

Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2019-20

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Executive summary

This Policy describes the expectations of students regarding attendance and punctuality whilst undertaking a programme of study at Craven College. Attendance refers to the scheduled time spent on College programmes. This can be categorised as lectures, workshops, work placement or tutorials as specified in the student's handbook/learning agreement or individual learning plan. In respect of Further Education full time students, ESFA funding is directly related to attendance and is monitored on a termly basis.

Attendance at College is part of the safeguarding agenda and we are committed to promoting the safeguarding and welfare of our students. Regular and consistent attendance at College is expected and is critical to any student's success and achievement of their learning goals. Poor attendance can be one of the main signs of disengagement with the student's programme of study and the College will attempt as far as possible to ensure that students remain fully engaged and succeed on their programme. Therefore, all attendance will be fully monitored throughout the study programme.

Support for students' success from parents, carers, employers and sponsors is actively encouraged and it is good practice for parents, carers and/or employers and sponsors to be informed of persistent student absenteeism. We seek consent to contact parents, carers and employers at enrolment for issues including attendance. Unless consent is withdrawn or there is a valid reason given not to contact relevant people, Craven College will deem the consent given at enrolment by the student at any point throughout the studies is accepted.

Each case of absenteeism is different and will be treated individually. The College accepts that many causes of absenteeism exist and will work with students on an individual basis to best address the needs and wants of each student. Recorded absenteeism may affect claims for support funds. It is therefore vital that students attend and that registers are accurately and timely marked by tutors.

Punctuality refers to students arriving before or at the designated start time of their teaching and learning session. Students should be challenged regarding lateness but this should be managed sensitively as there may be very valid reasons. Punctuality and attendance will be monitored via the student's Tutorial and/or Progress Review.

1.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all students undertaking a course of Further Education.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 All students are expected to attend all of their timetabled sessions. In exceptional circumstances, prior agreement to be absent may be made and approved by the personal tutor.

2.2 Staff are expected to start and finish classes on time as per the published timetables and arrangements made if they are to be late. Persistent lateness of staff should be addressed by the Head of School. Staff should mark registers on a daily basis, ensuring all registers are completed within 2 working days of the scheduled session.

2.3 Head of Schools, Centre Managers and Sector Subject Leaders (SSLs) are responsible for the timely response to student attendance issues, and the reporting of such issues to Student Services and/or MIS where appropriate.

2.4 Teachers/Assessors/Progress Coaches/Study Programme Tutors are required to monitor student attendance via registers and MIS reports and to address issues of absenteeism according to this policy and its guidelines.

2.5 It is the responsibility of the Centre Managers/Sector Subject Leaders to complete withdrawal forms as soon as a student is known to have withdrawn from their programme.

2.6 It is the responsibility of the MIS Department to remove students from the management information system on receipt of withdrawal forms or when identified by teaching staff during the data verification process.

3.0 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

3.1 All students are required to report expected absences via either text to the absence telephone line or report via Moodle using the absence report form. The Progress Coach Team will then record the student as absent via Prosolution.

3.2 The expectation is that students will have 100% attendance for all timetabled activities including PREP. The College is committed to helping students achieve the skills needed to find and keep employment in the future; excellent College attendance is a major way for students to demonstrate work ethic.

3.3 Regular and consistent attendance at College is expected and in some areas of the College the Awarding Body dictates the attendance level expected. Where specific attendance policy is dictated by the Awarding Body, then this will be adhered to. It is the Study Programme Tutor's responsibility to make students aware of the Awarding Body's attendance requirements and ensure that they attain them or make alternative attendance arrangements.

3.4 Students expecting prolonged absenteeism should contact their Study Programme Tutor to discuss the possibility of an alternative study arrangement and for this arrangement to be agreed by Head of School. In addition, students can contact the Student Services, if they wish to discuss reasons for prolonged absenteeism, and where pastoral support can be offered.

3.5 Students who report a medical condition (both short or long term) or disability that is likely to impact on regular or punctual attendance should be treated with sensitivity appropriate to their individual circumstances and may not be able to achieve the College attendance targets. A record should be held of the condition on the student's one-page profile on Promonitor. Information should be communicated to relevant staff who work with the student as to the adjustments required.

3.6 Individual instances of absenteeism should always be raised by Progress Coaches and Study Programmes Tutors either with the student informally or through tutorials.

3.7 Tutors are expected to make a professional judgement as to whether or not an attendance mark is given for example in the event of a late arrival due to weather conditions or an absence is approved in advance or an authorised absence granted (Appendix 3). This judgement will also consider whether equality issues could have any bearing on the student attendance levels, and make suitable allowances where this occurs. Examples could include: attendance at recognised religious events or festivals, change in mobility arrangements for less able bodied students.

3.8 Where a student has persistent non-attendance of a variable pattern, this should be addressed by the Study Programme Tutor and action planned for improvement. Where improvement does not occur the student should be referred to the Centre Manager/ SSL and/or Head of School (HoS).

3.9 For those students who are under 19 years of age at the start of their study programme, Programme Tutors to share information regarding a student's attendance or any other issues which might affect their education or well-being with their parents/carer.

3.10 Where a student continues with poor attendance of less than 85% and is making insufficient progress with their study programme or is affecting the progress of other students and has no mitigating reason disciplinary procedures will be adopted as per the Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

3.11 If a student has had four consecutive weeks of non-attendance then they must be withdrawn from the College in line with the ESFA funding regulations. This ruling applies, unless, for example there are specific individual student problems and then the need to extend would be discussed and agreed between the student and tutor concerned. It is the responsibility of the Programme Tutor to inform the Sector Subject Leader, so that the withdrawal form can be completed.

4.0 STUDENT MISSING IN EDUCATION

4.1 Children missing from education in a FE College context are students from the age of 16 to 18 (inclusive) who are not receiving suitable training, education or otherwise in employment. Students missing from education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

4.2 The College will follow the statutory guidance Children Missing Education. Non- attendance of each 16 – 18 (inc.) student is monitored and tracked as identified in this policy. The College will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the student’s whereabouts through parents and carers or relevant external agencies. Where there is no contact for a consecutive 20-day period or where an immediate cause of concern is raised then the Colleges safeguarding and child protection procedures are implemented.

4.3 Staff refer this concern straight to a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) who will follow the College’s safeguarding procedures and notify the local authority and relevant external agencies at the earliest opportunity. These safeguarding concerns are recorded on the College’s confidential safeguarding system (CPOM’s). All instances where the College has attempted to contact the student will be recorded on ProMonitor.

5.0 PUNCTUALITY

5.1 Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, tutorials and work placements on time. Expectations of attendance and punctuality must be discussed with students and set at the beginning of the programme of study as part of induction and reiterated throughout the course.

5.2 Lateness is defined as arriving after the start time of a scheduled/timetabled session and should be addressed with the student at the most convenient point in the session so as not to cause disruption.

5.3 Students arriving late should be encouraged to cause minimum disruption to the class. Persistent lateness should be monitored by the Programme Tutor and an action plan for improvement discussed and agreed. Failure to improve should be referred to the SSL and/or Head of School.

5.4 Lateness is not a reason for exclusion from the class. Lateness should be managed as integral to the educational tutorial and progress review.

5.5 Where the majority of students are not able to arrive at a given time, this should be reported to the Centre Manager/Sector Subject Leader and the Head of School as this may be a timetabling issue.

5.6 Staff are expected to start and finish classes on time and arrangements made if they are to be late or leave early. Student lateness should always be challenged but reasons for the lateness should be addressed at the end of class. Persistent lateness of staff should be addressed by the Head of School.

6.0 ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR APPRENTICES

6.1 All apprentices are expected to report absences either to their employer and their Apprenticeship co-ordinator.

6.2 The expectation is that apprentices will have 100% attendance unless APL has been agreed for specific elements of the programme. The College is committed to helping students achieve the skills needed to find and keep employment in the future; excellent apprenticeship attendance is a major way for apprentices to demonstrate work ethic.

6.3 Regular and consistent attendance at College is expected and for some courses the Awarding Body dictates the attendance level expected. Where specific attendance policy is dictated by the Awarding Body, then this will be adhered to. An example of this may be seasonal attendance or attendance out of normal College term time to meet the GLH of the programme. It is the Apprenticeship Co-ordinator/Tutor's responsibility to make apprentices aware of the Awarding Body's attendance requirements and ensure that they attain them or make alternative attendance arrangements.

6.4 Apprentices expecting prolonged absenteeism should contact their Apprenticeship Co-ordinator/Tutor to discuss reasons for absence and to discuss alternative study arrangement. In some instances, an Apprentice may be put on a break in learning depending on circumstances.

6.5 Tutors are expected to make a professional judgement as to whether or not an attendance mark is given for example in the event of a late arrival due to weather conditions or an absence is approved in advance. This judgement will also consider whether equality issues could have any bearing on the student attendance levels, and make suitable allowances where this occurs. Examples could include: attendance at recognised religious events or festivals, change in mobility arrangements for less able bodied students.

6.6 Where an absence is recorded and reported to the Apprenticeship Co-ordinator, the Co-ordinator will contact the employer before 10am where possible.

6.7 Individual instances of absenteeism will be discussed at review by the Apprenticeship Co-ordinator, Apprentice and employer.

6.8 Completion of registers and attendance records remain the responsibility of all Apprenticeship Co-ordinators/Tutors in conjunction with Team Managers and Senior Managers.

6.9 If an Apprentice has had four consecutive weeks of unauthorised absence then they are at risk of being withdrawn from the apprenticeship programme. This ruling applies, unless, for example there are specific individual apprentice problems and then the need to extend would be discussed and agreed between the apprentice and Apprenticeship Co-ordinator/Tutor concerned. It is the responsibility of the Apprenticeship Co-ordinator/Tutor to inform the Team Manager, so that the withdrawal form can be completed.

7.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7.1 The Senior Management Team will monitor the operation of this policy by receiving regular reports on student attendance.

7.2 Sector Subject Areas will also receive monthly reports which are monitored at the Performance Review meetings.

7.3 Key Measures by which the success of this policy can be evaluated

- Annual targets for attendance and punctuality are met
- Progress Coaches achieve agreed student attendance targets
- Curriculum areas can evidence year-on-year improvement in attendance and punctuality

- Timely action to support students below acceptable levels of attendance and punctuality
- Improved student success as measured by retention and achievement
- Staff compliance with the policy evidence through quality audit

APPENDIX 1: Guidelines for implementation of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Student/apprentice responsibilities

- Attend all scheduled classes, tutorials and work placements on time
- Aim for 100% attendance for all scheduled sessions
- Expect to be challenged if late for a scheduled/timetabled session and for attendance and punctuality to be discussed at tutorial or progress review
- If arriving late knock on the classroom door before entry and to enter the scheduled/timetabled session quietly and without disrupting the session. Provide a reason for lateness for the teacher/assessor
- Inform Study Programme Tutor/Training Co-ordinator of any anticipated reasons or unexpected reasons for absence from College and intended return date reporting expected absences via either text to the absence telephone line or report via Moodle using the absence report form. All details will be provided for students on a Contact Card
- Take responsibility for liaising with teachers in order to catch up
- Expect that claims for support funds may be affected due to absenteeism
- Full time students can view their own attendance through Proportal

Progress Coach responsibilities

- To check for receipt of texts from students or their parents / carers via the absence reporting line or via Moodle (absence reporting form) and record student absence via Prosolution
- To visit sessions from 09:00 (timetabling permitted) or planned start to check for learner absence. Where student not present in class, Tutor informs Progress Coach.
- Telephone students who are absent but have not reported their absence to elicit the reason and record findings via Class Registers
- To send an absence text if no response is gained via telephone call
- Chase up students absent for two days or more, initially through trying to telephone/text them and their parents / carers (for students aged under 19 years).
- For students who are not contactable or who do not return to College within 5 College days, letter to be sent (Appendix 3)
- If a student is absent from College more than 2 weeks with no contact made, a letter will be sent informing them if they do not contact the College / return to College they may be at risk of being withdrawn from the programme if they do not return (Appendix 4)
- If the student does not attend the College for 4 weeks or more and all attempts to contact the student have been exhausted the Progress Coach will prepare a withdrawal letter which must be authorised by the Centre Manager / Subject Sector Leader (Appendix 5)
- Students will be automatically withdrawn by MIS Office at six weeks of consecutive non-attendance.
- Progress Coach to discuss attendance and punctuality with students in ILP tutorial review and set targets for improvements if necessary.

Study Programme Tutor/Apprenticeship Co-ordinator responsibilities

- Agree a policy with individual groups on the class rules regarding lateness and attendance – expectation of 100% attendance and punctuality
- Remind students of the importance of keeping central records up to date with personal information such as personal telephone number and emergency contact telephone number
- Students who have identified barriers to attendance such as financial or social issues are to be referred to the Student Services Team who can offer a range of support services.
- To praise good attendance, reward excellent attendance for example attendance certificates
- To address poor attendance of less than 85% (without mitigation) via the Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy at Level 0. A contract for improved behaviour is to be signed between the Student / Programme Tutor / Progress coach to improve attendance and/or punctuality and SMART targets to be set which are frequently monitored. This will be recorded in Promonitor
- Refer to Centre Manager / SSL or Head of School (HoS) where improvement does not occur
- To share information regarding attendance / punctuality / wellbeing with parents / carer (Appendix 6)
- Students will be automatically withdrawn by MIS Office at six weeks of consecutive non-attendance.

Teaching Staff Responsibilities

- Mark registers on a daily basis and within 15 minutes of the start of the class where a classroom computer is provided, ensuring all registers are completed within 2 working days of the scheduled session where no classroom computer is provided
- Commence and finish all scheduled sessions on time and according to the MIS timetable and register. Agree cover with your Head of School in exceptional cases where you expect to be late or finish early
- Discuss attendance and punctuality with students and set targets for improvements if necessary and praise good attendance
- Celebrate excellent attendance and improving attendance via 'congratulations' post cards, emails or texts
- Students will be automatically withdrawn by MIS Office at six weeks of consecutive non-attendance.

Sector Subject Leaders/Centre Managers responsibilities

- Monitor attendance on a course by course basis using MIS reports and register data
- Challenge Programme Tutors/Progress Coaches and individual staff over their monitoring of their courses/units of teaching
- Have attendance, punctuality and retention as a regular agenda item in curriculum area or course level meetings
- Provide updates to the HoS on any issues with student attendance and implement formal disciplinary procedures as necessary with support of the HoS
- To be responsible for ownership of the data for their curriculum area
- Celebrate excellent attendance and improving attendance via 'congratulations' post cards, emails or texts and attendance certificates
- To instigate meetings with parents / carers where improvements in attendance / punctuality does not occur

- Following four consecutive weeks of non-attendance (without mitigation) withdraw the student from the College in line with ESFA funding regulations
- Students will be automatically withdrawn by MIS Office at six weeks of consecutive non-attendance.

Head of School Responsibilities

- Ensure timetables for each programme of study facilitates high levels of attendance and good time keeping
- Monitor attendance for each Sector Subject Area within the School on a weekly basis from MIS reports
- Drill down and identify courses where action is required
- Discuss attendance and retention in all 1:1 meeting with Centre Managers/SSL's with action plans in place where the Centre Manager/SSL needs to address an attendance issue
- Report on attendance, punctuality, retention and staff compliance with register mark up to VP C&Q at 1:1 meetings
- Use focus groups, targeted staff development or other intervention strategies to identify or address attendance issues
- Have attendance, punctuality and retention as a regular agenda item on School meetings – monthly leadership meetings and whole staff meetings
- Review attendance patterns where course success is below benchmark and make improvements and provide support as required
- Celebrate excellent attendance and improving attendance via 'congratulations' post cards, emails or texts and attendance certificates
- Monitor staff completion of registers and punctuality of starting classes. Address with staff member if non-compliance with register mark up and/or lateness is a persistent issue.
- Students will be automatically withdrawn by MIS Office at six weeks of consecutive non-attendance.

N.B: All instances where the College has attempted to contact the student will be recorded on ProMonitor. Where there is no contact for a consecutive 20-day period or where an immediate cause for concern is raised then the Colleges safeguarding and child protection procedures are implemented. However, students will be automatically withdrawn by MIS Office at six weeks of consecutive non-attendance. Should contact be established post six weeks and after withdrawal the student will be reinstated.

APPENDIX 2: Authorised Register Marks

/ - ATTENDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be used to record the physical attendance of the student in the classroom
L - ATTENDED (LATE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be used to monitor any students that arrive later than the official lesson start time. If selected the system will also ask you to enter the number of minutes late
O - ABSENT (NO REASON GIVEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To record the absence of a student from the lesson. This should be used if you are unaware of the reason the student is absent
R - ABSENT (REASON GIVEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To record the absence of a student from the lesson and they have notified you of the reason why
A - SITTING EXAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only use this mark if you know that the student is in College sitting an exam elsewhere Eg. GCSE Maths/English exams
D - RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS (EG EID)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used to record absence due to recognised religious holidays
H - HOLIDAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be used if you have been specifically notified that the student is on holiday. This mark can also be entered by the Admin Team or Progress Coach should the student text the absence line
I - SICK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only to be used if you have been specifically informed that the student is ill. This mark can also be entered by the Admin Team or Progress Coach should the student text the absence line
E - EXPERIENCE OF WORK / P - PLACEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If students are either out on work experience or placement you should use this mark to record their attendance
U - UNIVERSITY INTERVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have been advised that a student is attending university interviews you should mark their attendance using the U code. This should only be used if you know that the interview was attended
V - EDUCATIONAL VISIT / TRIP / TRAINING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In most situations any educational trip should be timetabled and therefore have its own register. If you have a group where some of the group are out on a trip use the V mark to record it
C - COMPLETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a student completes the unit earlier than planned, you can record this using the C mark. This should only be used for specific students within the group
T - TRANSFERRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This mark should only be used if you know that the student has transferred to another course or group. If after one week of entering this code the register has not been centrally updated to reflect the transfer you must investigate further
W - WITHDRAWN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are aware a student has withdrawn from the course / unit enter them as a W. If after one week of entering this code the register has not been centrally updated to reflect the transfer you must investigate further
X - CANCELLED CLASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst you are unable to select this mark on the registers you will see it appear. A register can either be cancelled using the "Cancel Class" button or centrally. This will pre-fill all students with the X mark

APPENDIX 3 - Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is not to be included in the absence calculation for a student.

Authorised absence includes:

1. Driving tests (not lessons)*
2. Stay in Hospital*
3. Emergency Doctor or Dental Appointments*
4. Funeral of a close relative
5. Religious holidays and festivals (where the student practises the religion/faith)
6. A medical appointment which cannot be arranged outside of College hours*
7. A visit to University either to attend an open day or for interview; or a career related interview*
8. Attendance at a probation meeting or court appearance*
9. Jury Service*
10. Severe disruption to student's mode of transport
11. Attending a job interview*
12. Pregnancy related sickness
13. Pre and Post Natal appointments*
14. Moving house
15. Care of a relative or person, where the student is a registered carer

*Students must provide evidence to their tutor e.g. a Hospital Appointment Card

Authorising absence can be undertaken by the teacher/ Progress Coach in the case of an absence from their class, Programme Tutor/Progress Coach/SSL/Centre Manager or Head of School for longer periods.

In all case of authorised absence, the member of staff who authorises the absence is to record in Promonitor the reason why the student has been granted authorised absence and include a description of the evidence seen that verifies the need for an authorised absence is true and accurate.

No more than five consecutive absences will receive authorisation. On day six the student is to be recorded as absent. Depending on the reason required for longer periods of absence that is planned, a 'Break in Learning' may be instigated. The Head of School is to discuss a Break in Learning with the Manager of MIS to review audit evidence and establish this can be instigated. Once this has been agreed with the Manager of MIS a Break in Learning can then be agreed with the student and the Programme Tutor informed.

A six weekly audit will be undertaken of the use of the authorised absence code to ensure appropriate use.

APPENDIX 4 - Student Letter of concern

Dear <Student forename>

I see from our records that you have been absent from College for 5 consecutive days. We have tried to contact you, but without success.

We are becoming concerned that you are missing a significant part of learning. We very much want you to continue with your programme and to achieve your qualifications. Attending College is obviously very important if you are to achieve success.

If you are unwell or away from College for some other reason, I would be grateful if you could let me know. The College has a range of support services available and we could put you in touch with these. Equally, if you are unavoidably away from College, it may be that we could make notes and work available through Moodle so that you can continue to work from home.

We have missed seeing you at College, and I would be very grateful if you could phone or email me as soon as possible on <telephone number> or <email> to let me know what is happening.

Yours sincerely,

Progress Coach

APPENDIX 5 – Student letter – absent from College over 2 weeks

Dear <Student forename>

It is now over 2 weeks since you were last in College and we continue to hear nothing from you, despite our telephone calls and letters.

You should know that if you are absent for 4 weeks or more without any explanation, we shall have to withdraw you from your course. This is a requirement of our funding body.

I would therefore very strongly urge you to contact me as soon as you can on <telephone number> or <email>. It would be a great shame if you were to be withdrawn without us having the chance to talk things through with you. As I have said on earlier occasions, the College has a great many support mechanisms available to you.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Progress Coach

APPENDIX 6 – Student letter Withdrawal

Dear <Student forename>

Further to my letter of <DATE>, I write now to confirm that, as we have not heard from you for a period of four weeks, I have had no option but to withdraw you from your course in line with the requirement of our funding body.

Please feel free to contact the College at any time if you would like any advice or support in the future.

I regret this outcome and would like to wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Progress Coach
CC Centre Manager / Subject Sector Leader - <Name>

APPENDIX 7 - Parent Letter of concern

Dear Parent / Guardian

Attendance: <student name>

I am writing to advise you that <students forename>'s attendance has fallen to <percentage attendance>% and as result we are becoming concerned that <students forename> is missing a significant part of learning.

I have enclosed a copy of<student's forename>'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance and punctuality.

As I am sure you are aware regular attendance is extremely important as missing College can have an impact on learning. Good attendance enables students to keep up with work required.

We will continue to monitor <student's forename>'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If appropriate, please ensure we have relevant doctor's notes and appointment details.

If there are any circumstances that the College may not be aware of which is having an influence on <student's forename> attending College regularly, please do not hesitate to contact us on <number>. We would be happy to meet with you to discuss our concerns at a time that is mutually convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Programme Tutor

APPENDIX 8 - Parent Letter Meeting request

Dear Parent / Guardian

Attendance: <student name>

As you are aware, the College regularly monitors student attendance due to the impact a low attendance rate can have on learning and progress.

I am concerned that despite intervention and an agreed action plan, <Student name's>, attendance has not improved and is now at <percentage attendance>. Please find enclosed a copy of their attendance summary.

Please can you contact me at the College, at your earliest convenience, on <telephone number> or <email>. We would like to meet with you to discuss our concerns at a time that is mutually convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Centre Manager / SSL / Head of School