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<b>Responsibility:</b>	<b>Director of HE and Access</b>

## HE STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

### 1. POLICY

- 1.1 Students<sup>1</sup> enter College for a range of reasons. Their main aim however is usually the achievement of their chosen qualification. It is our duty to support students to achieve their outcomes, ensuring that their experience at Leicester College is a positive one and will offer them progression and employment opportunities. As a result, the maintenance of up-to-date data, especially data captured in registers, is the responsibility of all staff who are accountable for students.
- 1.2 Retaining students and supporting them to achieve their qualifications is fundamental to the success of the College. Close monitoring of attendance contributes to a students' continuation and completion. Where students are at risk of low attendance, it is a requirement of the Curriculum Area to address this with use of attendance data available.
- 1.3 The College target for HE student attendance is 80% and 85% for higher level apprentices (HLA). The key to good attendance is high quality teaching and learning supplemented by the positive engagement of students. Each Curriculum Area is required to ensure that attendance at timetabled sessions is recorded in an accurate and timely manner. Where relevant, the conclusions drawn from College-wide processes will be used to improve the punctuality and attendance of students.
- 1.4 The College targets for continuation are not less than 80% for full time (FT) and part time (PT) HE and 75% for Apprenticeships (HLA)<sup>2</sup>. These targets and associated strategies will be monitored through termly Programme Management Board (PMB) meetings and annual self-evaluation processes (see also Section 6).
- 1.5 This policy and related procedures apply to all Level 4+ students on prescribed HE (e.g., Foundation Degrees, Higher Nationals, Honours), non-prescribed HE (e.g., L4+ NVQ, L4+ professional short courses) and higher-level apprenticeships.

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of the Policy 'students' includes any student/apprentice studying on a programme at level 4 and above. Other students should consult CR013.

<sup>2</sup> Target set as +5% in HE Strategy Action Plan 2022-25 and may be superseded by PSRB or other external agencies requirements.

## 2. PROCEDURES AND REPORTS

- 2.1 The overarching framework for this Policy is recognition that we should be treating our students with respect. The examples that we ourselves set as staff are important in terms of modelling positive behaviour. It is therefore implicit that all staff ensure that they are prepared in advance for each timetabled class and that the classes start and finish on time.
- 2.2 Safeguarding responsibilities relate to all College students and requires that attendance is accurately recorded and monitored on a timely basis<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.3 Attendance information **may** be shared with parents/carers of L4+ students aged under 18. Attendance information **will not** be shared with parents/carers of students aged 18+ unless the student requests this in writing. For apprentices' attendance will be shared with the employer at the progress review regardless of age.
- 2.4 The expectation is that staff will regularly access and use the College's attendance information available through EBS On Track, Matrix/Power BI, and ProMonitor to ascertain punctuality and attendance patterns. Any interventions on punctuality or attendance should be based on this data.
- 2.6 Appropriate support for students can aid punctuality and attendance. Programme Lead/Apprenticeship Leads<sup>4</sup> (PL/AL) are responsible for identifying students at risk or in need of additional support and/or mentoring. Where mitigating circumstances impact on student punctuality or attendance, the PL/AL should make all tutors aware of these circumstances through Pro Monitor/SmartAssessor. Where appropriate, referral to wider student services support within the college should be made.

## 3. PUNCTUALITY

- 3.1 The College's Graduate Attributes include 'self-management' that asks students to demonstrate *'the ability to plan work, schedule and use time effectively'*<sup>5</sup>. Any time after the starting time of a timetabled event is an instance of lateness. Lateness will always be recorded in line with the College Register Policy. When considering and making a judgement on the impact of HE student punctuality issues consider the following:
- Is the lateness persistent or one-off?
  - Is lateness first thing in the morning or is it for sessions when the student is already in College?
  - Is there a pattern developing with persistent student lateness that is disruptive to other students?

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<sup>3</sup> See College Register Policy

<sup>4</sup> Programme Leads or equivalent i.e., Apprenticeship Lead

<sup>5</sup> See HE Scheme of Work SoW Template

- 3.2 Students should telephone the College or contact tutors through email/Teams before the start of class to say if they are going to be late. This should be explained to students during the induction period, with appropriate contact details provided.
- 3.3 Students must never be excluded from classes due to lateness. In situations where students are late to practical workshop classes and have thus missed demonstrations and relevant Health and Safety information, they will need to be accommodated within the class but not allowed to perform operations which carry a potential risk.
- 3.4 In all instances, the tutor should make it clear to the late student that the lateness has been noticed and recorded. The tutor is required to ascertain the reasons for the lateness at an appropriate time during or immediately at the end of the session.
- 3.5 Significant concerns about lateness should be recorded through ProMonitor/SmartAssessor and raised where applicable at 1:1/tutorial/review meetings. In extreme cases where a student is persistently late, this should be addressed in accordance with the Student/Apprentice Behaviour and Conduct Policy.

#### **4 ATTENDANCE**

- 4.1 Students should telephone the College or contact tutors through email/Teams before the start of class to say if they are going to be absent. This should be explained to students during the induction period, with appropriate contact details provided. Absence will always be recorded in line with the College Register Policy.
- 4.2 In the event of unexplained non-attendance, the following procedures should be exercised:
- Unauthorised absence will be marked in accordance with the Register Policy and only acceptable register marks should be used. The register is an auditable document that is used by external funding agencies (i.e., Student Loans Company) and can be used in matters of law. Registers will be subject to audit samples throughout the academic year. It is the responsibility of individual staff members to be familiar with the appropriate register marks and to seek clarity, where necessary. The 'Off Campus' (O mark), can be used in relation to Level 4+ higher education delivery. The guidance for correct use of this attendance mark is described in the Register Policy.
  - It is the individual responsibility of all staff to complete registers within the first 30 minutes of each session. It is imperative that the College has a clear and accurate picture of student/apprentices being in sessions, and so absence can be monitored and addressed

in a timely manner. The college's auto-alert system will only trigger once a register has been completed within this timescale. There may be serious potential safeguarding implications if registers are not completed in a timely manner.

- In the case of work-based or HLA students it is appropriate for the employer to be contacted in the event of unexplained non-attendance.
- Where work placement/work experience students are due in the workplace but have not attended, the Curriculum Area will need to have arranged with the workplace to have this reported to the appropriate staff in their area. In most cases, this will be the work placement co-ordinator or Programme/Apprenticeship Lead.

- 4.3 From their monitoring, PLs/ALs should be aware if there is persistent absence develops and issues of non-attendance should, as with issues of lateness, be raised with students in 1:1/Review meetings, recorded on Pro Monitor and, if necessary, addressed in accordance with the College procedures outlined in Appendix 1 and 2.
- 4.4 PLs/ALs should consider the possibility of safeguarding concerns around issues of non-attendance. HE students may be vulnerable, particularly if living alone away from home, and continued non-attendance should be addressed quickly. Patterns of attendance that are unexplained or where contact has not been possible with the student and/or emergency contact should be referred to the Safeguarding Team as a concern, for further investigation. Additionally, any discussions with students relating to absence that highlight any potential wellbeing or other safeguarding issues should be referred to the Safeguarding Team, in line with normal reporting procedures.

## **5. PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE MONITORING AND INTERVENTION**

- 5.1 Appendices 1 and 2 set out the three-stage process for monitoring and dealing with the poor punctuality and non-attendance of HE students and HLAs.
- 5.2 Stage 1 involves action and monitoring (Pro Monitor) from the PL. Stage 2 escalates to the PAM and a tactical suspension of student finance can be invoked. A tactical suspension blocks the release of the next schedule tuition fee/maintenance loan payment. Stage 3 is a move to withdraw that involves formally ending the student's finance arrangements and must be signed off by the DoC.
- 5.3 De Montfort University (DMU) maintains that the monitoring of attendance and actions implemented as a result remain a matter for resolution at local level. For this reason, this College policy supersedes DMU policy. In the situation where a HE student is being withdrawn from the College based on poor engagement and attendance normal procedures for withdrawal should be applied. Contact the HE office for further information.

- 5.4 To avoid confusion and duplication, where a student is being monitored for attendance and becomes involved in an issue that requires the use of the Student/Apprentice Behaviour and Conduct Policy, then subsequent monitoring and action should be via the Student /Apprentice Behaviour Breach/Disciplinary procedure.

## **6. CONTINUATION (HE)**

- 6.1 The College applies the Office for Students (OfS) definition of 'continuation' to its dataset for Higher Education. Students active beyond 2 weeks of their start date are within the count. OfS continuation rates (excluding transfers) are based on student activity one year and 14 days after the student's start date. Undergraduate level students who are still studying for their HE qualification at the College, or who have qualified are described as having continued. All other students are described as non-continuers.
- 6.2 In the case of HE students who have secured tuition fee/maintenance loans, the Student Loans Company make three payments across the year to the student (maintenance loan) and the College (tuition fee). These payments roughly coincide with the start of each term; 25% of the annual tuition fee is paid after approximately 6 weeks of attendance in the Autumn Term. A further 25% is paid in January for the Spring Term and a final liability period payment of 50% of tuition fee is paid to the College after Easter for attendance in the summer term. If a student attends after one of these liability dates and then withdraws, the tuition fee and maintenance loan payment will be triggered for that term. If withdrawn from studies after this census point, the student will not be eligible for a tuition fee refund and may have to pay back all or part of their maintenance loan. Several agencies including the awarding body must be notified when a HE student withdraws, contact the HE office for guidance and in all cases the [HE Change of Circumstance process](#) should always be followed.

## **7. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

- 7.1 This policy links to the following policies and procedures concerning students and contact with parents:
- Student/Apprentice Behaviour and Conduct Policy
  - Register Policy and Procedure
  - Data Protection Policy.

HE Punctuality and Attendance Monitoring Process. All templates available on the HE SharePoint site.	
Where <b>punctuality</b> becomes a concern actions and outcomes should be recorded through Pro Monitor. Where appropriate, persistent, and disruptive lateness should be addressed through the Student/Apprentice Behaviour and Conduct Policy.	
<p><b>Stage 1</b> - Attendance falls below 80% HE PL raises concern with student via face 2 face, email, or Teams.</p> <p>Student invited to correspond/discuss matter and outcome recorded on Pro Monitor. Attendance continues to be monitored when it falls below 70% - escalate to Stage 2.</p>	Attendance falls to 80% or below
<p><b>Stage 2</b> - HE PL notifies PAM, who at their discretion uses <b>HE ATTEND (a)</b> letter to formally invite student to discuss attendance at a meeting.</p> <p>PAM to use the <b>HE ATTEND (b)</b> letter to record outcome of meeting. To include the establishment of a 4-week review period, and requirement that the student <b>MUST</b> achieve an agreed attendance rate during the 4-week review period.</p> <p><b>HE ATTENDANCE (b)</b> sent to student and archived on Pro Monitor.</p>	Attendance falls to 70% or below
<p><b>Stage 3</b> - The Director of Curriculum, at their discretion sends <b>HE ATTEND (c1 or c2)</b> notifying student of the intention to withdraw or not.</p> <p><b>HE ATTEND (c1 withdraw)</b> sets out notification of intention to withdraw student from last date of attendance. Student asked to contact curriculum manager in writing to present grounds for appealing decision and a 10-day appeal deadline set from the date of the letter. If grounds for appeal accepted by curriculum manager, repeat stage 2 (above). If grounds for appeal not accepted or no appeal submitted - proceed to withdraw.</p> <p><b>HE ATTEND (c2 not to withdraw)</b> confirms that attendance remains below expectations following Stage 2 processes, but the student is engaging with the course, submitting for assessment and achieving the necessary marks to remain on the course. This letter confirms no intention to withdraw but states that failure to continue to submit work for assessment will lead to an immediate return to Stage 3 (c1) above and withdrawal.</p>	Attendance continues below 70%
<p><b>Stage 4 – Confirmation of withdrawal</b></p> <p>Use <b>HE ATTEND (d)</b> to notify student that despite its best efforts the College cannot confirm satisfactory attendance, and withdrawal is confirmed by the <b>Director of Curriculum</b>.</p>	Withdraw student. Use standard centralised student withdrawal process.

**PLEASE CONTACT THE HE OFFICE FOR COPIES OF HE ATTENDANCE LETTER TEMPLATES (Stages 2 and 3).**