

Procedure 4.4 Attendance monitoring

This procedure is a response to the quality agendas and requirements presented by the OFS, Pearson and USP as the collaborative partner. It is designed to ensure consistency in approach to attendance across the different programmes in the Academy. The Academy is committed to offering opportunities for the development of all students in ways that meet individual needs. One aspect of this is a commitment to improving retention and achievement through raising standards of attendance and punctuality.

1 Aim

This procedure aims to assist all students to take responsibility for their full and prompt attendance which will enhance their learning experience, develop their personal skills and promote retention, achievement and progression.

Principles on which the procedure is based:

- student attendance should be managed across the Academy
- targets for student attendance rates should be set and monitored across the Academy
- punctuality and full attendance should be a benchmark by which the quality of provision is judged
- every effort should be made to maximize punctuality and attendance
- retaining full and accurate student attendance records is essential

2 Students' entitlements

Students are entitled to the best opportunities to be successful in their studies. If a student's general attendance and punctuality give the Academy cause for concern and there is a worry that the student may not complete his/her studies successfully, the student will be contacted to discuss the problem.

An attempt will be made to identify any problems or difficulties and arrangements may be made for special help from the Academic Head. He will listen to any problems raised and will try to give the support and guidance needed.

All students are entitled to expect lessons which start and end promptly. Staff will cover, or set appropriate work, wherever possible in the case of staff absence.

Every effort will be made to give advance warning of unavoidable changes in class schedules.

The Academy will try to ensure that no classes will be cancelled due to staff absence and will arrange for teacher substitution when necessary.

3 Students' responsibilities

The Academy requires students to attend all classes punctually according to their signed learning agreement and course timetable. Students should not knowingly miss a class for anything other than illness or exceptional circumstances. It is not advisable to take holiday in term time. If students need to miss a class, they, or someone acting on their behalf should:

- inform their administration/compliance department *immediately* and also the member of staff who takes the class, in advance, of any planned absence (eg. for a doctor's or dentist's appointment) and obtain prior permission which is authenticated with an Absence Authorization Notification note or Self Certification where medical note is not available from a hospital
- telephone the Academy reception desk before 9.15 am on the first day of an unplanned absence to provide an explanation. Students will be asked for personal details and for how long they expect to be absent and in the case of international students will be informed of the need to obtain medical evidence in the form of a GP note or hospital letter
- obtain a letter from their parent (or guardian if they are under 18) for any illness lasting more than one week
- on return to the Academy following any period of absence attend a return to Academy interview with Head of Administration
- on return to the Academy following an absence lasting less than one week, UK and EU students will need to complete a self-certification form, and for an absence lasting more than one week, they need to provide a doctor's note.
- make arrangements to catch up with any course work missed during absence.

If a student is absent without authorization for four weeks and there has been no response, the student may be deemed to have withdrawn him/herself from the course.

If, after four weeks of study or more, a student's attendance is less than 85% without good reason, the Academy may give the student a formal warning in writing. If the student's attendance falls below 75% on the second time without good reason, the student may receive a second warning letter. If the student's attendance falls below 65% for a third time without good reason, the student will receive a final written warning. The Academy will only issue two warning letters and one final warning letter in any one academic term. If a student's attendance remains inadequate, the Academy may take the decision to withdraw the student from the programme.

Students may be denied access to classes if they are more than 15 minutes late, unless there are good reasons. The same rule applies for online sessions at distance learning. Students may be required to wait until the class lecturer signals the student may enter the

room (or online session on the platform used) at a point which does not disrupt learning for other students.

Thereafter for any unauthorised attendance from the start of term the following procedures will be followed for each term: (Each Session is 3 hrs)

Warning 1 : after 15% unauthorised absence = 8 sessions or 4 days from the start of term
Warning 2 : after 25% unauthorised absence = 13 sessions or 6.5 days from the start of term
Final Warning: after 35% unauthorised absence = 18 sessions or 9 days from the start of term

A student may be withdrawn due to inability to fulfil programme requirements including poor attendance, following formal interview at the discretion of the Academy.

4 Teaching staff responsibilities

All members of teaching staff are required to:

- advise students of the Academy attendance procedure during induction
- inform the administration department if a student has been absent for any classes throughout a timetabled day
- mark attendance, absence and lateness in the register accurately (the Academy uses an electronic attendance system, but in case of failure use the register)
- monitor and report individual and group attendance and punctuality for their classes
- help to support students' return to Academy, as appropriate
- start and finish classes on time

5 Administration is required to:

- investigate, collect evidence, and make the decision within Academy regulations regarding student requests for authorized leave and to liaise with the Academic Head on sign off for requests
- ensure that the attendance team is aware of all issues relating to individual student attendance
- keep other teaching staff informed of issues and actions relating to a student's attendance and punctuality
- monitor and report on students' attendance and punctuality, with the help of teaching and teaching staff
- refer unresolved issues concerning attendance and punctuality to the Head of Administration

- ensure that paperwork regarding student attendance is up-to-date and kept in the attendance file.

6 Management's responsibilities

The Head of Administration is responsible for ensuring that all staff is aware of this policy and that students have been inducted into it and in addition will be responsible for setting annual targets for attendance rates across all Academy provision.

The Head of Administration is also responsible for facilitating the production of regular timely and accurate attendance data and reports, to allow teaching staff to take prompt action for the benefit of students.

7 Standards by which the success of this procedure can be evaluated

- annual targets for attendance are met
- continually improving attendance and punctuality
- high levels of attendance and punctuality when measured against relevant benchmarks
- swift action taken where needed to support students with less than acceptable benchmarks for attendance and punctuality
- improved student success
- staff compliance with the procedure during quality audits
- positive feedback in self-assessment reports

8 Responsibility for implementing this procedure

- The Head of Administration has overall responsibility for the implementation of this procedure across the Academy
- Programme coordinators are responsible for ensuring that course teams collaboratively address the requirements of this procedure
- the teaching staff, attendance team and appropriate administrative staff are responsible for meeting student entitlements.