

ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT POLICY

A. INTRODUCTION

Following the Ofsted inspection of December 2015 the college has responded swiftly to the views of the inspectorate and judgement that attendance is low in a significant number of areas. Whilst the college has always been committed to monitoring and improving student attendance, a key driver is now to ensure that more of a focus is placed on this task with a view to seeing a higher number of students successfully complete their course.

B. ENTITLEMENT

All students will have their attendance monitored through electronic registers. This policy sets out the process for intervening where the attendance of students is of a perceived detriment to their study, whilst also detailing how the college aims to praise and reward both improved attendance and outstanding attendance.

C. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy replaces the Attendance Monitoring Policy (August 2015).

The importance of attending lessons is continuously promoted and reinforced to students throughout their time with us. Leaders, managers and lecturers ensure that students make a direct link between positive attendance and successful outcomes whilst encouraging students to make the comparison between college and the workplace and preparing them for future study or employment.

Where students' attendance becomes a cause for concern, and fails to meet the expectations of the college, intervention is necessary to ensure that students are coached, mentored and, in some cases, disciplined in order to improve.

Consideration is given to those students who have a declared disability, long-term illness or who are pregnant, as each of these may affect the ongoing attendance of a student and as such, particular arrangements may be required to adapt a study programme to meet the needs of those students. In some cases, it may be appropriate to enact the Fitness to Study policy and procedures, and allocate specific resources to allow students to succeed if they are able to do so.

Should a student fail to attend college on a regular basis with no legitimate reason, then it is likely that action will result in targeted intervention, followed by disciplinary action, should there be little or no improvement.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

1. The college has designed this policy to ensure appropriate intervention takes place at varying levels of poor to outstanding attendance. In all cases, the principle of the policy is to take swift and effective action with the Assistant Principal – Services for Students, Curriculum Managers and Student Mentor team having joint responsibility for these procedures, and a subsequent and direct improvement on poor performance.

2. The college target for attendance in the academic year will be set annually by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
3. Where the attendance of a student is cause for concern, and they are under the age of 19 their parent or carer will be kept informed of their attendance.

Where we have students who are sponsored by an employer to attend the college and their attendance is a concern, we will keep the employer informed of the student's attendance.

Where we have children aged between 14 and 16 years of age studying at the college we will either; keep the sponsor school and/or their parent or carer informed of the student's attendance.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students

It is the responsibility of students to make every effort to attend all of their timetabled lessons. Where they are unable to attend college they must inform their Student Mentor by 8:45am. The preferred method of communication is by telephone though email is acceptable.

Students will have the opportunity to utilise ProMonitor as a tool to set and review their own targets throughout their time as a student at the college.

2. Student Mentors

The Student Mentor team, led by the Senior Student Mentor, is responsible for the operational monitoring of the attendance of full time students and those on study programmes within the college.

The Student Mentor team has responsibility to put in place face to face coaching, mentoring and other interventions, as detailed within this policy, to drive up the attendance rates within the curriculum areas they support. Those who the Student Mentors will regularly liaise with include students, lecturers, members of the Student Life team, Curriculum Managers, parents/carers and members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The Student Mentor team will utilise ProMonitor and EBS as a tool for reviewing and assessing risk and attendance of students on a daily basis.

3. Lecturers

It is the responsibility of the lecturer to inform the respective Student Mentor if a student does not attend a class and a register mark of 'absent' is used.

It is imperative that those members of staff who have authority to mark registers do so at the time of delivering the lesson to the class. Where this is not possible due to a lack of IT facilities, the member of staff should do so before the end of the college day. Failure to observe this may result in disciplinary action being taken against that member of staff.

Where a student is late to class and the register has already been marked, the lecturer should ensure that the register mark is changed from a mark of absent to a mark of late. A student is not absent unless they do not attend more than 50% of their timetabled lesson.

The lecturers will utilise ProMonitor and EBS as a tool for reviewing and assessing risk and attendance of students as part of the ILP/Tutorial programme within the college.

4. Curriculum Managers

The Curriculum Management team will receive regular reports which highlight attendance rates pertaining to courses and individual students. It is the responsibility of each Curriculum Manager to work with the Student Mentor who supports students in their area to highlight attendance improvement strategies and discuss individual student cases.

The Curriculum Management team will utilise ProMonitor and EBS as a tool for reviewing and assessing risk and attendance of students.

5. Assistant Principal – Services for Students

The Assistant Principal – Services for Students is responsible for overseeing the improvement of student attendance and reporting to the Senior Leadership Team and Corporation on matters relating to student attendance.

The Assistant Principal – Services for Students will utilise ProMonitor and EBS as a tool for reviewing and assessing risk and attendance of students.

F. INTERVENTIONS FOR POOR ATTENDANCE

1. Those students with attendance below 70%

Students with an attendance rate of less than 70% are at a significant risk of not achieving their qualification aims and/or completion of their study programme. At this level the Student Mentor and Curriculum Manager must make every effort to meet with the student and their parent/carer (if appropriate) and arrange a meeting with the Assistant Principal – Services for Students for a MEETING OF SERIOUS CONCERN REGARDING ATTENDANCE.

Following the meeting, the Student Mentor will update the student's ProMonitor profile with SMART targets for improvement being set and a letter sent home acknowledging the agreements which took place in the meeting.

If there is no improvement at the time of reviewing the SMART targets and the student has previously been subject to a Student Improvement Plan (SIP) then the Assistant Principal – Services for Students will refer to the Disciplinary Procedure.

2. Those students with attendance between 70% and 85%

Students with an attendance rate of less than 85% risk not achieving their qualification aims and/or completing their study programme and/or continuation of poor attendance. At this level the Student Mentor and Curriculum Manager

should make every effort to meet with the student and their parent/carer (if appropriate) and hold a **MEETING OF CONCERN REGARDING ATTENDANCE**. Within this meeting both the student and parent/carer (if appropriate) must understand the serious risk to progression should the student not improve their attendance.

Following the meeting, the student's ProMonitor profile should be updated with SMART targets for improvement being set and a letter sent home acknowledging the agreements which took place in the meeting.

If there is no improvement at the time of reviewing the SMART targets, then the Curriculum Manager should consider placing the student on a Student Improvement Plan (SIP) or refer to the Disciplinary Procedure.

Should the student not successfully improve their attendance following the SIP or Disciplinary meeting, then the Curriculum Manager should progress with the Disciplinary Procedure or extend the SIP and allow the Student Mentor to continue regularly meeting with the student to coach and mentor their improvement.

Should no further improvement be made then the Assistant Principal – Services for Students should be consulted with and informed.

3. Those students with attendance of between 85% and 90%

Students with an attendance rate which is between 85% and 90% risk missing vital work as part of their course and falling behind. Student Mentors should use opportunities to frequently meet face to face with students either formally or informally, to put in place support or challenge poor attendance.

If a meeting is required, then the Student Mentor should organise this and following and should update the student's ProMonitor profile with SMART targets for improvement being set and a letter sent home acknowledging the agreements which took place in the meeting.

4. Those students whose attendance is below the annual college target

Where there is concern, the Student Mentor should make contact with both the student and their parent/carer (if appropriate) to highlight the college concern. A **LETTER OF CONCERN** should be sent home detailing the specific attendance issues and encouraging them to seek support should they require it or attend more often. Where required, the Student Mentor should aim to meet face to face with the student to encourage them to meet the college target and improve their attendance.

5. Advice, Guidance, Support & Study Skills

At all levels of attendance intervention, the student should be asked if they have any support needs and where it is required, a referral should be made to either; the Learning Support team, the Student Life team or externally to support agencies.

At all levels of attendance intervention, and where a student risks being unable to successfully complete work which they have missed due to poor attendance, then the Student Mentor or Curriculum Manager should refer the student to the Study Skills Tutor so that missed work may be completed in a supervised environment.

G. MONITORING THE ATTENDANCE OF PART TIME STUDENTS

It is the responsibility of the Student Finance Assistant to regularly review the attendance of part time students. The Student Finance Assistant will work alongside lecturers, Curriculum Managers, the Student Life team and Assistant Principal – Services for Students to offer a similar level of service to encourage improved attendance where this is required.

H. MONITORING THE ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS AGED 14 TO 16

A member of the Student Mentor team will be asked to act as the main liaison between school and college where the college is the provider of education on behalf of a partner school. Liaison with parents/carers may be direct or through the school. This will be directed, in collaboration with the school, by the Assistant Principal – Services for Students.

I. RECOGNITION OF IMPROVED ATTENDANCE

Following intervention, as detailed in Section F1-4 of this policy, the college should make every effort to congratulate an improved attendance record where this is recognised. Where there has been a slight improvement, this should be done verbally by the Student Mentor. Where there has been a significant effort made by the student, the Curriculum Manager should aim to personally congratulate the student so as to encourage further improvements.

J. RECOGNITION OF EXEMPLARY ATTENDANCE

Exemplary attendance is deemed by the college to be 100% attendance at all timetabled lessons. It is recognised that this is a difficult task and so the following rewards will be made available to students on a monthly and annual basis.

1. Where a student attends 100% of their lessons in a month of teaching they will be entered into a prize draw where they may be awarded a voucher. They will automatically receive communication from the Acting Principal & Deputy Chief Executive which thanks them for their continued efforts.
2. Where a student attends 100% of their timetabled lessons throughout the full academic year, they will receive a gift voucher, an award at the annual Student Awards Night and be entered into a prize draw to receive a high value prize which supports learning.
3. Where a course meets or exceeds the annual college target at the end of each academic year, they will have the option to choose an educational visit through discussion with their lecturer.

K. LINKS TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

Disciplinary Policy – Authorised & Unauthorised Absences
Student Improvement Plan Guidance
Disciplinary Procedure

Quality Assurance – version control			
Review period	Annually	Review carried out by	Assistant Principal – Services for Students
Approved by	SLT	Date approved	26.4.16
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