

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

1. Background & Purpose

With the intention of enabling all - to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them, University Technical College Lancashire aims to encourage 100% attendance and punctuality. Ultimately, attendance levels will depend upon the quality of the college's curriculum, ethos and relationships – the better the college, the better the attendance and punctuality.

The latest government figures suggest that:-

- of students who miss more than 50% of school/college time, only 3% manage to achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths
- of students who miss between 10% and 20% of school/college time, only 35% manage to achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths
- of students who miss less than 5% of school/college time, 73% achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths

Regular attendance is essential if a student is to have a successful education. Poor attendance, poor punctuality and truancy inhibit a student's personal development, affect their safety, put them at risk of making bad choices, and will ultimately impede their future prospects.

2. Aims of this Policy

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:-

- registers are kept accurately and according to the agreed procedure
- there is effective monitoring of attendance and punctuality
- all parties work together – students, parents/carers, college staff and external agencies
- there is clear practice which deals with the causes of non-attendance and poor punctuality with effective follow-up action and support
- good attendance and punctuality is a permanent high priority for the college

3. Measuring and Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality

- Formal registers are taken twice per day
- Registration closes at 08:45 in the morning (taken at the beginning of Session 1) and at 13:35 in the afternoon (taken at the beginning of Session 3)
- Registration is a quiet, well-disciplined and an important occasion in the college day
- Staff use the symbols identified within the college MIS and these clearly distinguish between Authorised and Unauthorised absence – see Annex 1
- Should a student arrive in college after 08:45 they should sign-in via the Late Book in reception and will be marked as 'Late' when the MIS is updated
- Should a student arrive at Session 3 after 13:35 the member of staff should update the MIS with a 'Late' mark
- Pastoral staff phone home on the first day of a student's absence with a 'note' added to the MIS. If there is no response, then the Principal is informed – prompt action is essential

- All absences should be accounted for by a parent/carer phone call, letter or e-mail. It is vital that these are followed-up relentlessly by Student Services with the MIS updated when resolved.
- Teachers should keep the Principal informed of any attendance concerns; eg. a pattern of 'odd days off' for a student or group of students
- Pastoral leaders review the MIS at least once a week checking that procedures are being followed and looking for patterns of absence or unacceptable punctuality
- Officers from external support agencies meet with Group Tutors regularly to discuss any students causing concern
- All staff must use the MIS to keep attendance records for each session they lead and to send a message to the appropriate Group Tutor immediately if there are any absences that seem suspicious
- Pastoral Leaders also carry out 'spot checks' at various times
- Students whose attendance or punctuality are causing concern will be put on report; these need signing by a member of staff every session with sanctions imposed if the problems persist
- Poor punctuality is as serious as poor attendance and the two are often closely linked
- The reason for any lateness should always be investigated with each student on an individual basis, as in some cases, it is a matter of persuading parents/carers to give more support and treat lateness more seriously.

4. Strategies for Improving Attendance and Punctuality

- Monitoring and checking is vital, but this alone is not enough – essentially attendance will improve if the college regularly reviews the curriculum, learning experience and maintains a positive atmosphere.
- When dealing with individual attendance or punctuality problems, the college's strategy is in line with the principles of the Behaviour for Learning Policy with emphasis on:-
 - treating students as individuals
 - maintaining excellent liaison with parents/carers on a continuous basis
 - providing appropriate support to encourage improvement
- With each poor attendee it is necessary to ascertain the cause of the poor attendance and then work specifically on these root causes. Students will 'open up' if they trust the Pastoral Leader and teacher and there is a sensitive approach to the issue.
- All staff should be watchful for the signs that attendance or punctuality may be a problem; eg. feeling ill in a session, missing or late for certain sessions on a regular basis, comments by peers (often in jest), students displaying unhappiness etc. Any concerns should be referred to the Principal.
- Where attendance has fallen below 85% the Student Services will work with external agencies to implement strategies to encourage improvement and liaise with parents/carers.
- Students should be constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality.
- Poor attendance and punctuality often begins at primary school and so it is expected that at the time of transfer to University Technical College Lancashire, students with these issues will be identified by their previous learning establishment.
- High levels of attendance and punctuality will be rewarded via "Points for Prizes" as described in the Behaviour for Learning Policy as will significant and sustained improvements made by some students.
- Attendance and punctuality figures are included in the termly Interim Report so that students and their parents/carers are fully informed.
- Formal action to improve attendance may be implemented in partnership with external agencies.

5. Attendance Data and its Use

- Attendance data is analysed weekly by Pastoral Leaders and Senior Leaders in order to assess performance and trends.
- At University Technical College Lancashire we take 'Unauthorised Absence' to mean:-
 - truancy – absence without the knowledge of the parent/carer
 - absence condoned by the parent/carer which is clearly not for an acceptable reason; eg. shopping, looking after siblings etc.

6. Children Missing Education (CME)

The Government has placed a duty on Local Authorities to make arrangements to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age and not receiving a suitable education.

In relation to children, by suitable we mean efficient full time education suitable for her/his age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs the child may have. The duty does not apply in relation to children who are registered at school who are not attending regularly.

These children are referred to as Children Missing Education. Children are identified as missing from education when they are of compulsory school age and are:

- Not on a school roll
- Not being educated other than at school
- Identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including:

- They do not start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the education system
- They are removed from school by their parents
- They fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area
- The family move home regularly
- Family breakdown

Children and young people in the following groups are more likely to be missing from education

- Young people who have previously committed offences
- Children living in women's refuges
- Children of homeless families perhaps in temporary accommodation or housing
- Young people who run away from home
- Children with long-term medical and emotional needs
- Unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees and child who are from asylum seekers/refugees families
- Children of immigrant families not yet established in the UK
- Looked after children
- Children with Gypsy/Traveller background
- Young carers
- Children from transient families
- Teenage mothers
- Excluded pupils

Children missing from education are at a much greater risk of

- Physical harm
- Becoming involved in crime
- Demonstrating anti-social behaviour
- Abusing drugs and alcohol
- Sexual exploitation
- Being illegally employed
- Forced marriages

In the first instance the UTC should make every effort to ascertain the whereabouts of the student. This might include telephoning home, contacting the GP, friends, other relatives that are known. It is imperative that guidelines are followed in relation to ‘children missing education’, particularly as some of our most vulnerable families who frequently change addresses are likely to get lost in the system if the appropriate action is not taken.

At the UTC all absences must be followed up by the Student Services team. A first day response to absence is the expected procedure and this is usually in the form of a telephone call or text message to the parent/carer. If there is no proper explanation for absence given this will be followed up by a visit to the home of the student. This should take place within 5 working days of the initial absence. Where there is no response to the visit or parent/carer are still unable to be contacted the Pastoral Leader should then consider the child as potentially being a CME case. The Student Services team will inform Lancashire Local Authority of this situation by completing a CME form which is to be found on the Lancashire portal. The lead Group Tutor has access rights to this site as does the SLT.

7. Monitoring Impact & Review

- The consistent application and enforcement of an effective policy and the resulting procedures by all staff, with suitable monitoring to ensure this, can improve the attendance and punctuality of individual students and thus contribute to the overall college picture.
- The policy is to be reviewed annually and is linked to the Behaviour Policy (P01).

At UTC Lancashire, we take attendance in the Sixth Form seriously. In order that all students are clear about our expectations regarding attendance we have formulated the policy below:

Details on the policy and the steps it involves are given below:

Sixth Form Attendance Policy

Stages	Description
<p>1</p> <p>Teacher</p> <p><u>Warning issued for attendance figures below 90% for lesson</u></p> <p>OR</p> <p>For absence deemed unacceptable by the teacher</p>	<p><u>Initial poor attendance figures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor attendance can be raised as a concern by any member of staff. • The member of staff should address the issue of poor attendance in their lesson by meeting with the student and shall give him / her a Warning about their attendance. They may also wish to involve the parent/carer in the meeting for more impact. The teacher should inform Pastoral Leader so they can address the absence issue with the student and reinforce the values of good attendance. The Group Tutor should follow up the attendance issue with the student. They may also identify general absence in some/all lessons and address the issue (as above) involving the relevant teaching staff
<p>2 Pastoral Leader</p>	<p><u>Continued poor attendance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an unacceptable level of attendance continues the teacher should inform the Group Tutor in charge of attendance.

<p>First / second written Warning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A First written warning will be issued and the student will be asked to sign an Attendance Agreement agreed by the Group Tutor and the student. · A letter will be sent to the parent/carer of the student informing them of the situation. · Their attendance will be monitored by the Year Team for three weeks. · An attendance card may be issued. · After three weeks of improving attendance the student will be removed from the attendance file. If attendance has not improved one more warning may be issued.
<p>3</p> <p>Principal/ SLT intervention</p> <p>Written Warning</p>	<p><u>Failure to meet the requirements set by the attendance agreement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The offending student will be asked to meet with the Principal · A Final Written Warning will be issued and held on their file for a further three weeks. · A letter will be sent to the parent/carer of the student informing them of the situation. · An attendance card will be issued. · After three weeks of improving attendance the student will be removed from the attendance file.
<p>4</p> <p>Principal / SLT decision</p> <p>Possibly request to leave the Sixth Form</p>	<p><u>Continued failure to meet attendance requirements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Appropriate disciplinary proceedings will be decided by the Senior Management. · The parents/carers of the student will be involved in the process.

Annex 1

Registers are to be marked in the MIS as follows:-

- / Present am
- \ Present pm
- O Absent at Registration – this should always be updated unless Truancy is confirmed
- L Late – arrived before Registration closed
- B Educated off site
- C Other authorised circumstances
- G Family Holiday – not agreed
- H Family Holiday – agreed
- I Illness
- J Interview
- M Medical appointment
- N No reason yet provided for absence
- R Religious observance
- P Approved sporting activity

Ref: P02 Apr 2013 – reviewed Sept 16

- S Study leave
- U Late – arrived after registration has closed
- V Educational visit or trip
- W Work experience