



HE Attendance Policy

Doc No. To be completed by Quality

To be completed by Quality:

Issue	Date of 1 st Issue	Last Reviewed	Date of Next Review	Responsibility of
01	21.05.19	04.09.19	21.05.20	Centre for Excellence Manager HE

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Document Development

Please complete with details regarding the development of this Policy.

D1. Working Group

Details of staff who were involved in the development of this policy:

Name	Position

D2. Consultation

Details of staff, external groups or external organisations who were consulted in the development of this policy:

Please refer to Equality Screening Consultation Guidance.

Name	Organisation	Date

D3. Approval Dates:

Details	Date Approved
Equality Screening <i>(please refer to Equality Screening Guidance)</i>	
Quality Checked <i>(please refer to Quality Checklist)</i>	
SLT	
Governing Body <i>(SLT to decide if PPS needs to go to Governing Body)</i>	

D4. Communication Plan:

Please provide details and dates as to how this policy will be communicated, implemented and disseminated:

Action:	Action by:	Date:

D5. Document History

Issue no. under review (Please see the front page)	Date of review: (Date)	Who was involved in reviewing the document? (Name/s)	Were changes made to the document after reviewing?	If changes have been made, please provide brief details:	New Issue No.	If Yes, did the document need to go through consultation again?	If Yes, did the document need to be Equality Screened again?	If Yes, date those affected by document will be alerted of updated document:
			(Yes or No)			(Yes*/No)	(Yes*/No)	(Date)

* If you answered 'Yes' in columns E or F, you must forward details of additional consultation and/or screening to the Equality Officer.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To highlight and ensure that all higher education students understand the importance of attending and engaging with all lectures and learning opportunities, including work experience/placement as required by their course.
- 1.2. South West College has established a key performance indicator for all Higher Education students including Tier 4, of a minimum 90% attendance per academic year.
- 1.3. Where applicable, students understand that professional bodies or awarding bodies may have different requirements for attendance and that failing to meet these requirements could mean they will fail aspects of their course.
- 1.4. To highlight and ensure that all higher education students understand that failure to attend a lecture or learning opportunity disadvantages them and negatively impacts on academic success.
- 1.5. To understand the responsibility of students to attend where group work and collaborative learning is taking place and the negative impact non-attendance makes to other learners.

2. Tier 4 International Students

- 2.1. Students and tutors need to adhere to the UKVI guidelines (please refer to admissions or the HE Co-ordinator for further information on this).—Tier 4 students will receive attendance monitoring information when they register. This includes a compliance declaration which students must sign and a copy must be retained on file. The College (via the Faculty) will monitor the Tier 4 student's attendance twice a week. Monitored sessions should be selected by Faculties where it is feasible to carry out attendance monitoring and where individual students can be identified in person e.g. tutorials, seminars and lab sessions. If the Tier 4 student has a genuine reason why he/she has missed lectures, tutorials, practical classes, etc. they must contact their Course Director immediately. If he/she is absent for medical reasons they need to bring a letter from their doctor explaining your illness. Submission of coursework and attendance at exams must be monitored by Faculties throughout each semester. If a student has not attended for 10 days / 2 weeks (usually missing 4 consecutive contacts) of study this should be flagged up to the Faculty's UKVI Coordinator and then reported to the Compliance team.

3. Outcomes of Effective Attendance Monitoring

- The impact of effective attendance monitoring should result in the following:
- Increase attendance on higher education courses at South West College;
- Increase the number of students who stay on their programme of study;
- Increase success on higher education courses at South West College;

- Increase the number of students who progress onto the next stage or level of study;
- Increase the number of students who succeed at first attempt at assessment;
- Ensure students have ownership of their own learning and achievements.

4. Definition

4.1. Attendance - means being physically present at the lecture or learning opportunity, arriving on time and staying the duration of the session. Attendance can also constitute class participation through a number technological methods such as:

- Virtual learning involves any type of online learning whereby learners complete the course in their own time and at their own pace with no face-to-face element;
- Blended learning is when a portion of the traditional face-to-face instruction is replaced by web-based online learning;
- Online face-to-face learning involves any type of online learning that is completed in real-time, with a tutor, using a virtual classroom tool (e.g. Blackboard Collaborate).

4.2. The monitoring of virtual attendance will be conducted as follows:

- The student will be timetabled on Syllabus Plus;
- Once the course has been set up, the students enrolled and the activity has been timetabled, an e-register will be generated;
- This attendance will be tracked through the VLE/External site by viewing the activity log (Virtual Academy Support Assistant) and this information will be used to mark the e-register;
- The student must complete their virtual element within the timetabled activity to be marked present ("V");
- Tutors/Co-ordinators will be able to view all student weekly attendance on Pathway and can identify any Virtual attendance issues during the tutorial process and seek the support of the Virtual Academy Support Assistant to follow-up non-attendance in line with DfE guidelines.

4.3. Engagement means to be committed to and interacting with learning opportunities behaviourally, emotionally and cognitively.

5. Responsibilities of the College

- 5.1. The College, via the tutor, will monitor attendance using the College electronic system;
- 5.2. Tutors will report any issues or concerns regarding attendance to the Head of School and discuss with student either through the tutorial process or through a scheduled meeting;
- 5.3. Tutors will provide support and guidance to students with issues regarding attendance and engagement; this may include contacting other specialists and support such as counsellors;
- 5.4. The College will comply with the monitoring and reporting requirements of external organisations such as UKVI, professional, regulatory, statutory bodies, and awarding bodies;
- 5.5. Data collected regarding attendance will be stored and used in compliance with the Data Protection Act. Please refer to the College's Data Protection Policy for further information.

6. Attendance

- 6.1. **Meeting 1** - If attendance falls below 90% (please also refer to section 1.2 and section 3), an attendance tutorial will be booked with the tutor to ascertain issues surrounding attendance. Discussions, action plan (if required) and outcome of the tutorial will be formally noted.
- 6.2. Attendance will be monitored closely with further tutorials booked as needed.
- 6.3. Tutors may offer support through action plans or signposting other support.
- 6.4. Tutors may refer to the awarding body procedures where the student is unable to improve attendance due to ill health or personal circumstance; suspension from studies via a leave of absence may be an appropriate option to discuss (please refer to the SWC Extenuating Circumstances Procedure).
- 6.5. The student must consider the financial consequences of not attending, of the possibility of repeating a unit or a year if not successful and the impact this has on further study. Tutors are advised to consult and direct students to the Extenuating Circumstance Policy for further guidance. Refer to Student Finance NI for further information
- 6.6. It will be expected that the student will improve attendance after the initial tutorial (**Meeting 1**).
- 6.7. **Meeting 2** - If attendance does not improve following initial attendance tutorial, or targets on action plan have not been met, a meeting will be arranged between the Course Director, tutor and the student to ascertain difficulties with attendance and strategies to

improve attendance. Strategies/support and an action plan will be agreed by all parties and monitored within the college tutorial process.

- 6.8. If attendance does not improve after the **second meeting**, a **verbal warning will be issued**.
- 6.9. **Continuing attendance issues - Meeting 3.** If attendance does not improve immediately after the verbal warning and actions are not met, the relevant Deputy Head of School will meet with the student, Course Director and tutor to ascertain difficulties with attendance and non-compliance with action plan. The Head of School will also be informed.
- 6.10. **A written warning will be issued.**
- 6.11. If the student does not respond to correspondence regarding meetings, the awarding body, if required, will be informed and the student may be withdrawn from the programme on the third attempt of contact (*not applicable to Open University awards*).
- 6.12. The College will inform Student Finance NI of any withdrawal.
- 6.13. **Non-attendance** - If the student continues to have poor attendance, or not meet actions on action plan, the student will be advised to suspend studies.
- 6.14. The disciplinary procedure may be invoked for poor attendance.
- 6.15. The student should be advised to consider the financial implications for failing learning outcomes through non-attendance

7. Monitoring and Review

7.1. The College will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of this Policy.

7.2. The College will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote this Policy effectively and is committed to reviewing this Policy on a regular basis, in consultation with the recognised trade unions, statutory organisations such as the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and in line with models of good practice.

Signed:  Date 19-09-19
(Chief Executive)

Signed:  Date 19/9/19
(Chairman of Governing Body)