

# **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY 2025/26**

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## Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2025/26

### 1. Purpose:

City of Portsmouth College is firmly committed to ensuring all Student and Apprentices achieve their qualifications and have an outstanding learning experience during their time at the College.

The College recognises the importance and value of outstanding attendance and punctuality to Student and Apprentices achieving success, including progression to higher levels of study, gaining employment, and gaining promotion in employment.

Frequent absences and lateness impact upon Students and Apprentices achievement as well as the acquisition of behaviours required at the workplace. It may also lead to demoralisation, failure to meet course deadlines and ultimately to drop out. The policy is aimed at dealing effectively with attendance and punctuality issues to maximise learning and the achievement of qualifications, and to ensure Student and Apprentices are prepared for their future pursuits in education and the world of work.

All Students and Apprentices must be made aware of this policy and the College's approach to monitoring and managing attendance and punctuality at induction and be reminded of it regularly. All Students and Apprentices must be made aware that the college has every right to withdraw a Student and Apprentices from their studies where they fail to meet attendance targets.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed by the College, including hourly-paid lecturers, assessors & trainers, fixed term and fractional curriculum staff, and business and support staff with a responsibility to record, monitor and report on attendance.
- All Students and Apprentices and apprentices enrolled with the College to maximise their success and progression to employment or higher levels of study.
- Parent/carers and employers where appropriate, as the College recognises the role they can play through encouraging good attendance and punctuality.

### 3. Legislative Context

It is our responsibility to monitor the attendance of all Students and Apprentices through the register which is a legal and auditable document. We are also accountable for safeguarding all young Students and Apprentices and vulnerable adults and attendance monitoring is a vital tool in enabling this responsibility and meeting our statutory responsibilities.

The College is bound by legislation that encompasses the monitoring and reporting of the attendance of Pre-16 students.

### 4. Associated Policies

To be read in conjunction with the College Fitness to Study policy and the Student Behaviour policy.

### 5. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team [SMT], Learning & Quality Committee [L&Q] and Corporation.

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## Attendance and Punctuality Procedure 2025/26

### 1. Procedure Statement

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team to ensure a clear process is in place that gives effect to the Attendance and Punctuality Strategy and to this policy document.

The College process must be triggered whenever a Students and Apprentices attendance/punctuality falls below 90% (main programme, including Tutorial) and 80% (English and Maths, where part of the Study Programme) either in-week or on a rolling basis. Any process must also be able to be triggered at the request of a class teacher or personal tutor in the following circumstances:

- Where a Student or Apprentices who has been absent cannot be contacted or is non-responsive to contact from their class teacher or personal tutor.
- Where attendance/punctuality remains above college target, but patterns of poor attendance/punctuality are emerging.
- Where a Student or Apprentices fails to provide a suitable explanation for non or poor attendance/punctuality.

The College based process must ensure that parents/carers/Local Authority of Students and Apprentices who are under 18 (or who were under 18 at the start of their study programme) or has an EHCP are notified, at least, at the first formal stage of the process (Stage 1 of the Student Behaviour Policy)

Where prior notice has not been given, non-attendance of lessons will trigger automated text messages once a register has been submitted by the teacher or tutor.

1.1 Non-attendance of each lesson will trigger an automated text message that is sent to the Students and Apprentices and their NOK if the Student or Apprentices is under 18 years of age.

1.2 Parents or carers of Students and Apprentices who are 17 at the start of their study programme but who turn 18 during their study programme will continue to be notified of college business including concerns around attendance. If a Student or Apprentices is 18 years of age or older, the automated text message will only be sent to the Student and Apprentices.

1.2.1.1 *Student and Apprentices message:* An absence for college session on XX/XX/XXXX at XX:XX has been logged. Contact the college to let us know why you were unable to attend.

1.2.1.2 *NOK message:* An absence for college session on XX/XX/XXXX at XX:XX has been logged. Contact the college to let us know why you were unable to attend.

1.3 Teachers and managers working with Pre 16 Students must have a clear process in place for contacting the relevant school in line with the College's statutory duties, which is to inform Pre-16 Coordinator who will liaise with schools.

1.4 All staff, Students and Apprentices, parents/carers, and employers will be made aware of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy and the relevant college process that must be followed.

1.5 The College is committed to celebrating and rewarding excellent attendance and it is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team to ensure there is a clear process in place for rewarding excellent attendance through the Reward and Recognition awards for 100% attendance and most improved attendance.

- 1.6 The College is committed to supporting Students and Apprentices to improve their attendance and punctuality; however, the College also reserves the right to withdraw a Student and Apprentices from their course where attendance and punctuality fails to meet expectations and where they have reached the final stage of the Student Behaviour Policy. This is designed to mirror performance management within the world of work and to reflect employment practices whereby an employer can be dismissed for poor attendance and punctuality.
- 1.7 Where appropriate, the College Fitness to Study Policy should be enacted if Students and Apprentices are unable to commit to their studies due to medical issues. For some Students and Apprentices, the challenges they face are so great, that even with all the support available, they are not well enough to study at this time. If attendance and/or punctuality issues are being caused by ill health, it would not be appropriate to suspend or exclude a Student or Apprentices. The Fitness to Study Policy is a far more appropriate process in these circumstances.
- 1.8 Where a Student or Apprentices fails to attend their course following enrolment or where there are four weeks non-attendance without explanation, the College reserves the right to withdraw a Student and Apprentices from their course. Where the Student and Apprentices is under 18 or has an EHCP, the local authority and parent/guardian must be informed.
- 1.9 For the purposes of this policy, persistent lateness is treated as an attendance issue, Students and Apprentices with punctuality below the college target (98%) will be subject to the relevant attendance monitoring and review process.
- 1.10 Attendance to on-line learning is to be treated in the same way as attendance to face-to-face classes for the purposes of this policy. Where a Student or Apprentices is expected to log-in to an on-line class at a particular time and they fail to do so, this will be regarded as an unauthorised absence until such time it can be authorised in the way described above. Where a Student or Apprentice is not expected to log-in at a specific time but is required to provide evidence of work by a specific time but fails to do so, this too will be regarded as an unauthorised absence.
- 1.11 Attendance at Work Experience or Industry Placement is to be treated in the same way as attendance to sessions at college for the purposes of this policy. Where a Student is absent it is the responsibility of the parents/carers (if under 18 years of age or has an EHCP) or the Student (if 18 or over at point of enrolment) to contact the work placement and the work experience officer regarding reason for absence.

## **2. Responsibility**

**2.1 Students and Apprentices** - All Students and Apprentices have a responsibility to attend all their classes, and to notify their teachers if they are running late or not able to attend.

**2.2** Students and Apprentices under the age of 18 at the start of their programme or who have an EHCP it is the responsibility of the parents/carers to notify their teachers/personal tutor by calling or emailing below and leaving notification of the reason for their lateness or absence. Parents/carers should repeat this for each day of absence or for extended absence, discuss with their teacher and personal tutor their expected return date.

- Highbury, North Harbour, and Arundel Campus: 02392 328966 or [absence@copc.ac.uk](mailto:absence@copc.ac.uk)
- Sixth Form Campus: 02392 344377 or [sfc\\_attendance@copc.ac.uk](mailto:sfc_attendance@copc.ac.uk)

2.3 Students and Apprentices over the age of 18 at point of enrolment should notify their teachers by calling/emailing below and leaving a notification of the reason for their lateness or absence. Students and Apprentices should repeat this for each day of absence or for extended absence, discuss with their teacher and personal tutor their expected return date.

- Highbury, North Harbour, and Arundel Campus: 02392 328966 or [absence@copc.ac.uk](mailto:absence@copc.ac.uk)
- Sixth Form Campus: 02392 344377 or [sfc\\_attendance@copc.ac.uk](mailto:sfc_attendance@copc.ac.uk)

2.4 For 16-18-year-old and EHCP Students and Apprentices, all absences are unauthorised until such time they are supported with evidence from their parents/carers or relevant organisations (hospital, driving test centre etc). For adult Students and Apprentices, whilst they can self-certify absences for ill health, they should also provide evidence of other appointments.

2.5 Where a Students and Apprentices knows that due to extenuating circumstances, they are likely to be late or need to be absent on a regular basis, they must inform their teacher and personal tutor at the start of the course or as soon as they become aware. An agreement between Student and Apprentices and teacher must be made in writing and recorded on EBS where the request is a reasonable one.

2.6 **International Sponsored Students** - For our international students who are sponsored to study at our Sixth Form Campus, there will be an additional attendance monitoring requirement. As per Document 2: Sponsorship Duties of the Student Sponsor Guidance, such students will automatically be monitored on contact points. For the purposes of this policy, a contact point is defined as an academic teaching day.

To ensure that the college meets these requirements, our sponsored students will be monitored based on consecutive unexplained absences starting at 2 contact points. This will trigger an attendance intervention where students will meet the Global Engagement Team and from this point the college intervention process for absence will be followed.

If a sponsored student has accrued 10 consecutive unexplained absences at any time during their study, then a notification will be made to UKVI to notify withdrawal of that student. A copy of the return flight home and overseas re-entry stamp or equivalent is to be obtained as evidence of the student's assured exit from the UK.

Withdrawal of the student from their course of study will take place the same day that the notification is made to UKVI.

2.7 **Members of teaching staff and support staff with attendance monitoring responsibilities** – all members of staff are responsible for the attendance to their classes. They can and should call upon the support of their line manager and/or support staff to support with attendance management strategies, but ultimately, they must take responsibility for the attendance of their own Students and Apprentices and must be able to demonstrate that they have implemented the relevant attendance and punctuality process along with the Student Behaviour Policy.

2.8 **Subject teachers** are responsible for direct Students and Apprentices follow up for persistent unnotified absence for all aspects of their programme of study.

2.9 **Personal Tutors** are responsible to follow up persistent attendance issues directly with Students and Apprentices, parents, and carers and by implementing the Student Behaviour Policy as required.

**2.10 Managers** – all managers involved in the latter stages of the relevant attendance and punctuality management and review process must ensure that they have followed the process and that their staff have done the same.

Managers are responsible for routine weekly monitoring of Students and Apprentices attendance data and ensuring follow up of Students and Apprentices with attendance below College Targets. They are responsible for delivery of the Student Behaviour Policy implementation and the overall attendance of Students and Apprentices within their area of responsibility.

Attendance can be seen by managers using the college's EBS system.

Reports are accessed by managers that can be tailored to show attendance for specified courses or for individual/groups of Students and Apprentices.

**2.11 Parents and Carers** – all parents and carers of young people aged 18, at the start of their programme and under or with an EHCP have a responsibility to inform the college of absences either on the first day of absence or where a Student or Apprentices self-certifies on the first day, to verify that absence with either an email, letter, or phone call. Students and Apprentices who are 18 years of age at the start of their study programme can 'opt-out' of having their parents or Carers notified of any college business. Parents or carers of Students and Apprentices who are 17 at the start of their study programme but who turn 18 during their study programme will continue to be notified of college business including concerns around attendance.