



Truro and Penwith College Attendance and Punctuality Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The Truro and Penwith College Attendance and Punctuality Policy aims to promote professional working standards and demonstrate full commitment to study through personal engagement, organisational skills, self-discipline, and respect for others. Students are expected to work hard and take responsibility for their own learning. Full attendance and good punctuality play an important part in achieving this. The college prides itself on fostering a culture of high expectations and will make the most of opportunities to recognise and reward high levels of attendance and punctuality across all courses.

The College recognises the direct correlation between high levels of attendance, student retention, achievement, and success. Any class, lecture or activity missed, regardless of cause, reduces the opportunity for learning and may adversely affect student achievement. Poor punctuality and lateness have an impact on the understanding of the lesson and is detrimental to the learning of others. Every student will be supported to complete work to the very best of their ability, so that they can achieve their personal best. Supporting attendance is the responsibility of all staff.

Unless explicitly stated as a requirement of the course(s), the College does not routinely offer on-line, remote or hybrid teaching programmes and all regular teaching is delivered in college. In extreme circumstances (for example, Government directives, severe weather, or operational disruption) hybrid sessions may be offered for defined, short periods. Truro and Penwith College is required to record, monitor, and track attendance for auditable, funding purposes and attendance and punctuality play an important part of a student's record.

2. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

It is taken as given that, when a person chooses to enrol at Truro and Penwith College, they are doing so to achieve meaningful qualifications through exemplary levels of prompt attendance and engagement.

We aim for all students to achieve 100% attendance and will challenge those who fall below our minimum target of 95%. Part time employment and/or external commitments must be organised in out of college hours.

The purpose of this Policy is to support attendance, retention rates and explore every available method of retaining students. It will help ensure that student

attendance and punctuality is consistently managed across college and recognised by all as an integral part of student personal development.

3. ATTENDANCE ADMINISTRATORS

Our team of attendance administrators have a physical presence across our campuses and visit numerous classes daily to reinforce our expectation of 100% attendance consistently across all learner groups and programme areas.

They support, but are not responsible for, student attendance.

They work closely with tutors and lecturers to support attendance and punctuality and in turn the implementation of this policy through a range of measures, including but not limited to physical classroom checks, registrars and register comparisons, texts to students and parent/carers, reporting and trend monitoring, attendance to programme area meetings to flag students of concern, as well as specific monitoring of vulnerable groups.

AUTOMATED TEXT SERVICE

All full-time learners

Will receive a text message if they are recorded as an unauthorised absence for any timetabled session. This will prompt any latecomers to get to lesson quickly or report their reason for absence.

Under 18s

Parent/carer must report genuine absence for learners via email or the specified reporting line. If after 15 minutes their child/ward's reason for absence has not been updated and they have not arrived at their session, a text will be sent to their primary next of kin to advise of their absence. Once a learner turns 18, automated texts will continue to be sent to the primary next of kin for the remainder of that academic year, unless the learner specifically opts out of this.

Over 18s/ students living independently

Must self-report absence via email or the specified reporting line before 9:15 am on the day of absence.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

All Students are expected to:

- Attend all timetabled sessions which make up the programme of study.
- Arrive at the start of the sessions promptly, properly equipped and prepared for work.
- Return promptly after any timetabled break.
- Catch up on work missed during any period of absence.
- Arrange appointments, driving lessons, and any other non-emergency commitments during personal time.
- Not take holiday leave during term-time
- Ensure that any part-time work and/or external commitments are undertaken outside the College programme and do not clash with timetabled sessions.
- Report any unavoidable absence or lateness to the relevant Programme Team Administrator or Tutor in advance or at the start of the college day.

All Parents/carers are expected to:

- Report absence for learners via email or the specified reporting line.
- Support their child/ward to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Not organise holiday leave during term-time.
- Support the college when addressing concerns regarding areas of low attendance/poor punctuality for their child/ward.

All Teaching Staff are expected to:

- Be in the classroom promptly, prepared, and ready to start their lesson on time.
- Provide an early engagement activity at the start of the lesson to promote punctuality.
- Register students promptly, checking that all students have swiped-in and this matches the number of learners in the teaching space.
- Ensure that all attendance is recorded accurately.
- Staff are expected to keep their own records of attendance and punctuality for all learners.
- Challenge individual lateness appropriately at a suitable point after accommodating inclusion in the lesson.
- The lecturer must follow up any unauthorised absence by contacting the student and parent/carers promptly (normally within 24 hours), and notify the tutor, as well as ensuring the learner has access to resources to catch up work missed.
- Apply the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway where appropriate.
- Record all relevant actions on Attendance Tracking promptly.

All Tutors are expected to:

- Monitor attendance and punctuality of all tutees on a weekly basis.
- Meet with and discuss any unauthorised absences with individual students.
- Maintain regular contact with parents/carers where concerns arise.
- Record actions taken on Attendance Tracking with expected improvements and required outcomes with clear targets and timescales.

- Apply the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway where appropriate.
- Celebrate and praise good attendance and punctuality at every opportunity and, where possible, link this to positive employability skills.

All Programme Team Leaders (or designated Deputy Team Leaders/staff with delegated responsibility) are expected to:

- Monitor attendance and punctuality of groups in their curriculum area on a monthly basis.
- Discuss the low attendance and poor punctuality issues of individuals or groups with tutors or lecturers.
- Accept referrals of persistent absenteeism and poor punctuality by students from tutors.
- Meet with and discuss persistent underperformance of attendance and punctuality with students and parent/carer.
- Apply the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway where appropriate.
- Include Attendance Administrators within their team meetings.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION PATHWAY

Where there is initial concern regarding attendance and/or punctuality concern, teaching staff are expected to informally, sensitively and constructively challenge the behaviour. Learners are expected to reflect on their actions, act on advice, and take steps to avoid any repeat of the attendance/punctuality concern.

For reasons of safeguarding, if a learner is not in college for 3 consecutive days without notice of absence or contact, then contact will be made by the attendance team. If we receive no response from the learner or next of kin after attempts by phone or letter then, if the learner is under 18, the Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU) will be notified by the Safeguarding team, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will agree further action, including withdrawal.

Attendance Stage 1 (1A) - Lecturer Warning

To be issued if there are 2 or more occasions of unauthorised absence and/or punctuality concerns (nominally within two weeks) and student has previously been informally challenged by lecturer. Lecturer to make contact parent/carer and notify tutor. Concern(s) and actions to be reported on Attendance Tracking.

Attendance Stage 2 (2A) - Tutor Warning

To be issued if there are 2 or more occasions of Stage 1A warnings being issued (either twice by same lecturer, or individually from multiple lecturers). Verbal conversation between tutor and parent/carer to be carried out, with SMART targets set re: attendance and punctuality, with two-week time frame from date of meeting. Concern(s) and actions to be reported on Attendance Tracking. If appropriate, the Fitness to Study policy will be considered at this stage. The set targets will be reviewed after two weeks, and if met then the learner will be praised for the improvements made.

Attendance Stage 3 (3A) – PTL/DTL Warning

If learner fails to meet SMART targets set at Attendance Stage 2, then a PTL/DTL Warning will be issued. A meeting between Programme Team Leader (PTL)/Deputy Team Leader (DTL) (or other suitably nominated person), parent/carer and learner will be carried out, with SMART targets set re: attendance and punctuality, with two-week time frame from date of meeting. PTL/DTL (or nominee) to send PTL/DTL Warning Letter, explaining place on course may be at risk. Concern(s) and actions to be reported on Attendance Tracking. If appropriate, the Fitness to Study policy will be considered at this stage. The set targets will be reviewed after two weeks, and if met then the learner will be praised for the improvements made.

Learners will automatically receive a PTL/DTL warning should their attendance become of significant concern (below 85%), and may reference the reason for absence.

Attendance Stage 4 (4A) – Formal Attendance Warning (College Head)

If learner fails to meet SMART targets set at Attendance Stage 3, then Formal Attendance warning will be issued, via meeting between one of the College Heads, the learner and parent/carer, with SMART targets set re: attendance and punctuality, with two-week time frame from date of meeting. Curriculum Leader to send Formal

Warning letter, explaining place on course is at risk. Concern(s) and actions to be reported on Attendance Tracking. If appropriate, the Fitness to Study policy will be considered at this stage.

Learners will automatically escalate to a Formal Attendance warning should their attendance fall below minimum threshold.

From the end of the first two weeks of enrolment, if a learner's overall attendance falls below 65%, then their place has fallen below minimum threshold and their plan on their college course(s) may be withdrawn, via automatic escalation to Attendance Stage 4.

Attendance Stage 5 (5A) – Recommendation for withdrawal of course offer (Senior Management Team)

If learner fails to meet SMART targets set at Attendance Stage 4, and the Fitness to Study policy is not appropriate to follow at this point, then the student will be required to attend a **Formal Interview** with a member of the Senior Management Team.

The student (and the parent/carers of an under 18-year-old or vulnerable adult/EHCP) will be given five working days' notice of the interview. The notice will state the nature of the concern and the student's entitlement to accompaniment by a member of the family or designated carer/support worker. **The letter will state that the interview may result in the recommendation that the learner's place on the course(s) be withdrawn from Truro and Penwith College.** Concern(s) and actions to be reported on Attendance Tracking.

The decision to withdraw a course offer is a rare outcome generally reserved for circumstances where there substantial mitigating factors.

All stages of the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway can be followed whether or not a learner and/or parent/carer is able to attend meetings. Where a learner and/or parent/carer is not able to attend, then a written account of targets and actions will be provided.

5. UNAVOIDABLE ABSENCE AND LATENESS

- Each case of valid or unavoidable absence is different and will be treated individually.
- Unavoidable medical, financial, or social care appointments should be notified in advance and recorded as authorised absences.
- Unexplained or unreported absences will be followed up by tutors initially, and Programme Team Leaders if persistent absence patterns exist.
- Actions, expected improvements, and sanctions under the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway will be carried out.
- Four consecutive weeks of unexplained non-attendance will result in withdrawal in line with Education and Skills Funding Agency Regulations, as will individuals who fall under 65% unless they have an EHCP exemption.

Motivational and positive language should be used to ensure that students understand the importance of attendance and punctuality to all aspects of their study programme.

However, if the student continues to show no improvement as a result of the above actions, then they will be deemed to have broken the Student Code of Conduct and will enter the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway at Stage 4, conducted by one of the College Heads. This stage potentially results in the sanction of a Formal Written Warning and failure to improve attendance will lead to a permitted withdrawal of course from Truro and Penwith College.

Such permitted withdrawals are different to withdrawals under the Fitness to Study Policy which have significant, substantiated medical or mental health conditions underpinning the College's decision.

The Permitted Withdrawal has the same technical status as an Exclusion but avoids added negative connotations for often complex lives going forward. If a parent/carer, or external agency, refuses the option of Permitted Withdrawal, Truro and Penwith College reserve the right to exclude the student if circumstances warrant.

APPEAL AGAINST STAGE 5 OUTCOMES

In the case of **withdrawal of college course**, the student will have the right of appeal to the Principal. An Appeal may be made when the student believes the procedure has not been correctly applied or that the decision is disproportionate or unjust.

The Appeal must be in writing and lodged with the Principal's Secretary, within five days of the date of receipt of the letter of recommendation. It should state the grounds and particulars of the substance of the Appeal. If an Appeal is lodged within the time allowed, the Principal will review the process and consider the available evidence. If there are flaws in the process or outcome, or ambiguity in the decision reached, an interview with the Principal may be required.

The student will be given at least five days' notice of the date, place and time of any interview and of their right to be accompanied by a parent/carer or appropriate support worker.

In either event, the decision by the Principal will be final and confirmed in writing to the student within fourteen days of the Appeal, copied to parents/carers.

COMPLAINTS

Complaints about the Attendance and Punctuality Policy, or the way in which it was applied, should be made in accordance with the Truro and Penwith Complaints Policy, a copy of which is available from Programme Team Administrators or Senior Secretaries at Truro and Penwith College.

6. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As a College we will

- Value people equally regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and transgender status, in accordance with the College's 'Equality and Diversity' policy.
- Provide a safe and secure environment in which to learn.
- Support you in your learning and set targets which are challenging but achievable.
- Ensure that assessment of your learning is clear, regular and constructive.
- Give you regular feedback on your progress with guidance on how to improve.
- Provide information to your parent/carers on your attendance and achievement.
- Offer opportunities to improve your health and wellbeing.
- Offer advice and guidance on careers and progression opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for you to give us feedback and for us to deal with any complaints fairly and promptly.

As a Student, we expect you to

- Aim for 100% attendance at all timetabled classes, academies and workshops.
- Be punctual for all classes, arriving ready to participate and learn.
- Make learning successful for everyone by behaving in a way that promotes a co-operative, positive and productive learning environment.
- Complete work to the requirements set by your course and lecturers, meeting all required deadlines.
- Respect the rights of others, actively embracing equality and diversity, and by reporting inappropriate and unsafe actions.
- Seek help when needed and take up any support offered to you.
- Wear your Student ID badge at all times on the lanyard provided.
- Protect the College environment by not eating and drinking in classrooms, disposing of litter appropriately and recycling items where you are able.

What we will not accept in College

- Any form of bullying, intimidation, discrimination, or harassment.
- Any form of physical, emotional, or verbal threats to someone else, in person, via electronic communication or through a third party.
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs, solvents, alcohol, or any other behaviour changing substance.
- The supply or possession of any of these items on College grounds.
- The carrying of any weapon, or item intended to be used as a weapon, whether legal or not.
- Inappropriate or abusive language to any other student, member of staff or visitor to the College
- Inappropriate use of IT, viewing of indecent, illegal or inflammatory content online, cyber bullying or interference with College systems
- Behaviour which causes disruption to the learning of others
- Malpractice, plagiarism or copying the work of others and presenting it as your own
- Deliberate vandalism, graffiti or defacement of College property
- Littering, spitting or depositing chewing gum around the College grounds
- Smoking, or using a vaping device on or around the College campus