safeguarding Policy
Student Charter
Admissions Policy
Student Disciplinary Policy
Fitness to Study Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Reasonable Adjustments Policy
Data Protection Policy

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Owner / Area	Angela Bate/Education
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Ratified / Authorised by	
Equality Impact completed	



1. Scope and Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out and maintain expectations and responsibilities for student attendance and punctuality to maximise students' potential through development of skills, knowledge and attributes
- Safeguard students, for example, early identification of concerns, promotion of a safe learning environment, prevention of disengagement and isolation, supporting vulnerable learners and enabling timely intervention and support
- Detail how attendance of students will be monitored and responded to, to identify those who do not attend college and individual classes when required to
- Enable the college to address challenges with attendance/punctuality
- Enable learners to access appropriate support as necessary, return to their programme of study and achieve their learning goals
- Ensure that we provide appropriate and accurate course and cross college data to monitor performance and support appropriate intervention where required.
- Enable the college to provide appropriate evidence for external bodies such as the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Department for Education (DfE).

1.2 The College recognises that excellent attendance is key to maximising the learning experience, achievement of academic goals and development of career progression skills. Attendance and punctuality are highly valued by the College and employers and are essential to effective and successful education and progression.

1.3 This policy applies to onsite, offsite and remote delivery and covers all students enrolled on learning programmes/courses and all staff involved in attendance/punctuality reporting, monitoring and support

1.4 Information regarding attendance and punctuality is set out in the Student Charter, and introduced during enrolment, induction and the start of your course

2. General Principles

2.1 The college expects that all students attend and be on time for 100% of all aspects of their course. Students below 90% attendance for medium and long courses and 100% attendance for short courses, and/or with persistent punctuality issues may not be allowed to stay on their current course and/or progress to the next stage of study, unless there are exceptional circumstances (students should seek to speak with the appropriate staff member(s) as soon as possible to discuss any prolonged attendance/punctuality issues).

2.2 The college expects learners to arrive on time for pre-course induction, collection of bedroom keys and any other relevant activity.

2.3 Staff adopt a consistent approach to applying the Attendance and Punctuality Policy to ensure students are clear on expected behaviour and attitude towards attendance and punctuality.

Where non-attendance and/or punctuality has been deemed as unacceptable, the College will follow the Student Disciplinary policy or, the Fitness to Study policy.

2.4 All students will be made aware of their responsibilities and the college's expectations during completion of enrolment, induction and course ground rules/acceptable behaviour contracts.

3. Summary of College Expectations for Students and Staff

Students:

3.1 Attend 100% of all of your course on time and be ready to learn. This includes all course lessons, tutor & learning support meetings, tutorials, examinations and information, advice and guidance sessions.

3.2 During the enrolment process and up until attendance of your first lesson, learners must notify the college's admissions team if 100% attendance is not possible:

1. For shorter courses, this will likely result in you being removed from the course. The college will work with you to identify another convenient and appropriate course to apply to.
2. For longer courses, this will be discussed on an individual basis, require evidence and will only be considered in unavoidable or exceptional circumstances, and where learning is not adversely impacted.
3. If you are more than 30 minutes late (after the course start time) for day 1 of short course attendance (including collection of keys and induction), you will be removed from the course.

3.3 For long and medium courses:

1. Throughout the duration of your course, in unavoidable or exceptional circumstances, maintain appropriate and timely communications as laid out in the Student Charter and following the guidelines in the Course Guide.
2. For unavoidable absence or lateness, make contact as early as possible, continuing to do so daily for absence, unless evidence covering a duration of absence is provided.
3. Follow the absence request process in order to make absence requests regarding foreseen unavoidable or exceptional situations requiring absence (see Appendix for Absence Request Process/form)
4. Provide an appropriate reason for absence and/or lateness with supporting evidence where relevant. Provide medical evidence for absences as soon as possible.
5. Arrange medical appointments outside of lesson time unless it is an emergency.

3.4 For shorter courses, if, for any reason you are unable to attend a lesson, communicate this immediately to the college by calling the main college line (0121 4720116). Unfortunately, it is highly likely that you will be withdrawn from the course in this instance.

College Staff:

3.5 Actively promote the need for 100% attendance and punctuality.

3.6 Continuously monitor attendance and punctuality throughout students' time at College.

3.7 Address poor attendance, which may include following the Student Disciplinary or Fitness to Study procedures.

3.8 Monitor and review the attendance of all students throughout their course of study.

3.9 Respond to all absenteeism and lateness consistently and fairly, considering individual circumstances.

3.10 Notify the Welfare Coordinator as soon as possible where a student with a known pastoral concern is absent.

3.11 Follow up on all absences, including making contact and requesting explanation for where there has been no communication regarding absence. Where a student without a known pastoral concern does not respond to communications, or concerns around welfare are raised during communications, notify the Welfare Coordinator as soon as possible

3.12 Mark all registers fully, accurately and within 30 minutes of the lesson finishing. This is the legal and auditable document to record attendance and punctuality.

3.13 Provide support to students experiencing barriers to attendance and punctuality, and signpost appropriately.

3.14 Update the College MI system (currently Civica College Management System) to record any personal/pastoral issues that affect attendance and punctuality.

3.15 Have the right to refuse entry to learning due to lateness. This will be discussed during induction.

3.16 As this policy is a general guide, where the policy and guidance may not appear to fully cover the situation, seek advice from the Lead Tutor, Duty Manager and/or Welfare/Learning Support Coordinators.

3.17 In line with the college's Data Protection Policy which covers GDPR compliance, ensure all evidence of absence/lateness provided is used and stored lawfully and appropriately

4. Liaison with external agencies

Where relevant, the College will maintain close links with health care providers such as CAMHS, recovery groups and other specialists regarding the needs of students with physical and mental health difficulties.

This could include consulting on the suitability of programmes of study in the context of attendance concerns and possible barriers to acceptable levels of attendance.

5. Authorising Absence:

When authorising absences, the nominated member of staff will need to consider;

- Whether the case is reasonable
- The number of absences taken by the individual
- Repetitions of the same justification
- Whether the justification is backed up by evidence.
- Impact to learning.

If there are ongoing concerns regarding attendance and/or punctuality and it is deemed to be a behaviour concern, the Disciplinary Policy or Fitness to Study Policy may be implemented.

APPENDIX

Absence request procedure

Students are expected to arrange medical and other appointments outside of timetabled hours. However, we are aware that there can, at times, be unavoidable or exceptional circumstances where a student knows in advance that they are unable to attend a lesson. When this is the case, the **absence request process form must be completed**:

Absence request form	
Send the completed form to your subject tutor with evidence attached. To be completed by the Learner no later than <u>3 working days prior to the requested absence.</u> <u>Requests submitted less than 3 days prior to absence will not be considered for authorisation.</u>	
Student name:	
Tutor name (student to complete):	
Date Request Submitted:	
1. Time and date of requested absence: Date (dd/mm/yyyy): From (time): To (time): Topic/subject of lesson time missed:	
2. Reason for requested absence:	
Evidence submitted: (please list the evidence here in addition to attaching it to your request)	
3. Catching up on missed learning. Please state your plans for catching up on the learning you will miss due to this absence:	
Please note: We may ask for further evidence if required.	
Student Signature:	
Section 2: (to be completed by subject tutor)	
Tick as appropriate:	
Absence authorised	<input type="checkbox"/>
Absence not authorised	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tutor Signature:	

Examples of legitimate reasons for absence, if they cannot be made or rescheduled outside of timetabled hours might include;

- o Medical appointments
- o Major religious holiday
- o Attendance at a funeral
- o Severe disruption to the transport network
- o Responsibilities for caring for a close family member or child.
- o Home Office appointments

An absence will not be authorised for any of the following reasons;

- Holidays
- Babysitting
- Driving lessons
- Birthdays
- Leisure activities
- Shopping
- Full or Part-time work (other than work experience).