

## **ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

Agreed at SMT on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016

To be reviewed: October 2017

# WILTSHIRE COLLEGE

## ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

### 1. Preface and Context

It is acknowledged the following factors contribute to improving students' attendance, motivation and retention.

- 1.1. Identifying and supporting 'at risk' students as soon as warning signs appear.
- 1.2. Having a well-known and coherent infrastructure of support in place including both group and 1:1 tutorials, Additional Learning Support and internal and external welfare support.
- 1.3. Delivering well-structured and managed course programmes, integrating 1:1 tutorial reviews, Additional Learning Support, effective use of Pro-Monitor by staff and students, and course enrichment activities.
- 1.4 Developing a whole college approach to monitoring and challenging attendance with all elements of the programme of study particularly focusing on maths and English lessons.
- 1.5. Having a clear and fair Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure which incorporates robust systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality, following up absences promptly and firmly and consistently applying appropriate rewards systems where relevant.

This policy outlines the College's system for monitoring attendance and lateness identified above and clarifies the principles underpinning this system. It should be read in conjunction with the College's Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure, the College Programme Management File template and the Student Handbook.

### 2. Targets

- 2.1. The College sets annual retention and attendance targets which are closely monitored at college, campus, programme and course level.
- 2.2. Within each curriculum area the managers will set realistic and challenging targets for attendance and punctuality in each course which, when aggregated, will meet the College's overall attendance target. In addition, staff and students will set attendance and punctuality targets within Pro-Monitor

### 3. Attendance and Punctuality Policy Statement

3.1. As retention, achievement and student attendance are inextricably linked the College expects all students to attend **all** planned and programmed sessions included within the student's learning programme. The components of a study programme will include theory and practical sessions, tutorials, English and/or Maths GCSEs or Functional Skills classes (depending on previous attainment), work placements, integrated residentials and prescribed enrichment sessions.

3.2 Students will be required to make a commitment to **attend all components** of their programme at the start of their course (Student Code of Conduct). In return the College will commit to deliver the full 'student entitlement' as summarised within College expectations and ABC contracts.

3.3 Students are required to attend all planned and timetabled assessments including examinations. Failure to do so will result in exam costs being recharged to the student.

3.4 The College will apply consistent and rigorous procedures to monitor student attendance and will offer appropriate support to facilitate and encourage students to comply with programme and College attendance targets.

3.5 The session register is the formal auditable document used by the College to record attendance and punctuality. The College will ensure this record is consistently marked and accurate.

3.6 Students who fail to meet the minimum standards set by the Programme team and the College will be challenged initially by the student review process detailed in the Programme Management File (*see PMF, Appendix 1: Quality Improvement Boards*). Students who fail to respond positively to this process will be deemed to have breached the College's Code of Conduct and will be subject to the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

3.7 The principles underpinning the attendance and punctuality policy:-

- All components of a programme are purposefully planned to maximise the development of each student and prepare each student for success in terms of the end qualification(s) and progression. Each component is an essential part of the learning programme and to miss any of them, or any part of them, will undermine the effectiveness of the programme and have a negative effect on success rates.
- Missing or being late to a programmed session can be disruptive for the whole class. Missing or being late to a session without good reason is, therefore, disrespectful to both staff and fellow students.

3.8 This policy and the accompanying monitoring procedures will be reviewed annually and summarised in the College's online Student Handbook.

#### **4. Attendance and Punctuality defined**

4.1 In Attendance: student 'present'

A student is marked in attendance if they are present at the time of registration and remain in that session until its conclusion, as determined by the class teacher/supervisor.

4.2 Student 'absent'

A student is marked 'absent' when he/she does not attend any part of the scheduled session.

4.3 Lateness and left early

A student is late (and marked 'late' on the register) if he/she arrives after the scheduled start of the session. The mark 'M' is used to record when a student leaves a lesson early or does not come back to a session after a break.

4.4 Authorised absence

This is absence that has been discussed with, and agreed by, the student's Personal Tutor, subject tutor or Training Assessor prior to the absence occurring and falling within the criteria set out in *Appendix A*

4.5 Unauthorised Absence

This is an absence which does not fall within the criteria detailed in *Appendix A* and includes categories of absence detailed in *Appendix B*

4.6 Placement/Work Experience

This is only to be used when a student is out on placement/work experience that has been discussed with, and agreed by, the student's Personal Tutor.  
(*See Appendix C: Register Marks*)

Note: This replaces 'Other Register marks'

There are specific register marks for students out on work placements, students who have prematurely completed the course and students for whom 'attendance is not necessary'.  
(See Appendix C: Register Marks)

## **5. Attendance and Punctuality Procedures and Guidelines for staff**

5.1 The accurate marking of session registers is a contractual requirement for all teaching staff and noncompliance with these procedures will be taken seriously by the College. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure all teachers are made aware of the register marking codes and trained in the use of the electronic register system.

5.2 Programme timetables will be established prior to the start of a programme to facilitate the production and use of registers as soon as the programme begins. Subsequent timetable changes will be minimised and recorded in the standard way to ensure that registers are always up to date.

5.3 All session registers should be completed during or immediately after each session. In circumstances where, by virtue of the activity being undertaken, this is not practicable registers will be completed by the end of that day.

5.4 In circumstances where the scheduled teacher is absent the substitute teacher has the responsibility for ensuring the register is completed before the end of the working day. In exceptional circumstances, where there is no substitute teacher or supervisor, then the class will be cancelled and the register marked with the 'cancelled class' mark 'X'

5.5 In circumstances where access to the electronic register is not possible the teacher will use a temporary paper register and transfer the information to the electronic record by the end of the day.

5.6 Absence or lateness will always be challenged by session teachers and should be reported by the teacher to the student's Personal Tutor/Training Assessor/School or Employer as soon as possible on the day the absence or lateness occurs. The College will ensure that Personal Tutors/Training Assessors/Schools and Employers are able to track the attendance of their students on a daily basis. The use of Pro-Monitor will enhance the management of student attendance and lateness and enable personal tutors, assessors and managers to more effectively monitor issues and take corrective action. All staff are therefore required to record absence and lateness issues on Pro-Monitor where these are becoming a concern.

5.7 For Full-time students Personal Tutors will be expected to closely monitor attendance of their tutees on a weekly basis and will regularly discuss any absences with each student during each tutorial session with a more detailed review of attendance and punctuality forming the basis of the weekly 1:1 tutorial sessions throughout the year. Group tutorials will also be used to remind students about the importance of attendance and punctuality and the strong connection with achievement and development of appropriate employability skills. Automated letters / emails will notify parents / carers of absence/lateness concerns in line with the flow chart in appendix E.

For Part-time students it is the responsibility of the subject tutor and Training Assessor to closely monitor attendance and punctuality issues. If a student records any of the following they will be required to meet their Personal Tutor, subject tutor or Training Assessor to discuss and investigate the reasons for their absence/lateness: -

- 2 consecutive absences from the same session
- Attendance of less than 95% of scheduled sessions in any one week
- Being late for more than 10% of their scheduled sessions in any week

The results of this discussion, including recommendations on appropriate support, will be recorded in Pro-Monitor or within One-File (for an apprentice).

**5.8 Where a Personal Tutor, subject tutor or assessor has concerns about a student's attendance or punctuality the College's Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure should be implemented. However, before such action is taken it is recommended that a detailed discussion is held with the Personal Tutor to ascertain if any personal circumstances, mental health or educational needs should be considered.**

5.9 If disciplinary action is required and the student is aged under 18, the Personal Tutor /subject tutor or Training Assessor will notify the student's nominated parent/carer. For those sponsored by an employer the employer will be notified, irrespective of the age of the student. See appendix E.

5.10 The monitoring procedure for 'at risk' students

If the student does not respond to the Personal Tutor/subject tutor or Training Assessor support and advice, the student will be noted as 'at risk' and placed on an ABC contract recorded within Pro-Monitor.

5.11 Once the ABC contract has been issued actions will be monitored by their personal tutor or other responsible person to support the required improvements.

5.12 If a student does not respond to the ABC actions and improve their minimum attendance target the student will be deemed to have breached the Student Code of Conduct and face the standard Disciplinary Procedure.

5.13 A student will be withdrawn from their course under the College's Disciplinary Procedure if he/she:-

- Is absent at any time of the year for four consecutive weeks without authorisation
- Does not respond positively to the process of Disciplinary Procedure and reaches the stage where his/her attendance is likely to seriously impact on their achievement of their qualification and / or have a seriously negative impact on the attendance and achievement of other students within their group.

5.14 Personal Tutors / subject tutors / Training Assessor are responsible for monitoring the attendance and punctuality of their students each week and taking corrective action.

5.15 Heads of Department will regularly analyse attendance and punctuality records of their programmes. Attendance and punctuality will be discussed at each Quality and Resources Review meeting (QRR).

5.16 Attendance and punctuality will be a regularly reviewed by the College Performance and Quality Group (PQG).

5.17 Students reporting Absence

- Full-time students who are absent on any day when they have scheduled sessions should contact their Personal Tutor or use the college absence line.
- Part-time students should contact their subject tutor, Centre Manager or use the college absence line.
- Students sponsored by an employer should contact their employer and their subject tutor or Assessor

5.18 Contacting students who are absent

In the event of the student not contacting the College to report absence it is the responsibility of the Personal Tutor (Full-time students), Training Assessor (WBL students) or subject tutor (Part-time students) to ensure that a student is contacted on the day of absence to investigate the reason for absence and the likely return date.

**Appendix A**  
**16-19 Bursary / 19+ Bursary / 23+ Advanced Learning Loan Bursary**  
**Authorised Absence**

If a student wishes an absence to be recorded as 'authorised absence' and claim their 16-19 Bursary /19+ Bursary/24+ Advanced Learning Loan Bursary he/she must inform their Personal Tutor prior to the event and provide the evidence indicated in the table below.

<b>Reasons for Authorised Absence</b>	<b>Evidence required</b>
A planned medical appointment	Appointment card or letter
A special religious holiday	Letter from parent/carer or student (if living apart from parent or guardian)
A university/college open day or university/college/careers or job interview	Letter from parent/carer, university or employer or Careers Adviser
Work experience that is an integral and agreed part of a course	Personal Tutor will be aware of such an arrangement
An emergency need to look after a family member or other person for whom the student has a caring responsibility	Letter from parent/carer or relevant social service. Personal tutor authorisation
Attendance at a probation meeting	Appointment letter
Participation in a Community-Campus activity, including representing the course or college in inspections/agreed student involvement events and sporting activities	Personal Tutor authorisation
Bereavement and attendance at a funeral of a close relative or friend	Parent/carer letter
Severe disruption to transport (strike action/severe weather/serious road accident)	Confirmation from Student Services
Driving test	Appointment card/letter
Jury service	Notification letter
Severe weather conditions that cause the closure of the college or recommendation that students from certain regions do not travel to the college	Personal Tutor authorisation

**Appendix B**  
**16-19 Bursary / 19+ Bursary / 24+ Advanced Learning Loan Bursary Unauthorised Absence**

<b>Unauthorised Absence reasons</b> -the College does not authorise absence for the following reasons
Sickness
Periods during which a student is suspended from college under the College's disciplinary procedure
Holidays
Part-time or full-time work which is not part of the student's course
Leisure activities
Birthdays or similar celebrations

Child-minding or looking after people for whom the student is not identified as a carer

Shopping

Driving lessons

Medical appointments which can be arranged outside the scheduled programme timetable

### **Appendix C** **Register Marks (copy of MIS Register Marking Instructions)**

#### **Register Completion 2015-16**

<b>/</b>	Present	This is used when a student arrives on time for a lesson
<b>0</b>	Absent	This is used when a student is absent from the classroom for the duration of the lesson without authorisation e.g. illness – this will affect bursary payments
<b>P</b>	Placement/work experience	This is only to be used when a student is out on placement/work experience
<b>L</b>	Late	Used when a student arrives late for a lesson; tutors should follow college policy
<b>M</b>	Left Early	This is used when a student leaves a lesson early or does not come back to lesson after a break; tutors should follow college policy
<b>A</b>	Authorised Absence	This mark is to be used for students where an absence is authorised for reasons in the list below
<b>C</b>	Course complete	This mark is used when a student has completed the course earlier than planned and is therefore no longer required to attend the lesson. Such circumstances should be agreed by the Head of Department and Director of MIS.

### **Appendix D** **16-18 Bursary / 19+ Bursary / 24+ Advanced Learning Loan Bursary**

Attendance for the previous month is checked on the Learner Support Fund database and the bursary is paid in percentage terms as follows:

95 – 100% attendance, 100% bursary paid

85– 94% attendance, 80% bursary paid

Under 85% attendance: last date of attendance is checked and SSTM is contacted.

The above percentage allowances can be waived and payment made on a discretionary basis by Customer Services Managers on the recommendation of the SSTM/ Personal Tutor

## Appendix E - Late Card & Attendance Management Procedure

Staff remind students of the college expectation of a 100% attendance requirement and the importance of being punctual for all classes. Late is late and does not support the development of employability skills!



All absences and lateness must be accurately recorded on registers **before the end of the lesson**. All absences should be followed up by the tutor with the student / parent / employer on the day of non-attendance.



Where a student arrives late for class they should be challenged by the teacher asking them to explain their reasons for lateness. They should then be issued with a late card to complete. All completed late cards to be given to Curriculum Administrators (that day) who will record the reasons for lateness within Pro-Monitor.



Where lateness or absenteeism is becoming a concern the teacher should discuss the issue swiftly with the students' personal tutor **after recording concerns within Pro-Monitor**. Personal tutor, using Pro-Monitor will explore patterns of lateness or absence with tutee and implement corrective action / support.



Where necessary an ABC contract / disciplinary warning will be issued or individual support provided based on the personal circumstances of the student, and parents / carers or employer informed. Tutor to inform DHoD if a verbal warning has taken place and download this into Pro-Monitor.



MIS will run a report every Tuesday evening. Emails will be automatically generated to parents / carers informing them of the number of lates / absences for their son / daughter in the previous week. 18+ students will be emailed. Letters will be sent by Curriculum Administrators if parent's email address is not known.



After 5 lates or when attendance drops to **95% or below** an **amber** flag alert will be placed on the student's personal profile within Pro-Monitor. Personal Tutors to monitor lateness and attendance of their tutees on a weekly basis and take corrective action with all students flagged as red or amber.



After a further 5 lates or when attendance drops to **90% or below** a **red** warning on the student's personal profile will result in the student being **referred to DHoD / HoD** who will consider issuing a written warning.



Tutors to monitor attendance and punctuality closely for 4 weeks with a weekly review meeting and SMART targets set within Pro-Monitor

Extenuating circumstances should be referred to SSTMs

Check flags for "do not contact" for parents/guardians