



Punctuality and Attendance Policy

Author	Assistant Principal, Teaching and Learning
Date	June 2017
Person Responsible	Assistant Principal, Teaching and Learning
Approval/ review body	SLT
Frequency of Review*	36 months

** Policies will be reviewed more frequently if legal changes or good practice require*

Review History:		
Date of review	Reviewed by	Reason for review
October 2012	Vice Principal and Academic Group	This policy has required a complete review due to changes in the demographics of those attending courses and the funding requirements of central government.
November 2013	Deputy Principal	Changes to expectations of staff Title changes
June 2017	Assistant Principal, Teaching & Learning	Title changes, minor amendments

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Expectations of Staff	1
3. Expectations of Students	3
4. Actions	3
Appendix 1	4
Appendix 2	5

1. Introduction

Punctuality and attendance is important for many reasons. If a student fails to attend many of their classes, they are unable to gain the full value of the course and increase their risk of not achieving their qualification. Poor punctuality and attendance can be an indicator that something is wrong. Issues facing students include personal, social and economic factors.

- 1.1 Personal are defined as those which hinder their ability to arrive on time and commit to attending each session. It may be that they have members of the family to care for, have moved further away from the College or experience a new or continuing health problem.
- 1.2 Social are defined as those which are created by any other domestic issue and may be associated to them being placed in a vulnerable situation through harm by others or the misuse of substances.
- 1.3 Economic can be those covered by financial aspects, such as issues with costs related to travel to College, paying for lodgings or rent, or the responsibilities of providing for a family.

If one, or a multiple of these factors identified above, is affecting a student's ability to fully take part in their chosen course of study, then ultimately they are at risk of achieving a positive outcome and may, as a consequence, leave the programme.

Our focus as a College is to resolve issues causing poor punctuality and attendance, rather than to judge students on the basis of assumption.

The College offers a range of support to students which can assist or advise with most of the personal, social and economic factors, although ultimately the student has to want to accept the support on offer, if they are to continue in the College.

2. Expectations of Staff

Working with the Curriculum Teams, Curriculum Administrators are pivotal in the daily identification and tracking of learners and all absence reporting for each department will go through their office.

Staff are expected to:

- 2.1. communicate clearly the College's expectation of students to attend **all** classes, in order to maximise their chances of achieving their qualification aim and desired grade;
- 2.2. follow up on all non-attendance which will put in jeopardy the student's place on the course. If termly attendance falls below 85%, the tutor will follow this up and where no satisfactory explanation is given, a letter will be generated by the Curriculum Administrator and sent to the student

and parent/guardian and employer¹. Causes for concern should be generated by tutors for each instance of absence without satisfactory explanation. Where more than 3 causes for concern relating to attendance have been recorded, the tutor should refer to Curriculum Manager to commence the disciplinary process. For clarity, causes for concern trigger a level 1 disciplinary which is dealt with at Curriculum Manager level. Subsequent attendance concerns will result in a Level 2 disciplinary hearing held by the CM at which a written warning and behavioural and attendance agreement are put in place. Breach of this agreement will result in a recommendation for withdrawal being made by the CM to the Assistant Principal who may either sanction withdrawal at this stage (if the breach is clear without any mitigating circumstances), or convene a Level 3 disciplinary, which will likely result in a final written warning, breach of which will result in instant withdrawal;

- 2.3. challenge all late-comers. Lateness, in minutes, must be recorded in the register. In dealing with issues surrounding punctuality, it is important to be non-judgmental. We may not tolerate poor-timekeeping but we should always be tolerant of students. We should always bear in mind that students may often have good reasons for being late but may not want to discuss this in class or with their lecturer;
- 2.4. ensure that issues related to punctuality/attendance are addressed in tutorials and SMART targets for improvement set and monitored;
- 2.5. ensure that classes start promptly and finish as timetabled and that the required number of hours are taught;
- 2.6. ensure completion of electronic registers accurately on the day;
- 2.7. allow late arriving students into class at an appropriate point, unless there is a very good reason, for example health and safety concerns in a practical session, whilst challenging and recording this lateness. Where the majority of the lesson has elapsed, tutors may direct learners to study privately to avoid disruption to the class; no attendance mark will be given;
- 2.8. involve, as appropriate, parents (and employer if appropriate) to assist the Curriculum Manager in addressing issues of attendance and punctuality, identified through progress review tracking; and
- 2.9. ensure that the Curriculum Administrator is advised by the tutor with regard to each day of non-attendance by an Apprentice. The CA will respond according to the record of reporting agreement with the employer, (e.g. phone call to employer, letter if attendance drops, termly or half termly detailed attendance report).

¹ For those students who are studying a work-based learning apprenticeship route

3. Expectations of Students

Students are expected to:

- 3.1. ensure that they attend all lessons on their course and do so punctually;
- 3.2. arrive for lessons properly equipped and prepared;
- 3.3. contact the College at least one hour before the commencement of class, if they have genuine reasons for lateness or absence; and
- 3.4. endeavour to keep routine health and other appointments out of College hours, where possible; and
- 3.5. contact the College using the e-notify system where it is in use by the curriculum department.

4. Actions

- 4.1. Curriculum Managers and the Senior Leadership Team will monitor the punctual start of lessons through spot checks;
- 4.2. All courses are monitored weekly by the Curriculum Manager;
- 4.3. Standard letters will be generated via information from electronic registers. (Please refer to appendices for standard letters which can be adapted to suit the needs of the student);
- 4.4. Curriculum Administrator will run a report on a regular basis and liaise with Curriculum Manager to determine which learners should receive the relevant letters;
- 4.5. All Curriculum Managers are responsible for informing Curriculum Administrators if there is a valid reason for the letter not to be sent; and
- 4.6. After issuing letters expressing concern and offers of support, unexplained non-attendance will automatically result in withdrawal from the course after a four week period has elapsed.

APPENDIX 1

Letter 1

Dear

The College takes the welfare of all its students very seriously and I see from our records that you have been absent for week(s). I have tried to contact you but unfortunately without success. *[If appropriate, add: Your attendance had been excellent up to this point and I would like to congratulate you on that.]*

I am concerned and would like to know if you are well and that you are still enjoying your course. I very much want you to continue with your programme and to achieve your qualifications. Your attendance at College is obviously very important if you are to achieve success.

If you unwell or away from College for some other reason, I would be grateful if you could let me know. It may be that you are not happy on the course and, if this is the case, I would like to talk with you about this and discuss your options.

As you know, the College has support services available and it may be that I could put you in touch with these if that would help. Equally, if you are unavoidably away from College, it may be that I could make notes and work available to you through Moodle, so that you can continue to work from home.

Your lecturers have missed seeing you at College, and I would be very grateful if you could phone or email me as soon as possible on *** to let me know how you are.

Many thanks

Yours etc

APPENDIX 2

Letter 2

Dear

Further to my letter of ****, I write now to confirm that, as I have not heard from you for a period of four weeks, I have no option but to withdraw you from your course.

Please feel free to contact the College at any time if you would like any advice or support in the future.

I regret this outcome and would like to wish you well for the future.

Yours etc