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# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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## Introduction

This policy applies to all students and outlines the College's expectations with regards to attendance and punctuality. It aims to assist all students to take responsibility for their own attendance and timekeeping.

## Policy Statement

City of Bristol College recognises that excellent attendance is a key factor in maximising the learning experience and in developing employability skills. Attendance and punctuality are key qualities valued by employers and are therefore essential to effective employment. We are, therefore, committed to actively promoting, supporting and encouraging full attendance and punctuality for all our students in preparation for employment.

Signing the learning agreement, at enrolment, commits all students to attend 100% of their study programme. This includes, all work placements, classes, workshops, tutorials and examinations.

Students aged 16-18 on 31<sup>st</sup> August of the year they start their fulltime programme, who have achieved GCSE Grade 3 in English or mathematics will attend GCSE English or mathematics classes as part of their study programme. A student who has achieved a grade lower than 3 in their GCSE English or mathematics will be required to attend English or mathematics classes as appropriate to their level of learning.

## Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled with the College (16-18, apprentices, Higher Education students), to maximise their success and progression. However, some statements only apply to certain cohorts of students.

It also applies to all teaching, assessing and business support staff with a responsibility to record and monitor attendance.

International, non-EU Tier 4 students are required to comply with this policy but there are additional requirements regarding attendance that are set by the Home Office as part of their visa and the College's Tier 4 licence (please refer to the International Student Handbook).

The College recognises that parents/carers/guardians and employers, where appropriate, can support students through encouraging good attendance and punctuality.

## Definitions

**Acceptable attendance** is 94% or over, for all timetabled sessions with no unexplained late arrivals or early departures.

**Acceptable attendance** is 94% for Bursary, Learner Support Fund (LSF) and other attendance related payments. Attendance below this may result in payments being withheld

**An authorised absence** is an absence which an employer would be prepared to accept or where the absence could not have been reasonably foreseen (please see Appendix A).

**Alternative College Activity** occurs when a student or class are not present for a timetabled activity, but are involved in another College activity contributing to their course (eg field trip, exam, work placement).

**All other absence**, including sickness, is unauthorised (please see Appendix B).

## Principles

This policy is underpinned by the College's values of ambition, pride, integrity and respect.

### **Ambition**

The attendance and punctuality policy aims to:

- Set clear expectations as to the acceptable minimum level of attendance.
- Reinforce the correlation between high levels of attendance and achievement for all students.

### **Pride**

The attendance and punctuality policy aims to be:

- Accessible, easy to obtain and open to all students and stakeholders.
- Clear and easy to understand, and includes information about how to access further support.
- Responsive to the needs of individuals and contains a commitment that effective records will be kept by all involved.

### **Integrity**

The attendance and punctuality policy aims to:

- Ensure that all staff involved are appropriately trained, resourced and supported, and able to record the correct register marks.
- Set our clearly the expectations the college has of all students, apprentices and Higher Education students.
- Provide reassurance that attendance and punctuality is being monitored, to ensure that any outcomes or responses are appropriate, timely and inform the development and improvement of services.

### **Respect**

The attendance and punctuality policy aims to:

- Ensure all parties act reasonably and fairly towards each other, and to treat the processes themselves with respect.
- Encourage and allow for students to provide information relating to their attendance and punctuality without fear of disadvantage and so that appropriate support can be provided.

## Responsibilities

### **Students' responsibilities**

- All students are expected to be ready for the start of their lesson. This includes returning from breaks.
- All students are expected to stay in attendance until the end of their class, unless agreed with their tutor.
- All students must inform and seek authorisation from their lecturer/assessor or tutor/study coach in advance, of any known absences (see Appendix A) or lateness.
- All unforeseen absences or lateness must be reported to lecturer/assessor/tutor/study coach at least 1 hour before the start of the lesson.
- Students can view their own attendance through ProPortal.

## Higher Education students' responsibilities

- All students organise their personal arrangements to enable the level of attendance required by the programme of study. This will apply to all lectures, 1-1 tutorials and where applicable, work placements.
- In the case of unplanned absences, students should inform their Programme Lead as soon as possible so that any programme or module requirements can be discussed and an agreed action plan be drawn up.
- Where an extended absence is notified to the Programme Lead and it is considered to be significant in terms of impacting on the requirements of the programme, the College may require the student to interrupt their studies and return in the next academic year.

## College responsibilities

- **Staff** will always challenge latecomers. Lateness must be recorded in the register with an L and the number of minutes late added.
- **Staff** will expect students to arrive to class and 1-1 tutorials with their study coach/personal tutor on time, and will therefore set an example of their own punctual attendance by being in class ready to commence the lesson ahead of the students.
- **All staff** will communicate the College's expectations with regards to attendance and punctuality throughout the programme, providing students with clear instructions and contact details of how to report absence
- The College will monitor attendance and provide appropriate support for students who experience attendance difficulties.
- **All staff** should challenge attendance appropriately, directly with the student and in addition to the Study Coach (via a comment on ProMonitor – refer to the Student Disciplinary Policy). Student attendance levels should be regularly discussed, in team meetings, with the appropriate Head of Department.
- Individual attendance and punctuality levels will be addressed, with a student, during tutorials by the **Study Coach or Personal Tutor**. Individual actions for improvement will be devised, recorded and monitored on the student's Individual Learning Plan, in Promonitor and may form part of a Stage 1 or 2 of the Student Disciplinary Policy.
- The Attendance and Punctuality Procedure (within Student Disciplinary Policy) will be initiated where students have attendance below 94% or regular lateness. Poor student attendance will be subject to the Student Disciplinary Policy and action plan for improved attendance and punctuality.
- All students who are absent for longer than 4 consecutive weeks without notifying their lecturer/assessor, and show no intention of returning, will be withdrawn from their course without the Student Disciplinary Procedure being applied. A warning letter will be sent out after 2 consecutive weeks, initiated by the **Study Coach/Personal Tutor**, in liaison with the relevant Head of Department (exceptions may apply in Higher Education (HE) programmes).
- Students on part-time study programmes will also have their attendance levels monitored and low attendance will be challenged by the **lecturer**. Patterns of low attendance will also be subject to the Student Disciplinary Policy.

## Registers

The register is the legal and auditable document used by the College to record attendance and punctuality.

The accurate marking of a register is a contractual requirement for all teaching staff and non-compliance will be subject to staff disciplinary procedures.

Registers must be completed within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson. If the activity prevents this, a temporary paper register must be completed and the electronic register completed before the next working day.

It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to ensure they are trained in the use of electronic registers; are aware of the register marking codes, are responsible for using the correct register marks to ensure they are accurate and know how to access and complete a temporary paper register, if needed. All training guides can be found on the [College Intranet](#).

Register marks can be found in Appendix C.

## Students with disabilities, learning difficulties or other support needs

Support is available from the Learning Support team for students who have a disability or medical condition that affects their ability to achieve 100% attendance or to be regularly punctual to class. The team will work with the student to ensure reasonable adjustments and any other support is in place. Please call 0117 312 5186 or email [learningsupport@cityofbristol.ac.uk](mailto:learningsupport@cityofbristol.ac.uk) to arrange an appointment.

The needs of students with learning difficulties, medical conditions or disabilities will be taken into consideration during any reviews or disciplinary action, with regards to attendance.

If certain circumstances are affecting attendance, the College has a Student Services, where there are dedicated staff that can provide support and guidance on a range of issues, including financial support, changing course, careers advice, childcare and accommodation. Appointments can be made through the Student Services Team, at reception, at each of the main sites or calling 0117 312 5000.

The Study Plus team may also be able to provide advice and support to students, on a range of issues including essay and report writing and assistance with mathematics. Students should speak to their lecturer/assessor about this.

## Linked policies

- Student Charter
- Student Disciplinary Policy – attendance and punctuality
- Student Progress Policy
- Additional Learning Support Policy
- Discretionary Learner Support Fund Policy

**Review frequency:** every three years

**Lead officer:** Assistant Principal FEHE

**Senior Manager Responsible:** Assistant Principal FEHE

## Appendix A – Authorised absence

The following reasons for absence are acceptable

1. Driving tests (not lessons)\*
2. Stay in Hospital\*
3. Emergency Doctor or Dental Appointments\*
4. Funeral of a close relative
5. Religious holidays and festivals (where the student practises the religion/faith)
6. A medical appointment which cannot be arranged outside of College hours\*
7. A visit to University either to attend an open day or for interview; or a career related interview\*
8. Attendance at a probation meeting or court appearance\*
9. Jury Service\*
10. Severe disruption to student's mode of transport
11. Attending a job interview\*
12. Pregnancy related sickness
13. Pre and Post Natal appointments\*
14. Moving house
15. Care of a relative or person, where the student is a registered carer

\*Students must provide evidence to their lecturer/assessor eg a hospital appointment card

## APPENDIX B – UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

The following reasons for absence are not acceptable and deemed unauthorised

1. Sickness (except where related to pregnancy). Sickness will always be recorded as unauthorised. Any absence over 5 days will require a doctor's note. **This needs to be marked S on the register**
2. Holidays during term time
3. Part or Full-time Work, which is not part of the student's programme of study
4. Leisure activities
5. Birthdays or similar celebrations
6. Shopping
7. Driving lessons
8. Missing the bus
9. Routine appointments with your GP (Doctor and Dentist)
10. Oversleeping

Absence for 5 days or more because of sickness, will require a "statement of Fitness for Work" from a doctor, brought into College on the first day of return.

An ongoing medical condition which may affect attendance, either temporarily or permanently, may require the student to provide further medical information to ensure reasonable adjustments are made. Furthermore, a Personal Evacuation Plan and/or a risk assessment may be required prior to the student's return to College, conducted by the Study Coach/Personal Tutor communicated to the relevant Head of Department.

## APPENDIX C – REGISTER MARKS

Mark	Reason	Details	%
/	Present	The student is present at the start of the timetabled session. If a student leaves before the end of the session you should amend the mark to D (see below)	Positive
L	Late	The student turns up for the session but is late. You will be required to add the number of minutes.	Positive
D	Departed Early	Student attends the lesson but leaves early. You will be required to add the number of minutes early the student left. Reason will need to be included in Register notes.	Positive
A	Authorised Absence	An authorised absence is an absence which an employer would be prepared to accept or where the absence could not have been reasonably foreseen. You will be required to select a reason for the absence from the drop-down menu. Remember the “notified” is not the same as “authorised”.	Neutral
N	Notified absence	All absences that are not authorised or due to sickness but we have been notified of.	Negative
O	Absent	All absences that are not authorised or due to sickness and we have not been notified of.	Negative
S	Sick	A student is reported in sick. Sickness due to Pregnancy and a stay in Hospital for medical purposes is an authorised absence.	Negative
M	Missing/Unknown mark	To be used in rare circumstances where a tutor cannot confirm the attendance of a student or a tutor has left the organisation without marking the register. Only the Timetable and Register Support Team can use this mark. Please contact them to facilitate this.	Neutral
B	Backfill	Used when a student starts later than the “planned start” date of the course. This mark will automatically complete. It does require the enrolment start date to be accurate. If you need a register updated with this mark please contact the timetabling team	Neutral
W/T/C	Withdrawn/Transfer/Complete	A student has Withdrawn from, Transferred from or Completed this timetabled session. Remember that you have to follow additional procedures for each of these actions, the mark in the register does not automatically Withdraw, Transfer or Complete the student.	Neutral
Z	Class Cancelled	This is used when a class is cancelled, for reasons out of the control of the College. eg “snow day”, Strike, tutor is sick and no cover is available. Cancelled classes must be authorised by your SLT lead. Only the Timetable and Register Support Team can use this mark.	Neutral
X	Alternative College Activity	Alternative College Activity occurs when a student or class are not present for a timetabled activity but are involved in another College activity which contributes to their course ie an individual or whole class have swapped their lesson for another activity (eg trip, exam, work placement, College Representative Meeting). For audit purposes you must provide details of the “new activity” on the register to the Timetable and Register Support Team. Only the Timetable and Register Support Team can use this mark.	Neutral

UM mark on attendance reports, indicates the register or student has not been marked for that session.