



# Attendance Procedures

## Further Education and Apprenticeships

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<b>Student Friendly Version</b>	Yes

### Revision history

Version	Type (eg replacement, revision etc)	Date	History (reason for changes)

### Monitoring and review

This procedure will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team every three years.

## Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that students are at the heart of everything we do, therefore regular and consistent attendance at college is expected and is viewed as critical to student success and achievement of their learning goals.

Poor attendance can be one of the main signs that students are disengaged with their programme of study, and the college will try as far as possible to ensure that students remain fully engaged and succeed on their programme. Therefore all attendance will be fully monitored throughout the programme of study.

The College will:

- Encourage support for our students' success from parents, carers, employers and sponsors and it is good practice for parents, carers and/or employers and sponsors to be informed of persistent student absenteeism.
- Support a relentless focus on continually improving students' attendance and Punctuality.
- Investigate the many causes of absenteeism and work with students on an individual basis to best address the needs and wants of each student.
- Acknowledge the impact of caring responsibilities for Young Adult Carers and therefore we will ensure that strategies are implemented in departments to minimise the disruption to their education and support them to achieve their goals.
- Work to develop positive behaviours towards attendance and punctuality which will begin during induction period and will be reinforced throughout their learning journey.

## Attendance procedure

**The Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality is responsible for ensuring:**

- That the Attendance Policy and Procedures is implemented, that student attendance meets the College attendance target of 94% or above and delivers an outstanding student experience over the period of this policy.

**The Assistant Principal, Student Services is responsible for ensuring:**

- The Attendance Policy is available and that the attendance procedures are followed, and student attendance meets the College target of 94% or above.
- Heads of Curriculum Departments are briefed about the implementation of the Policy and Procedures.

**The Assistant Principal Curriculum FE is responsible for ensuring:**

- The Attendance Policy is available and that the attendance procedures are followed, and student attendance meets the College target of 94% or above.
- A rota is in place for the senior leadership team to meet and greet students at the start of each day.

### **The Students/Apprentices are Responsible for ensuring:**

- Attendance at all scheduled classes, tutorials and work placements or employment on time.
- Informing their Personal Tutor/Course Leader/Assessor of any anticipated or unexpected reasons for absence from College and intended return date.
- When they are not attending a work placement, they must inform a work placement officer immediately so that the employer can be informed of non-attendance
- Taking responsibility for liaising with teachers/assessors in order to catch up with missed work.
- If they have arrived late to the scheduled timetabled session, they enter quietly and without disruption and provide a reason for lateness to a member of teaching staff at the end of the session.

### **The Heads of Curriculum Departments are responsible for ensuring:**

- Appropriate staffing and resources are identified to promote and support an outstanding student experience.
- A meet and greet team of managers welcomes students to College between 8.30am and 9.30am. This will occur the first three weeks of the academic year and the first week back after every half-term break.
- Expectations of attendance and punctuality are discussed with students at the beginning of their programme of study or Apprenticeship as part of the student induction process. Targets are set and reviewed throughout the year.
- Electronic registers are used once issued, ensuring all e-registers are completed within 15 minutes of the scheduled start of the session. In exceptional circumstances following agreement with the HOD, registers are to be completed online within a short period after the session
- Classes start and finish on time as per the published timetables, and in exceptional cases arrangements are made if they are to be late or finish early.
- Paper registers for classes in the community are uploaded within 5 days
- Student attendance is monitored via registers and EBS agent reports to identify any patterns of poor attendance. Where there are concerns about a student's attendance or punctuality, we will seek feedback from the student in order to develop strategies to support improvement.
- Students identified in the following categories will have individualised attendance agreements in place at the start of the academic year or at the point of disclosure:
  - Young Adult Carers
  - Care leavers
  - Looked after children
  - Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers children
  - Students with Identified strategies in their Education, Health and Care Plans.
  - Pregnant students
  - Students with Childcare responsibilities
- Strategies are identified and shared with the teaching team to support students from the identified vulnerable groups, including Maths and English.
- Student records are updated to reflect actions taken to address poor attendance and punctuality with details of smart targets set and recorded, including Maths and English.
- Strategies are agreed in the department to address students arriving after the start of lessons to avoid disruption to the flow of the lesson and other students' learning.
- All staff involved with the learning programme including Maths and English are informed of the student absence.
- Excellent attendance is a regular agenda item in curriculum area and course level meetings, ensuring monitoring is analysed, strategies are reviewed and disciplinary procedures are being followed. Where there are attendance concerns for students with Education Health

and Care Plans that lead to further action including disciplinary action, the Head of SEND & ALS is consulted and appropriate support for the student is in place.

- An agreement is in place with the HOD of Maths and English about how they will be notified about student absences or withdrawal.
- Resources are available on line for students to continue studies during periods of absence.
- Excellent attendance is recognised and celebrated.

**Head of Department for Apprenticeships is responsible for ensuring:**

- Appropriate staffing and resources are identified to promote and support an outstanding Apprenticeship experience.
- Agreement is in place with the HODs of curriculum about how they will be notified about apprenticeship absences and how they report apprenticeship absence from classroom-based activity including Maths and English
- All apprentices are aware of the procedures to follow if they are unable to attend their classroom delivery or employment.
- Attendance, punctuality and retention is a regular agenda item in department meetings, ensuring monitoring is analysed, strategies are reviewed and disciplinary procedures are being followed.
- Strategies identified to address attendance and punctuality issues for classroom-based activity and employment are shared with all staff working with the apprentices to ensure a consistent cross-college approach.
- Excellent attendance is recognised and celebrated.

**Head of Maths and English is responsible for ensuring:**

- Appropriate staffing and resources are identified to promote and support an outstanding student experience.
- Electronic registers are used once issued and ensuring all e-registers are completed within **15 minutes** of the scheduled start of the session.
- Classes start and finish on time as per the published timetables and in exceptional cases arrangements are made if they are to be late or finish early.
- Paper registers for classes in the community are uploaded within 5 days
- The curriculum departments are informed about the absence of an English or maths teacher on the first morning of absence and arrange short term cover through the success centre in most instances.
- Student records are updated to reflect student's progress with details of smart targets set and recorded.
- Attendance, punctuality and retention is a regular agenda item in department meetings, ensuring monitoring is analysed, strategies are reviewed and disciplinary procedures are being followed
- Attendance, punctuality and retention is a regular agenda item in department meetings, ensuring monitoring is analysed, strategies are reviewed and disciplinary procedures are being followed.
- All students are aware of the procedures to follow if they are unable to attend their English and/or maths classes.
- Resources are available online for students to continue studies during periods of absence.
- Agreement is in place with the HODs of curriculum about how they will be notified about student absences or possible withdrawal from Maths or English.
- Excellent attendance is recognised and celebrated.

**MIS and Registry are responsible for ensuring:**

The removal students from the EBS system on receipt of withdrawal forms (paper or online) or when identified by the Head of Department during data verification.

## Appendix 1: Barriers to Good Attendance and Punctuality

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are placed on wrong course or programme and/or slow response to transfer onto a more appropriate programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor timetabling (e.g. a break of more than one hour between lessons is viewed as too much, and anything less than 15 minutes is seen as too little)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure of responsible staff to contact absentees promptly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timetabling early starts for courses with high proportion of students with care responsibilities or scheduling courses over too many days</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of encouragement and support from parents who would prefer their son or daughter to work for a living rather than continue with his or her education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insubstantial induction which does not thoroughly embed the correct behaviour from the start of the programme</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking holidays in term time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students unaware of how to report absence</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport difficulties – bus passes are not always appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure of staff to establish a good rapport with the students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure of teachers and/or student experience staff to provide the necessary and appropriate support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sickness</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal / family problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of learning support where needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dislike of subject, lecturer or tutor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work commitments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to praise good or improving attendance, punctuality or behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boredom / lack of motivation / uninspiring or passive learning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficiently close monitoring of students' attendance during the winter term and especially when students have completed their first assignments before half term as many students fail to return to the college after the half-term break</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overly critical / inappropriate handling of lateness, poor punctuality or behaviour.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students who start courses late are more likely to have a poor attendance record than those who joined them at the start</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial hardship (especially among 19+ students)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research demonstrates that student attendance that falls below 92% causes a deterioration in performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As it is not always easy to impress upon employed, part-time students the importance of giving due priority to their college studies as well as their work commitments, attendance rates may rise if they are limited to a maximum of 10 hours study time.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socialising taking priority over learning so the student is in College but not attending class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance rates for functional skills and theory lessons tend to be lower than those for practical sessions</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 Strategies for improving attendance and punctuality

The table below includes a comprehensive range of possible actions departments may choose to take depending on circumstances. Some actions have a financial cost and so their availability will be subject to budget availability.

Outcome	Actions
1. Students understand and believe that each day of attendance matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet and greet team of managers (HoDs/APs) welcome students to College between 8.30 and 9.30. These to take place the first three weeks of the academic year and the first week back after every half-term break.</li> <li>• Teachers and support staff are role models – e.g. punctual and ready to start each session with purpose, utilising and engaging and interesting activity. It is vital students feel that there is good reason to be there and to bond with the group – inclusion is a major factor in retention.</li> <li>• Students must feel they will miss out if there is any assumption they can ‘catch up’ easily by reviewing material on Moodle.</li> <li>• Produce and display ‘league tables’ for course attendance.</li> <li>• Ensure the review of students’ attendance is a routine and critical part of the tutorial process, highlighting any links between poor attendance and failure to achieve targets.</li> </ul>
2. Early interventions take place with at risk students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ‘at risk’ students and implement appropriate strategies in class and in tutorials to re-engage students</li> </ul>
3. Monitoring of attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and support staff must form good relationship with their students.</li> <li>• Teaching and support staff must make extensive use of email and text messages and the ILP to help manage the attendance of students</li> <li>• Implement the use of student mentors to help motivate students where appropriate</li> </ul>
4. 100% staff commitment at all levels seen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies for improvement work best when improving attendance is seen as everyone’s responsibility.</li> <li>• Use ‘Meet and Greet’ checks (HoDs/APs) at the beginning of the day and departmental specific ‘corridor walks’ (CAMs/HoDs) in between sessions especially after lunch break. Intensive checks for attendance carried out first week back after every half-term.</li> <li>• All staff should challenge lateness and any apparent lack of purposeful activity.</li> <li>• Consider the style of dealing with lateness. If too confrontational it may have adverse consequences, and an aggrieved student may then drop out altogether.</li> <li>• It is preferable for students to turn up late rather than not to attend at all and many students who are consistently late for lessons may have sound reasons for being so. Ensure the class profile is detailed and referred to appropriately.</li> </ul>

<p>5. Extra support provided to students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While good support is essential to students' success, it is also necessary for students not to feel it is acceptable to be absent and 'catch up' later.</li> <li>• Good employability skills such as attendance and punctuality must be a priority for development and, again, the responsibility of every member of staff.</li> </ul>
<p>6. Targeted financial support available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase flexibility and quality of childcare facilities (whole college responsibility).</li> <li>• Increase staff knowledge of what additional support funding can be used for.</li> <li>• Precise targeting of hardship funds to students who are experiencing financial difficulties.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Data used well to monitor and drive improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to constantly monitor attendance data so that actions and interventions can take place in a timely fashion. It is also important the data being used is consistent and valid and all staff and managers are looking at the same data.</li> <li>• Attendance data can be used to carry out a wide range of interventions such as letters home, meetings with parents, following the disciplinary process.</li> </ul>
<p>8. Celebration of attendance through rewards and incentives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward students with 100% attendance rates or most improved attendance and punctuality.</li> <li>• Competitions – by dept., campus, course.</li> <li>• Enterprise activities</li> <li>• Lunchtime activities</li> <li>• Congratulatory letter/email from HoD/AP.</li> <li>• Praise messages.</li> </ul>
<p>9. Sense of community, belonging and caring apparent in the College.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free tea and toast provided before 8:30am.</li> <li>• Use of Student Union</li> <li>• Introduction of clubs, extra-curricular events.</li> <li>• Whole group/dept/cross-college enrichment activities.</li> </ul>
<p>10. Use of external/industry speakers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular external speakers to add further interest and a different perspective.</li> <li>• Reaffirm the importance of punctuality and attendance as essential employability skills.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3: Guidance for register mark up

### MARKS USED FOR EBS REGISTERS

MARK	DESCRIPTION	USE THIS WHEN	Effect *
/	Present	The student attends the session and is on time for the start	Positive ✓
L	Late	The student attends the session and arrives after the start	Positive ✓
A	Authorised Absence *	The teacher/assessor have agreed <b>in advance</b> that the student can be absent from the session for activities relating to their programme of study, which can be evidenced, e.g.: projects or distance learning	Positive ✓
P	External work experience/placement	Student is on external work experience / placement	Positive ✓
V	External trip, visit, residential	Student is on <b>external</b> trip, visit or residential related to their study programme	Positive ✓
S	Sick	The student does not attend the session, and notifies you that they were ill.	Negative ✗
O	Absent	The student does not attend the session and you have been given no reason for their absence, or the reason is not one of the categories below.	Negative ✗
–	Not Expected	The student is not expected due to personal appointments such as hospital, doctors or dentist or an agreed religious festival. Students have been directed not to attend in the event of snow disruption of college closures, including college TAP days.	Neutral –
F	Finished studies on this register	The student does not attend the session and has completed their study, while the session is continuing (e.g. where more than one teaching group attend the same session, with different attendance dates) <b>NB please check that the end date for the relevant curriculum is correct.</b>	Neutral –
T	Transferred	The student does not attend the session and has transferred from the session (e.g. where the transfer/withdrawal forms for a student have not yet been processed, or where a student has the option of attending different sessions and transfers between them) <b>NB please ensure that the correct transfer/withdrawal form has been completed, where the student has transferred from the course.</b>	Neutral –
W	Withdrawn from register	The student does not attend the session and has withdrawn from the session (e.g. where the transfer/withdrawal forms for a student have not yet been processed) <b>NB please ensure that the correct transfer/withdrawal form has been completed, where the student has withdrawn from the course.</b>	Neutral –

\*see further guidance below

## **Authorised Absence (A)**

Authorised Absence is recorded when a student is absent, or not expected, at the session due to undertaking activities related or contributing to their programme of study. Examples of this could be carrying out market research, project work, (agreed distance learning).

A separate mark is to be used to record external work experience or external enrichment.

## **Not Expected (-)**

Wherever possible, students should try to arrange non-College activities outside of their course timetable. Where this is not possible, the following is a list of reasons for absence which may be categorised as 'not expected' by the Head of Department:

- A medical or dental appointment which cannot be arranged outside College time
- A particular need to look after a family member or another person for whom the student has caring responsibilities
- A family bereavement of a close family member
- A religious holiday, (for a maximum of 3 days in an academic year), this is in addition to the normal allowance (i.e. Eid, Diwali etc.)
- A visit to a University, either to attend an open day or an interview (external trip)
- A careers interview
- An appointment with a Connexions personal advisor
- Attendance at a funeral of a close family member
- Service disruption to the student's mode of transport. The student must follow the same procedure for informing the College as for illness.
- Moving house
- A job interview
- Driving test (excludes lessons)
- Attendance at an exam.