East Coast College

Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy and Procedure

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Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy and Procedure

1. Background

East Coast College are committed to the importance of high rates of attendance and punctuality to support student success. Students are more likely to achieve their qualification, progress and develop a wide range of employability skills, as well as becoming involved in the College community if they regularly attend classes. Students who arrive late impact their own learning, but also the progress and learning of others.

The Attendance & Punctuality Policy and Procedure outlines how teaching staff, support staff and students should work together to improve attendance and punctuality and support students in achieving their full potential. This procedure is detailed in the College Attendance and At Risk Flowchart.

2. Main Principles

- Students are expected to achieve 100% attendance – including virtual and on campus learning. The College target is 90% to accommodate for illness/authorised absence only. These expectations are made explicit during the admissions and induction stages.

- Teaching staff and students are aware of what qualifies as an authorised or unauthorised absence for record on the register.

- The College pro-actively monitors student attendance. Monitoring starts with the teaching staff, with support available from the curriculum administrators (college) and student services teams.

- Learning Support Funds to support students to achieve good attendance rates may be withdrawn when attendance falls below 95%.

- In the event of inclusion and disciplinary action for poor attendance and punctuality the college will recognise and consider the individual circumstances of students.

3. Students with special circumstances

- If a student has a disability, specified learning need, specified individual circumstance or an on-going medical difficulty directly affecting their attendance or ability to arrive on time / make contact regarding absence this will be identified and shared with curriculum and support teams. The College will work with students affected in this way to ensure that reasonable adjustments and supports are in place and levels of expectation set accordingly. This information will be recorded on the electronic Individual Learning Plan (eILP).

4. College expectations of Teaching Staff

- All teaching staff are required to communicate the College's expectation of punctuality and attendance to students.

- Teaching staff must complete the class register accurately and fully within the first 10 minutes of the session or as soon as is practicable, or according to individuals' contract.

- Subcontractors to send registers on a Friday to the data team. They are responsible for monitoring registers and following their own or ECC policy, depending on contract.

- Virtual lessons will be treated in the same way as on campus lessons, in terms of attendance expectations, registers and follow up of non-attendance concerns.

- Authorised absence must be notified prior to the lesson missed. Teacher / SAM informs MIS via data@eastcoast.ac.uk using the authorised absence form (found in the MIS area of Sharepoint / LSFC student services).

- Teaching staff are responsible for following this policy, the process of student attendance and classes starting on time.

- All teaching staff should reinforce the message that poor attendance is not acceptable and that when it falls below expectation it will lead to action, including possible inclusion and disciplinary action, withdrawal from the programme of study and/or the ability to progress to the next level of study.

- Teaching staff will make students aware of the expected method of contact if they are going to be absent – refer to Attendance, At Risk and Withdrawal Flowchart.

- Notification must be made by 8.30am on the morning of the absence or at least 30 minutes before the start of a class.

- All attendance actions must be recorded accurately and at the first opportunity on the eILP/Onefile, noting dates and type of contact with the student/parent or carer or employer.

- Staff should ensure that the reason for absence is established and recorded. Root cause to be established by the teacher. In the event that this may include safeguarding; wellbeing; additional support or course satisfaction concerns referrals to support services will be actioned.

- Teaching staff should contact the student at the earliest opportunity to ensure missed work is discussed and arrangements for 'catch up' are in place.

- Any unauthorised absence (days 1-5) or period of absence must be followed up at the earliest possible opportunity within 5 working days.

- Staff to be aware that being absent, as well as missing, from education can be warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation (particularly County Lines). KCSIE. Therefore refer to safeguarding if there are concerns.

- Where absence becomes a concern, a regular occurrence, follows a pattern or falls below 90%: the teacher should refer to curriculum administrator, who should contact the student and parent/carer where student 16/17 or High Needs using the attendance letter 1where required – see appendices to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter with the Curriculum Manager / Director of Faculty. Patterns of persistent non-attendance or emerging trends will be investigated by the Curriculum Manager / Director of Faculty.

  Where absence persists refer to the Inclusion and Disciplinary Procedure.

- Where absence concerns include an apprentice please refer to the Curriculum Manager. Communication of absence for reasons not known must take place with the employer by the teacher/trainer or coordinator.

5.   College expectations of student services and support teams

- Student services and support teams are required to communicate the college's high expectation of punctuality and attendance.

- Student services will send daily texts to parent/carers of 16/17yr olds informing of absence on the previous day.

- Any member of support services receiving an absence update from a student or a student's representative, should record the information on the eILP the same working day.

- Referral can be made from the teacher/trainers to a member of student services for support if appropriate that should address the root cause of absence. Action planning to agree action will take place and be recorded on the eILP ensuring everyone working with the student has accurate information.

6. College expectations of the Students

- All students are required to attend all scheduled lessons (on campus or virtual) and arrive before the start of the lesson appropriately prepared to work.

- All students are required to inform the College at least 30 minutes before the lesson if they are going to be absent or late. Students may contact their course leader directly or via student services stating their student number, name, course and reason for absence.

- Students should ensure their contact information is up to date and accurate. Changes to any contact information should be passed to the course leader and reception as soon as possible.

- Students are responsible for their own time keeping and levels of attendance. Students should be made aware that it is not appropriate to schedule holidays, health and other appointments during college hours unless absolutely necessary. If this cannot be avoided, a medical note, proof or prior consent from the teaching team will be required.

- All students should commit to complete outstanding work as homework from missed classes.

7. Rules for Authorised Absence

All authorised absence will be updated by MIS following receipt of authorised absence form:

1) They should be for a known purpose
2) The purpose should be valid
3) The member of staff should have agreed the absence in advance, preferably in writing

Occasions when teaching staff may allow an authorised absence are listed below:

- Employment interviews
- Isolation due to serious illness
- Careers events, University Interviews or Higher Education Fairs
- Hospital appointments (should provide appointment card or letter)
- Religious festivals for the religion to which the student belongs
- An appointment with a support services team member or agency

- Attendance at a probation/ YOT meeting or a court appearance

- Attendance at a funeral

- Severe disruption to the students mode of transport to College e.g. bus or rail strike, leaving them with no practical means of getting to College

- Driving test and theory test (not driving lessons)

- Emergency doctor and dentist appointments are permitted (an appointment card is required). Normally these should be booked outside lesson time

- Student Representative/Ambassador/Union/Involvement meetings or events (these are known in advance and details sent to teachers)

- Signed as medically unfit to study by GP or hospital doctor.

The decision to grant authorised absence remains at all times with the College. If an occasion arises where you are uncertain contact your curriculum manager.

8. Key Performance Indicators

- Attendance at 90% or above and achievement targets are met in line with whole College KPIs and are in the top 10% nationally.

- Consistently demonstrate that Student involvement influences curriculum design and delivery via course reviews and self-assessment.

- Inclusion and Disciplinary process demonstrates attendance action taking place.

- Engagement with partners that supports recruitment with integrity, transition and progression pathways is evidenced.

9. Monitoring

- This policy and procedure will be monitored through termly Principal's report to the Corporation, Senior Leadership and management teams and Self-Assessment Reports.

- A rolling attendance report will be generated on a weekly basis. This will support identifying those students with patterns of non-attendance.

- Across the year managers and SLG will receive reports documenting attendance by course and curriculum lead. Live reporting enables each manager to access these reports at any point for their areas.

- Comply with funding agency criteria for withdrawing students for non-attendance.

Appendix 1 initial attendance letter

Dear (insert name)

(Insert name of course)

It has been noticed that you have been absent from your classes. We would like to help you resolve any difficulties so that you can continue with your course.

If you continue to miss classes, you will get behind with your studies and you could lose your place on the course. You should also be aware that if you leave college there may be financial implications for you and, if you are aged 18 and under for your parents. Raising the Participation Age (RPA) law is in place for 16-18 year olds, please see overleaf for further detail.

We would like to arrange a conversation between you and the Curriculum Manager / Director of Faculty. Please get in touch to agree a convenient time on:

Add details

With help from the College, students are usually able to resolve problems and successfully complete their course.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Insert name
Job title
Include parent/carer in envelope addressee for 16/17 years or vulnerable adults

Raising the participation age

Young people are required to stay in education until they are 18 years of age.
It is government policy that all young people are expected to stay in some form of learning until they are 18.

Young people can choose from the following options:

- Full-time education (e.g. school, sixth form college, or further education college)
- Work based learning (e.g. apprenticeships)
- Part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for over 20 hours a week

Why?

Employment prospects require an increasing level of skills, training and qualifications. By staying in education for longer young people will be better equipped to pursue successful careers.

Visit the **National Careers Service's website** to access information and advice about education, training and work.

Source - www.Suffolk.gov.uk