

The
Sheffield
College

POLICY

Further Education Student Attendance Policy & Procedures

Document administration

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SLT lead	Director of Student Services	
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Document	Description and link
1	<u>Student Positive Engagement & Behaviour Policy, Guidelines & Procedure</u>
2	<u>Student Charter</u>
3	<u>Employee Code of Conduct Policy</u>
4	<u>Safeguarding Policy, Guidelines and Procedure</u>
5	<u>Public Statement of Commitment: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)</u>

1. Purpose

1.1: Attendance and punctuality are integral and fundamental to our students learning, development and progression.

1.2: The purpose of this Policy is to set out The Sheffield College's (TSC) approach and expectations of student attendance and retention for the 2024/2025 academic year.

2. Scope, aims and objectives

2.1: This policy applies to all students and apprentices. For students it applies to each of their planned and timetabled face-to-face on campus learning sessions, planned and timetabled face-to-face online learning sessions and other planned off campus activity including independent virtual learning. For apprentices it applies to each of their planned and timetabled face-to-face on campus learning sessions, planned and timetabled face-to-face online learning sessions and planned independent virtual learning.

Attendance is defined as where a student or apprentice is present for face-to-face learning sessions on campus or for face-to-face online learning sessions arranged and agreed by the college.

Retention is defined as any student who does complete their learning goal or programme.

2.2: This policy aims to promote a whole college approach to maintaining excellent attendance, to set out the procedures for reporting, recording, and monitoring attendance, and to clarify what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.

2.3: This policy outlines the key indicators that signal a student is 'at risk' of not being retained. Early intervention is critical. This document outlines the procedures that must be followed if a student is identified as 'at risk' of not being retained.

2.3: TSC will support a relentless focus on continually improving students' attendance and punctuality. Our expectation is that students have 100% attendance and are punctual to all their scheduled commitments including lessons and tutorial appointments. This includes physical and online learning sessions. We recognise though that this is a challenge for some students.

2.4: TSC will support students experiencing genuine difficulties in attending college. We will investigate the many causes of absenteeism and work with students on an individual basis to best address and remove barriers to attending for each student.

2.5: TSC will actively identify, intervene, and monitor the progress of any student or apprentice who is 'at risk' of not being retained. Students experiencing consistent attendance and punctuality issues and are considered to be at risk of failing to achieve or of withdrawal may find themselves subject to our Fitness to Study process or our Student Disciplinary Process.

2.6: TSC work to develop positive behaviours towards attendance and punctuality which will begin during the interview, be developed during the induction period and will be reinforced throughout their Study programme.

2.7: TSC will seek support for our students' success from parents, carers and employers. It is good practice for parents, carers and/or employers to be informed of persistent student absenteeism.

2.8: TSC acknowledge the impact of caring responsibilities for Young Adult Carers and therefore we will ensure that strategies are implemented in academies to minimise the disruption to their education and support them to achieve their goals.

2.9: TSC recognise that some categories of students are more vulnerable than others and therefore require enhanced monitoring of attendance (e.g. Young people with care experience, 14-16 year olds, some students whose EHCP indicates that there may be a need)

2.10 TSC will actively identify, intervene and monitor the progress of any student or apprentice who is 'at risk' of not being retained. Indicators for potential 'at risk' students are:

- a) Students whose attendance drops below 95%.
- b) Students who display unexplained absence for a period of 2 or more consecutive days.
- c) Students who display sporadic attendance or a pattern of non-attendance.
- d) Students who are consistently late for lessons.
- e) Students who have time out for health reasons.
- f) Absence from specific elements of their study programme e.g. maths and English, work experience and/or industry placements

a) College.

2.11 TSC will actively review student attendance as part of a process of Student Progress Reviews. The reviews will be scheduled under the Common Assessment Points throughout the academic year.

3. Responsibilities

An overview of the expectation for attendance management for all levels including management, academic staff and key support staff can be seen below.

3.1: The **Director of Student Services** is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation arrangements of these procedures.

3.2: The **Head of Tutorial and Student Progress** is responsible for developing, leading, and monitoring the implementation of these procedures.

3.3: The **Deputy Principal** is responsible for ensuring:

- a) That the Attendance and Retention Policy and Procedures is implemented, that student attendance meets the College attendance target of 95% or above and delivers an outstanding student experience over the period of this policy.
- b) To ensure appropriate resources are in place to ensure that the policy can be implemented fully.

3.4: The **Director of Strategy and Systems Improvement** is responsible for:

- a) ensuring that these procedures meet ESFA requirements.
- b) agreeing and providing College, Academy and Student level attendance and punctuality reports via Power BI and MI reports.

3.4: **Assistant Principals** are responsible for:

- a) The Attendance and Retention Policy and Procedures is available and that the attendance procedures are followed by all staff, and student attendance meets the College target of 95% or above.
- b) Academy Directors are briefed about the implementation of this Policy and Procedures and held to account for their actions.
- c) Management Information (MI) reports are monitored to ensure attendance issues within departments are identified early and acted upon.

3.5: Academy Directors are responsible for ensuring:

- a) 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.
- b) Targets are set and reviewed throughout the year.
- c) Full compliance with TAP registers, ensuring all TAP registers are completed within 10 minutes of the scheduled start of the session.
- d) 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.
- e) Student attendance is monitored via registers, MI reports and the Student Positive Engagement and Behaviour Policy, Guidelines and Procedures are followed to identify any patterns of poor attendance. Where there are concerns about a student's attendance or punctuality, seek feedback from the student in order to develop strategies to support improvement.
- f) Student records are updated on Promonitor to reflect actions taken, to address poor attendance and punctuality, with details of smart targets set and recorded, including Maths and English.
- g) Strategies are agreed in the department to address students arriving after the start of lessons or leaving early to avoid disruption to the flow of the lesson and other students' learning.
- h) All staff involved with the learning programme including Maths and English are informed of the student absence.
- i) 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 and Additional Learning Support is consulted and appropriate support for the student is in place.
- j) Resources are available online for students to continue studies during periods of absence.
- k) Excellent attendance is recognised and celebrated on a regular basis – at least once per term.

3.6 The Curriculum Manager/Programme Co-ordinator/Sector Director (Apps) are responsible for:

- a) Working with the course team to maximise attendance at all sessions. Actively promote the importance of good attendance to all students, consistently and persistently.
- b) Liaising with Heads of Student Experience, Progress Coaches, Personal Tutors or Work Based Learning Tutors/Training Assessment Facilitators for apprentices to ensure that students on the programme who have not attended are contacted, to identify reasons for non-attendance and agree strategies for improvement in attendance.
- c) Reviewing Power BI and MI attendance dashboard/reports weekly and monitor groups, individuals progress or identify any cause for concerns.
- d) Where attendance is not improving, managers should review this with PTs and ensure the strategies and approaches are fit for purpose and recorded appropriately. This may require them to be updated or further support may be initiated.
- e) Ensuring 'Student attendance and learners at risk' is a standard agenda item at all team
- f) meetings.

- g) Ensuring they understand which stage/s of the attendance and retention policy and procedures are within their area of responsibility at any given time. Accurate records therefore need to be recorded on the student's Pro Monitor or the apprentice's Smart Assessor.
- h) Actively review student attendance as part of a process of Student Progress Reviews. The reviews will be scheduled as per the agreed **Common Assessment Points** throughout the academic year. The reviews will be scheduled under the Common Assessment Points throughout the academic year. This would provide a stop and review point that involves: Pastoral teams.

3.7 Teaching staff delivering face to face and synchronous online delivery are responsible for:

- a) Being a role model and demonstrating exemplary behaviours with regard to attendance and punctuality by arriving on time for lessons and not finishing lessons early.
- b) Ensuring the teaching room is prepared and ready to start the lesson on time and the room is set up appropriately to facilitate effective use of the TAP register system.
- c) Ensuring TAP registers are complete at the beginning (within 10 minutes) of a lesson wherever the facilities exist to do so.
- d) 100% registers are marked each day for scheduled sessions.
- e) Registers must be completed electronically via the TAP register system where this facility exists. Where the facility does not exist, then registers will still be marked within 10 minutes and uploaded electronically to the MIS team within the same day.
- f) Live synchronous lessons will use the appropriate mark to distinguish between delivery in college, and asynchronous sessions – this is essential to understand whether the learner was in college, or elsewhere.
- g) Actively review student attendance as part of a process of Student Progress Reviews. The reviews will be scheduled as per the agreed **Common Assessment Points** throughout the academic year. The reviews will be scheduled under the Common Assessment Points throughout the academic year. This would provide a stop and review point that involves: Curriculum Managers, and Programme Co-ordinator, and Pastoral teams.

3.8: The Head of Student Experience/Sector Direct (Apps) is responsible for:

- a) The management of attendance procedures and interventions linked to the positive engagement policy. They must ensure that they understand the policy, procedure, and guidelines. They must ensure that both personal tutors and student mentors understand the policy, procedures and guidelines at the start of the academic year. They must ensure that both personal tutors, student mentors and curriculum teams are trained to understand their role and responsibility.
- b) Throughout the enrolment and induction period they must ensure that they manage and co-ordinate 'welcome to college events'. The events should make expectations and procedures of attendance clear to parent / carers. Throughout these events it must be made clear to parents / carers of the support available for attendance.
- c) Throughout the induction period they must ensure that all personal tutors have made attendance expectations and procedures are clear.
- d) Throughout the academic year they must ensure that there is a quality assurance procedure tracking the intervention personal tutors and students mentors are taking.
- e) Regularly track, analyse, and report on attendance, punctuality, progress and engagement by Academy at the Student Experience Group and at Performance Review
- f) Embed the college's Positive Engagement and Behaviour policy into the Academy to support the success of each the student.

- g) Embedding college procedures to ensure students at-risk (including for reasons relating to attendance, progress and retention) and students forming part of Priority Groups are identified and supported.
- h) Carrying out agreed quality audits regarding attendance, punctuality, progress and engagement and provide College, Academy and student level attendance, punctuality and engagement reports.
- i) Actively review student attendance as part of a process of Student Progress Reviews. The reviews will be scheduled as per the agreed **Common Assessment Points** throughout the academic year. The reviews will be scheduled under the Common Assessment Points throughout the academic year. This would provide a stop and review point that involves: Curriculum Managers, and Programme Co-ordinator, and Pastoral teams.
- j) Support competitions and reward schemes through the tutorial and curriculum framework that encourages excellent student attendance.

3.9: The **Personal Tutor** is responsible for:

- a) Ensure students, parents and carers are aware of the college attendance expectations and absence reporting procedures. They should share the procedure section of the policy with all stakeholders. They should set clear expectations of attendance identified in the policy. They should ensure that students are aware of this expectation during induction and parents / carers are aware of this expectation during the induction period. Both welcome to college events and early contact with parent / carers in regards to attendance expectations should occur during the induction period. Throughout the academic year there should be an aim that all students maintain attendance of 95% or better through regular and consistent engagement with parent / carers.
- b) Ensuring all parents/carers of students who are absent that day are contacted to triangulate information regarding the reason for absence, interventions are logged and actions for improvement identified and reviewed. Where required, support via the Student Mentor should be put into place when attendance becomes a high-risk concern. Follow up interactions in relation to logging actions, outcomes and actions should be logged on Promonitor.
- c) Identifying and referring students with low attendance that is classified as high risk to Student Mentors. Further intervention, action planning and / or disciplinary measures should be put in place via the positive engagement policy. It is important that the guidance of the positive engagement policy is followed and the correct members of staff assigned to interventions to ensure the student receives the most accurate level of intervention and support.
- d) Review the attendance dashboard and monitor poor attendance for all elements of a student's study programme.
- e) Deal with and record poor attendance following the Guidance section (5.2) of this policy.
- f) Be the first point for tracking and monitoring the overall attendance, retention and progress of each of their students.
- g) Undertaking summative review, a student's attendance, retention and progress throughout the academic year: three formal one to ones (full time study programme) and two parent/carer events (full time study programme) and within the formal progression process (full time study programme).
- h) Actively review student attendance as part of a process of Student Progress Reviews. The reviews will be scheduled as per the agreed **Common Assessment Points** throughout the academic year. The reviews will be scheduled under the Common Assessment Points throughout the academic year. This would provide a stop and review point that involves: Curriculum Managers, and Programme Co-ordinator.
- i) formatively assessing the attendance, retention and progress of students throughout the academic year.

- j) Ensuring student contact details students on EBS are accurate.
- k) Need to assess patterns of absence and a lack of progress.
- l) Working collaboratively with curriculum colleagues (Head of Student Experience, Curriculum Manager, Student Mentor) to assess impacts on learning to trigger high risk and create actions for attendance and progress in all formal one to one review

3.10 Data Services and Exams responsible for:

- a) Ensuring timetables that do not adhere to the good practice guidelines are flagged up and dealt with
- b) Proactively look at student and course timetable clashes and resolve quickly.

3.11 The Curriculum Administration and Support Team (CAST) are responsible for:

- a) Provide support to the Academy Absence phone number and email inbox when able to do so. Record the explained absence in the relevant registers for that day.
- b) Action any letters requested by Personal Tutors, Academic or Student Experience managers to be sent to students and parents regarding attendance within a suitable timeframe.

3.12: A College Student/Apprentice should:

- a) Understand the colleges expectations regarding attendance at induction and seeking further clarification if needed.
- b) Attend all scheduled classes, tutorials, enrichment activities and work placements or employment on time.
- c) Follow attendance procedures for absence from College through MYHUB for Authorised attendance or contact the dedicated Academy phone number for unauthorised absence. This absence will be recorded on the appropriate registers.
- d) When they are not attending a work placement, they must inform the nominated work placement supervisor immediately so that the employer can be informed of non-attendance
- e) Understand how attendance to all elements of their study programme will be reviewed as part of each tutorial they have with their Personal tutor. This should take place at least once every half term.
- f) Understand that the Personal Tutor will follow up any unauthorised absence with a student as per the student attendance and retention policy and procedure.
- g) Understand the impact on their progress and progression if attendance drops below 95%.
- h) Take responsibility for liaising with teachers/assessors in order to catch up with missed work.
- i) 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.
- j) be able to articulate the strategies they are implementing to improve their attendance.

3.13 A Parent/Carer should:

- a) Understand the colleges expectations and procedures and seek further clarification if needed. The College will notify parents regarding unexplained absence or attendance concerns as per the Student Attendance and Retention Policy and Procedure.
- b) Understand where to access to key information relating to the students attendance, absence, punctuality and progress.
- c) Understand where to access should be provided with the timetable for their son/daughter and key assessment dates at the start of the academic year by the faculty area.

3.15: Sector Based Work Based Learning Tutor is responsible for:

- a) Ensuring registers are completed for apprentices via the TAP register system.

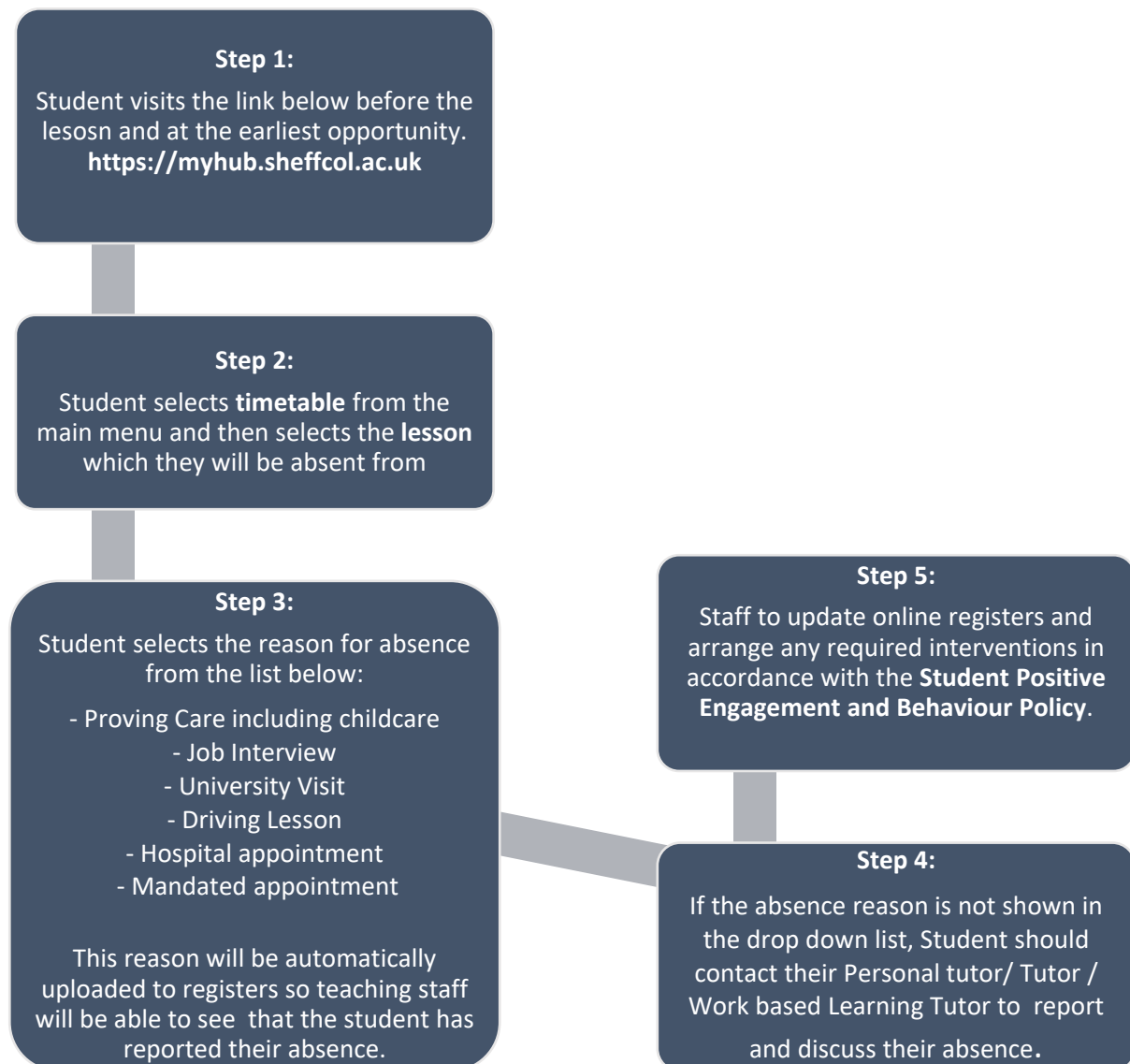
- b) Contacting every apprentice that has not attended and inform the employer by 11am or within 2 hours of the start time of the first session.
- c) Work with the employer, apprentice and tutor to resolve any underlying issues for non-attendance and set actions to improve.

3.16 An **Employer** should:

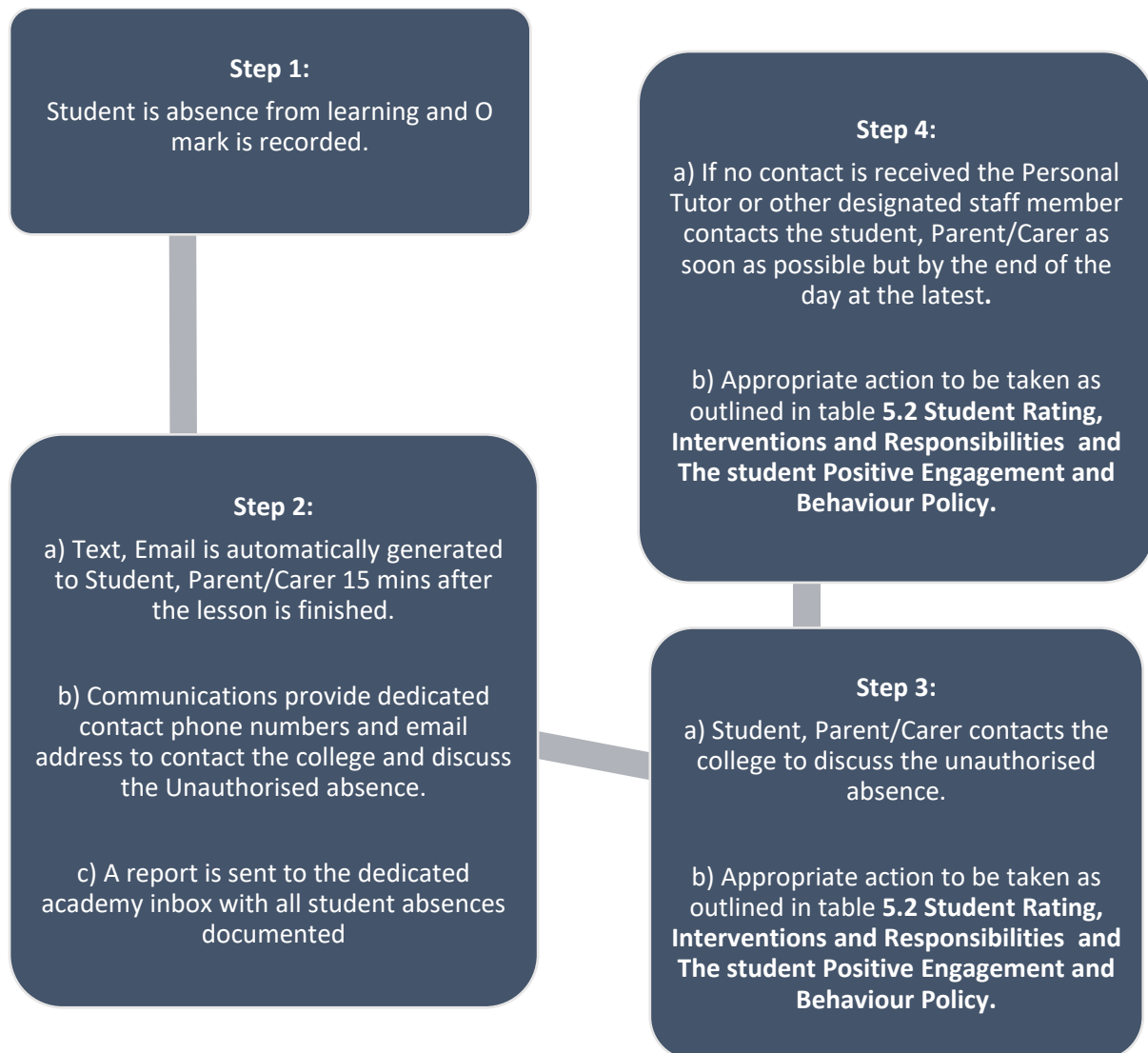
- a) Understand the colleges expectations and procedures and seek further clarification if needed. The College will notify employers regarding unexplained absence or attendance concerns as per the Student Attendance and Retention Policy and Procedure.
- a) be informed of non-attendance on the day of non-attendance.
- b) Understand how the College reviews attendance at every progress review and inform the employer of any non-attendance and discuss the reasons for the non-attendance, especially if it was the employer's decision that resulted in the non-attendance.
- c) Where the non-attendance is the result of the employer an agreement and is made with the employer to remove any instance of this occurring again.
- d) Understand that The Training and Assessment Facilitator will ask the employer to support any disciplinary processes as a result of non-attendance.
- e) Understand that the Work Based Learning Tutor will provide the employer with a summary of the reduction in the off-the-job training requirement and agree with the employer how the time will be substituted with alternative off-the- job training activities to ensure the minimum off-the-job training is achieved.

4. Procedures

4.1: Student Absence Procedure – Notified Absence (All Students)



4.2: Student Absence Procedure – Unauthorised Absence (16-18 and EHCP students)



5. Guidelines

Completion of Registers (TAP Automated Attendance Monitoring)

- a) Staff login and 'start' the timetabled session
- b) Students swipe their card on the portal readers to record their attendance; OR staff mark the student as present.
- c) Any attendance mark recorded 15 minutes or more after the start of the session will be recorded as late.
- d) Staff must update the Absence Module to record any required information about individual attendance in the session.
- e) Where a student is aged 16 – 18 and the register mark recorded is 'O' the registered next of kin and Personal Tutor will be sent a message to inform them of the absence.

5.1 Register Marks

The following reasons can be entered into the Absence Module

Code	Code Usage	Type	Note
24	A (Authorised Absence)	Negative	Mandated Appointment
1	N (Notified Absence)	Negative	Sickness
20	B (Not Required to attend)	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned study leave • Attendance at exams • Attendance at College events such as enrichment (including guest speakers, trips & visits) • Religious Holidays • Where the student has transferred or withdrawn but still appears on the register
16	N (Notified Absence)	Negative	Providing Care
19	N (Notified Absence)	Negative	Other
17	N (Notified Absence)	Neutral	Interview / University Visit
21	A (Authorised Absence)	Negative	Hospital Appointment
15	N (Notified Absence)	Negative	Family Celebration
18	N (Notified Absence)	Negative	Driving Lesson
14	N (Notified Absence)	Negative	Holiday
23	A (Authorised Absence)	Negative	Bereavement
27	M (Apprentices only) Retained by employer	Positive	(Apprentices only) Retained by employer
22	A (Authorised Absence)	Negative	Diagnosed Medical Conditions

26	A (Authorised Absence)	Negative	Whilst on Time out
24	A (Authorised Absence)	Positive	Student finished unit early but remain in learning

5.2 Absence Reason Module

Where a student or apprentice is not in attendance, it is important to update the Absence Module if there is a known reason prior to ending the session and submitting the register, as only the 'O' mark will lead to an automated message to the next of kin and Personal Tutor.

Training on how to use the absence reason module and attendance systems can be found via the links below:

[Staff Reporting Absence on EBS On Track](#)

[Student Attendance Management Systems](#)

5.3 Authorised Absence

The College accepts that there are occasions when it is not possible for a student or apprentice to attend for legitimate reasons.

- a) Hospital appointments, where proof is provided in advance
- b) Mandated appointments, where proof is provided in advance
- c) Bereavement (usually an immediate family member)

Authorised absence will not affect progression decisions; however it is a negative reason.

5.4 Notified Absence

Notified absence is used where a student or apprentice has informed the College about their absence in advance, but the absence is not authorised (for example: personal holiday) and does not meet the criteria of the B mark. The reason for absence should be recorded in the Absence Reason Module.

Students can notify the college off the absence for individual lessons only via the MYHUB platform for the following absence reasons only:

- a) Proving Care including childcare
- b) Job Interview
- c) University Visit
- d) Driving Lesson
- e) Hospital appointment
- f) Mandated appointment

Students will need to contact their Personal Tutor or tutor for all other absence reasons including absences over multiple days.

5.5 “B” mark (not required to attend)

The B mark should be used when the student or apprentice is unable to attend their original timetabled session. It is to be used appropriately and accurately, examples of when it can be used when include

- a) Planned study leave
- b) Attendance at exams
- c) Attendance at College events such as enrichment (including guest speakers, trips & visits)
- d) Religious Holidays
- e) Where the student has transferred or withdrawn but still appears on the register

The ‘M’ mark should be used when an apprentice has been retained by the employer and is therefore still in learning but with the employer instead of college.

5.6 Student Rating, Interventions and Responsibilities

The table below illustrates student ratings, recommended and required interventions plus responsibilities.

Weekly

No of Sessions Missed*	Required Action	Staff Responsible
No sessions missed	1. Celebrate and reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Tutor • Tutor • WBLT (Apps)
1 st unauthorized absence for English and/or Maths or main programme	1. Non-Attendance email & text sent to student and parent/carer (where required) 2. Absence followed up with student and parent/carer (if needed). On attendance letter sent if no communication is made with student or parent/carer. 3. Joint intervention expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Tutor and Personal Tutor • WBLT (Apps)
2 nd consecutive unauthorized absence for English and/or Maths or main programme	1. Positive Engagement Plan to be put in place, led by the PT and supported by the Tutor of that qual unit. 2. Risk allocation elevated to Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Tutor and Personal Tutor • WBLT (Apps) • Non-attendance letter is sent
3 rd consecutive unauthorized absence	1. Allocation of a Student Mentor who must review the Positive Engagement Plan with the student.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As this is a red stage, collaboration between Curriculum Manager/Programme C-

for English and/or Maths or main programme	<p>2. Risk allocation elevated to Red</p> <p>3. Any student with 3 or more absences has a NOK intervention meeting</p>	<p>ordinator and the Student Mentor must be used to form interventions to re-engage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBLT (Apps)
4th consecutive unauthorized absence for English and/or Maths or main programme	<p>1. Place student on an amber stage disciplinary with the support of the Head of Student Experience. There must be clear recorded collaboration of intervention between curriculum leadership to re-engage student absenteeism.</p> <p>2. Any student with 4 or more absences has a NOK at risk intervention meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Manager, Programme Co-ordinator, personal Tutor, Student Mentor. • WBLT (Apps)

Overall

Attendance & Punctuality grade	Colour Rating	Attendance & Punctuality %	Average Time Lost*	Required Action	Staff Responsible
Outstanding		98 – 100%	Up to 3 days of learning	1. Celebrate and reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Tutor • Tutor • WBLT (Apps)
Very Good		95 – 97.9%	Up to 7 days of learning	2. Discussion in 1:1	
Good		92 – 94.9%	Up to 11 days of learning	1. Positive Engagement Plan (PEP) (Yellow Stage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Tutor • Tutor • WBLT (Apps)
Unsatisfactory		80.1 – 91.9%	Up to 26 days of learning	<p>1. PEP or PEP Extension (Yellow Stage)</p> <p>2. Amber Stage contract</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Tutor • Tutor • WBLT (Apps)
Unacceptable		Below 80%	26 days or more	1. Red Stage 2 disciplinary. (This may affect a student's continuation and/or progression).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Student Experience with the support of Academy Director • Sector Director for Apps

Where interventions are used the guidelines from **the Student Positive Engagement and Behaviour Policy** are to be followed.

The College reserves the right to withdraw a student or apprentice where their attendance, punctuality or engagement level is unacceptable and has significant impact on academic progress, is not improving or continues to decline despite previous intervention.

6. Implementation, Monitoring and Review Arrangements

6.1: All new employees are made aware of this as part of college procedures and guidelines during the formal employee induction process and staff are expected to have read this where relevant to their role.

6.2: Updated and amended guidelines are discussed in training sessions, team meetings and via email communications as appropriate. The policy is available via the College website.

6.3: The Curriculum and Quality Management Group will monitor the effectiveness of these procedures to ensure improvements in student attendance and Retention.

6.4: Personal Tutors will review student attendance as part of a process of Student Progress Reviews. The reviews will be scheduled under the Common Assessment Points throughout the academic year.

6.5: These procedures will be subject to an annual review facilitated by the Director of Student Services.

Appendices if required