



Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date revised	Author/reviewer	Section / page no. changed	Summary of change(s)
2.0	May 2024	AMZ		Terminology updated Teacher contract Senior Tutor contract Support plan / discussion Pastoral Board

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Purpose and scope	3
3. Using this policy.....	3
4. Definitions.....	4
5. Duties and Responsibilities.....	5
6. Persistent Absenteeism	7
7. Equality Impact Statement	8
8. Further information.....	8
9. Policy review.....	8

1. Introduction

Government legislation came into force in 2013 requiring young people to stay in education and training until they are 18. Therefore, every St Brendan's student has a legal duty to attend College every day and attend each lesson on time.

The purpose of this policy is to explain the principles of good attendance and punctuality that we work to in the College and to identify the responsibilities of staff, students and parent/carers.

2. Purpose and scope

Levels of attendance and punctuality have a direct impact on the success of our students. Students are more likely to complete and achieve their qualification if they attend lessons regularly and on time. This is not only at subject lessons, but also at Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE), Tutorial, work experience and the wide range of enrichment activities, and is vital if students are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities which are offered to them.

We recognise that parents/carers play an important role in encouraging students to reach good attendance and punctuality levels and in supporting the College policy. The Parent Portal is available for parents/carers to track the attendance and punctuality of their young people.

Students who arrive late to lessons have an impact not just on their own learning but also on the progress of others in the lesson. Therefore, we need our staff to set and enforce, and our students to comply with, high expectations of attendance and punctuality, as would be required by future employers.

The College will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance and punctuality with students through a range of communication channels, e.g. Studentship Awards, posters, tutorial sessions and 1:1s.

3. Using this policy

The link between good attendance and academic outcomes is clear and excellent attendance and punctuality is a universal expectation in the world of work. Therefore, high levels of attendance and punctuality are expected from all students, which means being on time and attending every part of the Study Programme shown on the Learning Agreement that the student signs during enrolment.

The College expects 100% attendance from all students. Anything below this, without good reason, is considered unacceptable and may have consequences in relation to the disciplinary process, progression, contribution towards examination fees or bursary funding.

Students will be entered into the College's termly Studentship Awards prize draw as recognition of good attendance and improvements made to attendance.

[Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy]

Arrival at lessons more than 5 minutes after the start is considered as 'late' and the number of minutes late from the start of the class is recorded on the register. More than 5 late lessons recorded in a two-week period is a trigger point and there will be consequences in relation to the disciplinary process.

The focus is on 'presence' rather than absence. Students should be in classrooms ready for the start of their lessons. Missing or being late to a timetabled lesson can be disruptive for the whole group and is therefore disrespectful to both staff and fellow students.

Early support and intervention is key, and all staff will work with students and parent/carers to act swiftly where attendance or punctuality is consistently poor.

Students will be able to see their own attendance and punctuality levels on the Student Portal and regular reviews and reporting of this will be part of the student monitoring process.

Electronic registers must be completed within 15 minutes of the start of all teaching lessons, tutorials or any other activity that counts towards a student's study programme.

The College recognises that non-attendance may be a sign that a student is experiencing other issues or difficulties and will ensure that students with mitigating circumstances are not unfairly penalised but supported to overcome barriers to attendance. This will be done through a range of strategies including 1:1 meeting, referrals to support agencies, use of bursary funding, or adjustment of study programmes or timetables using the Fitness to Study Policy.

Holiday during term time is not authorised. If parents/carers request to take the student on holiday, an Application for Leave of Absence Form must be sent to the Principal which is available on our website. Parents/carers will be charged £40 per subject at the end of their courses if permission is refused by the Principal but the student travels all the same. This decision is final. If a student is travelling outside the U.K., the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed. The AO will check that all students are back in college on the day they are expected to return and will refer to the DSL should they continue to be absent.

The procedures linked to this policy aim to identify students with poor attendance and/or punctuality and to use appropriate mechanisms within the College to address the barriers to good attendance.

4. Definitions

For the purpose of applying the provisions contained in this policy, the following definitions will apply:

Term / acronym	Definition
ATL3	Access to Level 3 programme
AO	Attendance Officer
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead

DOF	Director of Faculty
CCL	Course Cluster Lead

5. Duties and Responsibilities

Students

Every student has a legal duty to attend education or training and it is their responsibility to ensure they attend college every day and attend each lesson on time.

If a student is absent from College because of illness or an emergency appointment then the student's parent/carer should notify the College ideally by 9.00am but 12pm at the latest on the first and each subsequent day of absence using the 'Report an absence' function on the website, the absence telephone line or email.

For any pre-arranged notified absence (e.g., university open day), the student should complete the form available on the College website and provide the required evidence in advance.

Do everything possible to avoid necessary absences by making medical appointments outside class time unless it is an emergency

Every student is expected to be punctual and any student arriving more than 5 minutes late to a lesson or planned activity will be marked as late on the register.

If a student arrives late to a lesson they should go straight to class, knock on the door, wait outside the lesson and only enter when the teacher requests them to. Students to enter the classroom with minimal disruption to other students and the teacher will enter a late mark. The student must speak to the teacher at the end of class to explain the reason for being late and check they have not been marked as absent. If a student is late to class on a regular basis, a discussion will be had with the teacher and further action may be taken accordingly.

If a student is subject to an attendance support plan or intervention, it is their responsibility to engage with the supportive steps offered to help them improve and maintain good attendance.

Staff

All staff are responsible for ensuring the good attendance and punctuality of their students and for dealing with attendance and punctuality issues whenever they occur.

It is expected that all staff will act as positive role models in terms of their attendance and punctuality by arriving on time for lessons and not finishing lessons early.

It is the responsibility of all staff to lead by example, promoting good attendance and punctuality and communicating clearly the College's high expectations – students are expected to be present in 100% of lessons and to arrive before the start of the lesson ready to learn.

[Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy]

Staff should consistently reinforce the message that poor attendance or punctuality is not acceptable and that where it falls below an agreed level this will lead to action, including possible disciplinary action.

There are some specific responsibilities attached to staff and these are outlined below.

Teacher/delivery staff

- Accurately completing the register within the first 15 minutes of the lesson
- Noting in the register any absences and lateness
- Following up absence with the student and parents/carers with a teacher discussion to find out any reasons or barriers and set realistic targets
- Reporting any persistent issues with students to the Progress Tutor
- Promoting good punctuality and attendance through their own behaviour and teaching standards.
- Update Pro-monitor with notes and actions

Attendance Officer

The College will provide students with clear instructions on how to contact the College if they are going to be absent. A Student Guide confirming all processes regarding attendance will be issued during Induction and will be available on Tutorial Teams pages and the College website.

The AO will ensure notified absences (form, telephone or email) are documented and registers updated daily.

Progress Tutors

- Working with the student to improve attendance with regular target setting.
- Dealing with any personal/pastoral issues that affect poor attendance and punctuality.
- Liaising with parents/carers to improve attendance and resolve issues.
- Updating ProMonitor with notes and actions relating to attendance or punctuality.

Course Cluster Lead

- Discussing students causing concern at team meetings and taking early action to resolve issues.
- Reviewing attendance in cluster using the attendance dashboard.
- Ensuring that registers are marked accurately and in a timely fashion and following up on any unmarked registers with individuals in their team.
- To check teachers are following up on student absence.
- To meet students and parents/carers for agreeing a support plan with SMART targets.
- Refer on to DoFs, students who are not making adequate progress.

Progress Tutor Managers

- Ensure that registers are marked for absent team members.
- Liaising with parents/carers to improve attendance and resolve issues that have been referred by Progress Tutors.
- To meet students, parents/carers for agreeing a support plan with SMART targets.

Director of Faculty

- Monitoring overall attendance at Faculty level.
- Working with CCLs on strategies to improve overall attendance/punctuality for their faculty.
- Ensuring that, in the event of a staff member being absent, the register is taken or reallocated on the timetable in instances of long-term absence.
- Referring students to Pastoral Board where a student has not improved long term absence.

Pastoral Board

Membership will consist of the following roles:

- o Vice Principal for Student Experience & Progression
- o Vice Principal for Curriculum, Quality and Innovation
- o Head of Student Wellbeing and Progress
- o
- o Progress Tutor Managers
- o Attendance Officer
- o Head of Inclusive Learning and managers as appropriate

The purpose of the Pastoral Board is to review students who have been referred where their attendance is below 70% and they are not responding to the academic support/interventions put in place by teachers, CCLs and Progress Tutors. The meeting is the final stage after all other interventions have been tried. Where there is no evidence of support/interventions having taken place, the students will be referred back to the appropriate stage.

The Pastoral Board will meet every fortnight.

Students who have been identified in subject course reviews will be reviewed at the Pastoral Board, and actions will include;

- Mental health or welfare referral
- Fitness to Study process
- Referral to external agencies
- Academic Review meeting with contract and targets

6. Persistent Absenteeism

As detailed by the Learning Agreement all students sign, attendance at College is compulsory. The College will attempt to address persistent absence in the following way:

- If a student has not attended College for 3 days without notification, the Progress Tutor will be alerted by the Attendance Officer and try to contact the student and their parent/carer.
- If a student has not attended for 5 days without notification, a letter/email will be sent to the student and their parent/carer requesting urgent contact.

- If a student has not attended for 10 days without notification, a 'Have you Left' letter will be sent. If no response or contact is received within a 4-week period and the student has not attended lessons, the student will be withdrawn, in accordance with Education and Skills Funding Agency policy. The student will be referred to relevant NEET prevention or support agencies as appropriate. If there are safeguarding concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be contacted.
- If a student has been absent for a prolonged period which has been reported, the student must, to remain enrolled, satisfy the College that there is a genuine intention to return. Their return to College may be phased and managed through the Fitness to Study process and there should be clear evidence of the student attempting to complete work during their absence. .

7. Equality Impact Statement

We are committed to ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the way we provide services to our students and the way we treat our staff reflects their individual needs and does not discriminate against individuals or groups on any grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act, which are age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate any individual with particular equality and diversity requirements in implementing this policy and procedure.

8. Further information

8.1 External information

Relevant legislation and statutory requirements that have been taken into consideration for this policy include:

- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

8.2 Internal information

Local policies and procedures that have been taken into consideration for this policy include:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Register Marking
- Admissions Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Student Positive Behaviour Management Policy

9. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually from the date of approval.

The policy may be reviewed at an earlier date if necessary, for example, to update it in line with changes in legislation, organisational development or good practice.

[Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy]

Any individual who has queries regarding the content of this policy, or has difficulty understanding how this policy relates to their role, should contact the Policy Author.