



Truro and Penwith College Attendance, Absence and Punctuality Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The Truro and Penwith College Attendance, Absence and Punctuality Policy aims to promote professional working standards and demonstrate full commitment to study through personal 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 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.

We do 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, absence 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.

If attendance declines without certified, notified reason for genuine need (for example absence for short-term medical reasons) students may be referred to either to the Student Disciplinary Procedure or Fitness to Study Policy.

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, register comparisons, texts to students and parent/carers, reporting and trend monitoring, attendance to programme area meetings to flag students of concern.

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.

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.
- 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 does 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.

- Apprentices are required to report any unavoidable absence to their line manager.
- If a learner is undertaking work experience, they are required to inform the point of contact of any unavoidable absence.

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.
- 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.
- Apply the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway where appropriate.
- Record all relevant actions on Attendance Tracking.

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 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.

All Line Managers (for Apprentices) are expected to:

- Monitor attendance and punctuality of learners in their care.

- Challenge individual lateness appropriately at a suitable point.
- The Line Manager must follow up any unauthorised absence by contacting the student and parents/carers promptly (normally within 24 hours) and notify the Programme Team Leader.
- Discuss the low attendance and poor punctuality issues of individuals with the Programme Team Leader.
- Meet with and discuss persistent underperformance of attendance and punctuality with students and parent/carer.
- Apply the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway where appropriate.

Learners undertaking work experience are expected to:

If a learner is undertaking work experience, the learner must notify the relevant Programme Team Administrator or Tutor of any unauthorised absences in advance or at the start of the college day. If the learner does not arrive at the scheduled work experience placement, the placement must notify the Programme Team Administrator the same day.

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.

If a learner is not in college for 3 consecutive days without notice of absence or contact, then contact will be made by attendance team. If we receive no response from learner or next of kin after attempts by phone, text, email or letter the Safeguarding Team must be contacted who will then follow the Learner Contact process.

Attendance Stage 1 (1A) - Lecturer Warning

To be issued if there are 2 or more occasions of concern regarding attendance and/or punctuality (in short period, say 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 must be considered at this stage.

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, via meeting between PTL/DTL, parent/carer and learner to be carried out, with SMART targets set re: attendance and punctuality, with two-week time frame from date of meeting. PTL/DTL 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 must be considered at this stage.

Learners will automatically receive a PTL/DTL warning should their attendance become of significant concern (i.e., below 85%), unless there is clear mitigation.

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, parent/carer and learner to be carried out, 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 must 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) 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 the fact 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 parent/carer is able to attend meetings. Where a parent/carer is not able to attend then a written account of targets and actions will be provided.

If at any point during the Student Attendance Intervention Pathway a safeguarding concern arises contact to the safeguarding team must be made by the lecturer, tutor or PTL/DTL to discuss their concerns so appropriate action can be taken where needed.

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. Consideration will be given to children missing from education.

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 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 his/her 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 Staff 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 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 attendance
- 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.

LEARNER CONTACT & HOME VISIT – PROCESS AND GUIDANCE

All contact / processes undertaken to be recorded in Staff Advantage / CPOMs

The learner and NOK do not respond to any attempts to contact, exhausting all possible options, including all contact details in Staff Advantage (including NOK where appropriate, including for those over 18).

MIS have also been contacted to review any course changes, transfer to apprenticeship or unenrolment.

For government defined 'vulnerable' learners additional support must be sought from child & adult social workers, targeted workers and other professionals involved with the learner.

Discuss concerns with the Safeguarding Team, who will assess the risks to the learner based on recent safety and welfare concerns, historical concerns and signs of safety.

GREEN

AMBER

RED

No evidence to suggest a risk to the learners' personal safety or welfare.

Non-engagement and welfare concern letter to be emailed/sent by PTA/PTL/Attendance Team.

Some evidence to suggest a risk to the learners' personal safety or welfare.

AMBER non-engagement and welfare concern letter to be emailed/sent by PTA/PTL/Attendance Team with a target date for contact to be established.

Safeguarding Team to be informed who may contact Early Help (EHH), Children's Social Care or Adult Safeguarding.

Escalation of AMBER concern. Strong evidence of risk to the learner's personal safety or welfare.

Safeguarding Team to make an EHH / MARU referral and/or contact Police for enquiry or welfare check.

OR

Home visit based on assessed risk to the learner and staff. See Appendix A below.

Contact achieved

Yes

No

Escalate to AMBER concern.

Contact achieved

Yes

No

Escalate to RED concern.

Contact achieved

Yes

No

Discuss next steps with DSL.

The PTA/PTL/Attendance Team to continue to monitor and maintain contact regarding attendance.

Guidance on home visit

There is no legal obligation or statutory requirement for Truro and Penwith College staff to conduct home visits, although it may be that it is the only way to establish contact with a learner. As there are no legal grounds to carry out a welfare check, the visit should purely be to establish contact. However, if during the home visit staff members have concerns about the safety / welfare of a learner then the normal process for raising a concern should be followed and recorded.

Where a home visit is considered then the following guidance should be followed:

1. Discuss any home visits with Safeguarding Officer and/or DSL. Home visits should be risk assessed and agreed by a member of SMT.
2. A minimum of two staff members, both of whom are part of the Safeguarding Team.
3. Consideration needs to be given to the learner's anticipated response to the members of staff attending the home.
4. The attending members of staff are clear on the purpose of the home visit, and that it is not a welfare check, but an attempt to make contact.
5. If nobody answers the door then a business card or note should be left to inform the learner, parents, guardians etc. that a home visit has been attempted.

Risk Assessment

The following risk assessment template must be completed prior to a home visit being completed. Multiply the likelihood score with the impact score, if any of the assessed risks have a total score greater than 4 then the visit **must not** be completed by Truro and Penwith College staff. The Safeguarding Team will contact MARU / Police.

Risk	Likelihood (Score 1-6)	Impact (Score 1-6)	Total Risk Assessment Score (Likelihood x Impact)
Staff experiencing verbal or physical abuse from learner, learner's family, associates or general public.			
Staff being threatened by the learner, learner's family, associates or general public.			
Staff coming into contact with animals or household pets.			