



## Student Attendance Policy

### The aims of this procedure are:

- to enable all absences to be fairly and consistently dealt with across the College.
- to monitor and improve the attendance of all students.

In interpreting these procedures, the decision of the College is final. The College may amend this procedure at any time, or depart from it, depending on the circumstances of the case.

### Attendance requirements

As part of the terms and conditions of enrolment at the College, students are expected to attend lectures, seminars and tutorials. If attendance is unsatisfactory without any extenuating circumstances such students will be subject to the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

Attendance will be monitored through the registers and the Student Information system. Where a student misses classes they will be contacted by phone, email and/or SMS and asked to explain the reasons for their absence. Students are required to respond to these messages.

### Absence notification (short-term)

Where there are valid reasons for absence, students must provide proof, including doctor's notes, evidence of an accident, or other documentation. Where a student knows in advance that they will not be able to attend their classes, they must notify the College and provide supporting evidence for their absence. The following rules will apply to absences:

- during term time students will not be given leave of absence for overseas national holidays or attendance at family functions, etc.
- no student will be granted authorised leave of absence for more than 2 weeks during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances and such leave is agreed with the College management.
- any absence due to illness must be notified to the Student Support as soon as possible, preferably before 10.00 am on the day of absence
- students who are absent from classes for more than 5 working days must provide a doctor's certificate
- all students must declare any medical condition or disability which is likely to result in their missing a significant number of classes. All female students must inform the College if they are pregnant. Any false declaration, or failure to disclose a condition or pregnancy, may result in a student's enrolment being cancelled without any fee refund.

## Long-term absence

If a student is absent for longer than four weeks without informing their tutor, course manager, course administrator or other manager, without providing appropriate evidence to support a legitimate absence (for example major illness or operation), they will be withdrawn from the College. In this circumstance, the College's Student Disciplinary Procedures will not apply but the withdrawal will be recorded on the Student Information System for any future applications to the College.

## Explained absences

4.1 There are some absences which can be marked as an explained absence. These include:

- illness;
- medical appointments, which could not be made out of college hours;
- a religious holiday (up to 3 days);
- a university interview or
- a career-related interview;
- a work placement, which is an integral part of the student's programme of study and for which the student does not receive payment;
- attendance at a probation meeting or a meeting with social worker or UK Border Agency or Embassy staff;
- severe disruption to a student's method of transport, such as a strike or snowstorm, that leaves the student with no alternative method of travelling to College;
- a College representatives' meeting or Student Council Meeting.

## Unexplained absences

The following reasons for absence are **not** acceptable and **cannot** be marked as explained absences. They include:

- holidays
- part or full time work which is not part of your programme of study
- leisure activities
- birthdays or similar celebrations
- shopping
- driving lessons

Students should be aware that if they take holidays during term time they may be withdrawn from examinations and/or coursework may not be submitted for marking and verification. They will also be called to a meeting in accordance with the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

## Following up on absences

1. The College will contact those students who miss their classes by phone, email or SMS. Further continued absence will result in 2 warning letters. If, after receiving these warnings, students still fail to attend classes without a valid reason for absence, the



College will send a third and final letter explaining that the College is withdrawing sponsorship and will inform the UKVI/Home Office that the student's registration has been cancelled. NO fees will be refunded and the student will be expected to leave the UK.

2. A condition of the Student Visa is that all students are required to ensure that the College has their up to date contact details at all times; this includes their home address in the UK, their international home address, their email ID, UK mobile and any land line contact number, as well as telephone and email contact details of their parent/guardian at their overseas address.
3. No extensions to Student Visas, exemptions from Council Tax, or requests for authorised absence, will be supported by the College where attendance falls below the minimum requirement. For example, the attendance requirement for Council Tax exemption letters is 80%.

### **Deferring units or courses**

- i. Any student who expects to be absent from classes for more than two weeks for any reason (for example, their own illness, or the illness or death of a close family member) must inform the College as soon as possible. In such a case, fees will not be refunded, but will be held on account for up to 12 months until the student is able to resume studies.<sup>1</sup>
- ii. Any international student who becomes pregnant is advised not to continue with their studies at least 15 weeks before the expected date for the birth of the child. All international students who are pregnant are advised to return home, and apply for a new visa once they are ready to resume studies, having made all the necessary arrangements for the welfare of their child. The student will be responsible for any associated expenses. Fees already paid will not be refunded, but will be held on account for up to 12 months until the student is able to resume her studies.
- iii. UK and EU students, along with international students who may be pregnant by who remain in the UK are expected to attend all classes until the 35<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. Normal attendance rules will apply. Students will normally be granted an authorised absence for a maximum of 3 months, from the 35<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy, and to resume 8 weeks after the child is born. This absence will be reported to the UK Border Agency, where appropriate.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Disciplinary actions for breaking the student attendance requirements**

Where student contravene the Student Attendance Procedures they will be subject to the Student Disciplinary Procedures as outlined below:

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<sup>1</sup> In some cases the student will need to reapply for a new Visa. It may be necessary to report the student to the UK Visas and Immigrations (UKVI) if they fail to meet the Tier 4 attendance requirements.



**Stage One:** The student will be spoken to by a member of the academic team. They will be expected to explain absences and provide/agree an action plan for improvement (Stage One) Student attendance will be monitored.

**Stage Two:** If a student`s attendance fails to improve, a further meeting will be held with the student and, if appropriate, a final written warning will be provided (Stage Two) indicating that if they continue to not attend they may be suspended from their course. Warnings may also include conditions. The College may decide to:

- not enter a student for examinations/external assessment
- not submit their coursework for verification
- not allow them to progress to the next year/level of their course

**Stage Three:** Where the attendance of a student continues to be of concern they will be excluded from the College (Stage Three), either temporarily or as a permanent measure. A letter explaining this decision will be sent to the student by a senior manager. Students may also be suspended or excluded from the College for the non-payment of fees, the non-submission of assignments and failure to progress academically, failure to abide by the rules of the College.

Where students are excluded, they have the right to appeal against the decision.

### **Appeals**

Students wishing to appeal the decision to exclude them must do so in writing to the Principal within 5 days of the exclusion. They must state why they are appealing the decision. If there are no clear grounds for the appeal and the College has followed its` procedures correctly an Appeals Panel will not be called. If the Appeal Panel goes ahead it will be dealt with in line with the College`s Appeals Procedure. The Appeal Panel`s decision is final.

### **Other related documents**

- a. Student Disciplinary Procedure
- b. *UK Quality Code* references: in particular Chapter B2 Indicator 6; Chapter B9 Indicators 2-3

**The End**