

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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**Department/Area:** Quality Assurance

**Issued by:** Vice Principal

**Responsibility:** Vice Principal

**Next Review Date:** August 2023

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The **purpose** of the policy is to:

- Improve student attendance.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for the whole College community; including students, parents, teachers, coaches, managers and governors.
- Implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students.
- Recognize the needs and support of the individual student in the event of significant periods of absence.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance-related data.

The **scope** of the policy is:

- All students.
- All members of staff.
- Parents and governors.

## **Introduction**

The Attendance and Punctuality Policy is a subset of the Student Disciplinary Policy. It addresses student absence in terms of behaviour and looks at the incentives and rewards that foster good attendance and the sanctions that seek to improve attendance, when a student's attendance falls below expectations.

Good attendance plays an essential part in students' academic development and success. The A-level and vocational diploma courses offered by the College are intensive. Students cannot afford to miss teaching and study time.

Students should strive to achieve consistently good attendance, aiming for a minimum of 95% attendance for the year. An attendance record of 95% or above tells a university or employer that the student is dedicated, motivated, organized and takes their responsibilities seriously.

A good resolution to any punctuality or attendance issue is always the domain of a group of people, including the student, teacher, coach, student welfare and attendance officer, academic faculty administrator, curriculum leader, parents/carers and senior leaders. Due regard for the sharing of information on student attendance and punctuality is vital to the implementation of this Policy. Information about punctuality and attendance is usually shared between staff on the College Portal.

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

The College has a commitment to promoting good relations between different groups of staff and students by age, gender, race, disability, learning difficulty, sexual orientation and religious belief. Our aim is for all students to achieve to their full potential. Good attendance and punctuality are key factors in students achieving high grades, and we are committed to removing any barriers that may inhibit good attendance and punctuality, particularly barriers involving age, gender, race, disability, learning difficulty, sexual orientation and religious belief.

The College will give due regard to students who have a declared or diagnosed disability or learning difficulty that impacts on their attendance at College and will make any reasonable adjustments on behalf of the student, to enable the student to continue to engage in learning.

### **Safeguarding**

The College has a strong commitment to keeping students safe. Good attendance is essential for the College to judge that Henley College students are safe, whether inside or outside of the College.

Students may from time-to-time feel anxious about their study and about life in general, and this may impact on their attendance at College. Due regard will be given to students' feeling at any particular time in the academic year.

### **Principles of Good Attendance**

- To set expectations about attendance and punctuality clearly - students should attend a minimum of 95% of lessons.
- To implement a system of incentives, rewards and sanctions to improve student attendance and punctuality.
- To have due regard for the sharing of information on student attendance and punctuality via the College Portal. Please note that attendance data should not be shared on the portal with parents in the case of students who have elected to not have their personal data shared with their parents.
- To provide a supportive timetable that assists students in maintaining good attendance.
- To maximise students' attendance by enabling students to attend lessons remotely, if required.
- To ensure students who take part in super-curricular activities, enrichment and high-performance sports programmes are not late for lessons or leave lessons early, in order to attend training or fixtures.

- To record students' attendance accurately, completing the recording of student attendance on the day of attendance, and with the most appropriate symbol.
- To have due regard for students who are absent or late due to illness, disability, religious commitments or other personal circumstances.
- To have due regard for students who are late for lessons because of problems beyond their control to do with public transport.
- To monitor attendance data regularly and carry out interventions with students when required.

### **Incentives and Rewards**

The system of incentives and rewards acknowledges students' efforts to improve their attendance and punctuality.

- Students should be made aware in induction and throughout their programmes of study at College that universities and employers view students who have an attendance record of 95% or above as people who are dedicated, motivated, organized and takes their responsibilities seriously. This may be the difference for entry into a first-choice university, apprenticeship programme or employment.
- Students who have 98% attendance or above will be entered into a prize draw where they could win an Amazon gift voucher.

### **Sanctions**

The system of sanctions aims to challenge the behaviour of students and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

- Each classroom should have an area near the door for late arriving students. If a student arrives late for a lesson, the student should wait in the area near the door for instructions from the teacher on how to participate in the lesson.
- If the student is persistently late, the student should be referred to the Curriculum Leader.

- If a student's weekly attendance falls below 90% without explanation, the student should be placed on a D1 Disciplinary for attendance. Teachers and coaches can place students on a D1.
- If the student's attendance does not improve, the disciplinary process should be escalated to D2, D3 and D4, when the student's place at College becomes at risk.
- If a student who is enrolled on GCSE English and /or GCSE maths does not attend those lessons, the student will not be allowed to attend their main qualification until they have attended their GCSE English and/or GCSE maths lesson.
- If a student's attendance is below expectation, the student should not be allowed to take part in extra-curricular activities such as visits to employers, universities, and rugby and football matches.
- A student who has poor attendance may not be allowed to re-enrol or progress within the College the following year.

### **Withdrawals/Exclusions**

There are two reasons the College may withdraw a student on the grounds of poor attendance. Firstly, because the student is no longer able to achieve their qualification(s) successfully because of their lack of attendance at College, and secondly where it is necessary to withdraw the student in order to comply with funding regulations.

If a student disciplinary on the grounds of poor attendance is escalated to D4, and the Principal or Vice Principal conclude that the student is no longer able to achieve their qualification(s) successfully, the College reserves the right to withdraw the student from their programme of study at the College.

Funding regulations dictate that a student must be withdrawn from their study programme, if they are absent for 20 consecutive College days. The Education and Skills Funding Agency does not distinguish between authorized and unauthorized absence for this purpose.

### **Care Responsibilities**

The College recognises that care responsibilities for dependent children, relatives or disabled parents may affect a student's ability to attend College. The College will take these responsibilities into account when agreeing an authorised absence provided there is advance warning. If attendance falls below 80% no further absences will be authorised.

## **Types of Absences**

The following unavoidable absences will be authorised by the Faculty Administrator.

- Serious illness, recovery from operation or recuperation after illness.
- Known medical condition
- Hospital appointments
- Jury Service.
- Court appearances, Probation or Youth Offending Service appointments.
- Job interview.
- Attendance at HE open day (up to two) or interview.
- Funerals of relative or close friend.
- Recognised religious holidays.
- Practical driving test.
- Participation in significant extra curricula activities.
- Large scale transport disruption.

The following are examples of absences that are not acceptable.

- Isolated illness; e.g. headache/cold
- Regular transport delays
- Routine dentist, doctor or optician appointments
- Holidays
- Work
- Leisure activities
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Driving lessons or Theory test
- Babysitting or looking after siblings, or other
- Waiting at home for arrival of delivery/service

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Teachers**

- To complete the register in an accurate and timely manner.
- To employ strategies to challenge and improve students' attendance and punctuality, if necessary, as part of pedagogical practice; for example:
  - Classroom Management – an area at the front of the classroom for latecomers to sit and wait for instructions.

- Questioning – asking individual students who miss a lesson without authorisation or explanation why they were absent. The timing such of questions, and the follow up questions, should elicit a commitment from the student that they will attend all lessons.
- To notify parents if a student falls behind with work due to issues relating to attendance and punctuality.
- To initiate a D1 Disciplinary as necessary, recorded on the College Portal, if a student's attendance falls below 90%.

#### **Tutors**

- To monitor the overall attendance of students in their tutor groups.
- To meet informally with students whose weekly attendance falls below 95%.
- To employ strategies to challenge and improve students' attendance and punctuality during 1:1 tutorial meetings and whole-class tutorial sessions.
- To initiate a D1 Disciplinary as necessary, recorded on the College Portal, if a student's attendance falls below 90%.

#### **Faculty Administrators**

- To carry out a weekly review of registers completion.
- To flag up to Curriculum Leaders the non-completion of registers in their curriculum area.

#### **Student Welfare and Attendance Officers**

- To work with the Student Welfare Manager and PPD Programme Manager to identify students who have low attendance.
- To meet with students who have been placed on a D1 Disciplinary for poor attendance, to help the students with strategies to improve their attendance.
- To escalate to a D2 Disciplinary, if a student who is on a D1 Disciplinary for attendance does not improve.
- To patrol shared areas of the campus they work on just before and after the start of each timetable block.
- To direct students to attend lessons when necessary.

**Personal and Professional Development Programme Manager**

- To facilitate informal 'cause for concern' meetings between coaches and students whose unexplained attendance drops below 95%.
- To attend D2 Disciplinary meetings as required
- To issue an Attendance Agreement to students whose attendance does not improve following a D1 Disciplinary.
- To escalate to a D3 Disciplinary, if a student who is on a D2 Disciplinary for attendance does not improve.

**Curriculum Leaders**

- To carry out a weekly review the Curriculum Area attendance data.
- To support the Student Welfare and Attendance Officer in issuing an Attendance Agreement to students whose attendance does not improve following a D1 Disciplinary.
- To support the Student Welfare and Attendance Officer in escalating to a D3 Disciplinary, if a student who is on a D2 Disciplinary for attendance does not improve.

**Assistant Principals**

- To arrange meetings with students, parents, Curriculum Leader and Student Welfare and Attendance Officer, when a disciplinary on the grounds of attendance is escalated to a D3 Disciplinary.
- To re-issue the Attendance Agreement to students whose attendance does not improve following a D2 Disciplinary, and a final written warning.
- To escalate to a D4 Disciplinary, if a student who is on a D3 Disciplinary for attendance does not improve.

**Principal / Vice Principal**

- To determine if a student is to be withdrawn from their programme of study at the College permanently on the grounds of poor attendance, following a D3 Disciplinary.

**Management Information Services (MIS)**

- To make available a weekly list of student absences per qualification group.
- To operate a system of automatic emails to parents when students have an unexplained absence.



### **Students**

- To attend all lessons on their timetable, arriving before the start of the lesson.
- To understand and comply with College expectations of attendance and punctuality.
- To notify their Faculty Administrator in advance, if they have a genuine reason for lateness or absence.
- To arrange medical appointments out of College hours where possible.
- Not to arrange work commitments that clash with their College timetable.
- To comply with classroom procedures for students who arrive late.
- To be able to find and regularly monitor their own levels of attendance on the Student Portal.
- To catch up on any missed work as a result of absence.

### **Parents**

- To not take holidays in term time.
- If a student is unwell, or has an unavoidable absence, the parent must contact the College (Faculty Administrator) to confirm the reason for absence before 10.00 on each day of the absence.
- If a student is ill for longer than seven consecutive calendar days, the parents must submit a doctor's certificate to the Faculty Administrator.
- To attend student disciplinary meetings on the grounds of low attendance, if required by the College.

Note: Some students elect at the start of the year, that their personal data should not be shared with their parents. The final Parents bullet point refers only to parents whose son/daughter has elected that the College may share information with them.

## **Improving Attendance**

This section considers ideas to improve the attendance of students who have unexplained absences. Teacher can influence students who have unexplained absences by:

- Making the link between good attendance and good grades clear to students regularly.
- Reminding students regularly that an attendance record of 95% or above tells a university or employer that the student is dedicated, motivated, organized and takes their responsibilities seriously. This can be the difference between achieving a first-choice university place or gaining an apprenticeship or job opportunity.
- Asking a student who has been absent from a lesson without explanation for a commitment that they will attend the next lesson.
- Planning a series of lessons and explaining to students the content of the series of the lesson at the start of the series.
- Holding a discussion with students about attendance; the benefits of attendance and the consequences of poor attendance. Questions students could discuss could be: Does attending College make you more intelligent? Is it more important to attend all your lessons than anything else you do?

## **Procedure for Managing Student Absence**

The procedure for managing unauthorised student absence follows the College's Student Disciplinary Procedure. The first 'cause for concern' stage is intended to be an informal conversation between the student and the coach, with the aim of resolving any attendance issues informally.

If poor attendance persists, the matter should be escalated through the four formal stages of the process from a D1 meeting with the Student Welfare and Attendance Officer, to a D2 meeting with the Student Welfare and Attendance Officer and a College manager, a D3 meeting with the Assistant Principal and finally a D4 meeting with the Principal or Vice Principal. If the student's attendance does not improve by Stage 4, the College reserves the right to withdraw the student from their programme of study at the College.

### **Cause for Concern Process**

- A 'cause for concern' meeting will be held with the student's coach, if their weekly attendance drops below 95%.

### **D1 – Student Welfare and Attendance Officer Intervention**

If a student's weekly attendance drops below 90%:

- The students will be required to attend a study support meeting with a Student Welfare and Attendance Officer, to discuss barriers preventing the student from attending lessons.
- Parents/carers will be informed that the meeting has taken place.
- The student's attendance will be monitored closely for four weeks.

### **D2 – Student Welfare and Attendance Officer and College Manager Intervention**

If the student's attendance does not improve:

- Parents/carers of the student will be invited into College for a meeting with the Student Welfare and Attendance Officer and a College manager, to address the main issues and agree targets and support actions to help improve the student's attendance.
- An Attendance Agreement will be issued with targets and action points that are agreed by the Student Welfare and Attendance Officer, the student and the parent/carer.
- If there is significant improvement in the student's attendance, no further intervention will be taken. If the student's attendance does not improve, or declines further, the next step will be implemented, as agreed at the meeting with parents/carers.

### **D3 – Assistant Principal Intervention**

If the student does not meet the targets set in the Stage 2 Attendance Agreement:

- Parents/carers of the student will be invited to a meeting with the Assistant Principal, Curriculum Leader and Student Welfare and Attendance Officer.
- A written warning will be issued if appropriate and the attendance agreement will be re-issued.

#### **D4 – Senior Leadership Intervention**

If the student's attendance continues to be below the targets set in the Attendance Agreement or the student's overall attendance is below 80%:

- A careers guidance interview will be offered to the student.
- If there are no genuine reasons or circumstances to explain the level of absence, or the student's refusal to engage in the intervention process, the College reserves the right to withdraw the student from their programme of study at the College permanently.
- The parents/carers of the student will be involved in the process.

## Flow Chart – Managing Student Absence

### D1 – Study Support

**Student Welfare and Attendance Officer Intervention**  
Meeting held with students whose weekly attendance is below 90%



### D2 Disciplinary

**Student Welfare and Attendance Officer and College manager Intervention**  
Parental meeting with student, Student Welfare and Attendance Officer  
and College manager - Attendance Agreement to be completed

Failure to meet requirements of  
Attendance Agreement



### D3 Disciplinary

**Assistant Principal Intervention**  
Parental meeting with Assistant Principal, Curriculum Leader, Student  
Welfare and Attendance Officer - Attendance Agreement to be re-issued;  
Written Warning to be issued

Continued failure to meet the  
requirements of the Attendance  
Agreement



### D4 Disciplinary

**Senior Leadership Intervention**  
A careers guidance interview will be offered to the student.  
The College may withdraw the student from their programme of study.