



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY GUIDANCE

Latest Review Date	17th September 2019
Reviewed By (name and role)	Mel Parr Student Services Manager

1. Purpose

Levels of attendance have a direct impact on the success of students at Dv8 Sussex. Research has shown that students are more likely to complete and achieve their qualification and overall course aims if they attend all timetabled provision.

This policy guidance provides a framework within which Dv8 tutors can operate. It specifies in broad terms the strategies to be used to respond to poor attendance and punctuality. Learners who arrive late have an impact not just on their own learning but also on the progress of the rest of the class. High expectations of attendance and punctuality will also be required by future employers. We need all Dv8 Sussex staff to set high expectations regarding attendance and punctuality. Attendance is also a key way through which different bursaries and learner financial support are awarded.

2. Registers

The register is the formal auditable document used by Dv8 Sussex to record attendance and punctuality. Dv8 will consistently ensure that this record is marked and made accurate. The accurate marking of registers is a contractual requirement for all teaching staff and Dv8 will take non-compliance with these procedures seriously. It is the responsibility of the Head of Centres to ensure that all teaching staff are made aware of the marking codes.

In order for the system to work, registers must be marked by the timetabled teacher within 10 minutes of the start of each session.

Centre Coordinator/ Team staff will be monitoring registers and basing their actions on Arbor, so it is essential that this is live data.

There will be a member of Centre Team monitoring registers at the start of each lesson period. Any learner not present at that time will receive a text message from Centre Team asking them to contact college & a) explain their absence, or b) inform us of their expected arrival time. These texts

are recorded on Arbor under Communications and Notes on the Student Profile. The appropriate CAL will then call each learner before the end of the first session to discuss their reasons for non attendance and aim to ensure that they come in as soon as possible.

If a learner does not respond within 1 hour then parents will be called to help ensure that the young person attends on that day or support can be offered if they are facing difficulties in attending.

Any learner who contacts us to explain an absence will have their register mark amended or annotated accordingly. This will apply to all sessions.

3. Dv8 Response to late arrivals

Any students who arrive late for the session will need to fill in the class “Late Sign in Book” (to be provided to each class) as they arrive in class, giving their name, time of arrival and reason for lateness. Tutors should then look to ensure students are seated and ready to learn as quickly as possible, with as little disruption as possible to the rest of the class or the lesson.

Tutors must then speak to late students at the first available opportunity, emphasising the importance of being *Ready to Learn* at the start of each session.

Tutors are expected to ensure they are explaining the importance of punctuality to students and that it is a key *Employability Skill*. Poor attendance and lateness has a direct negative impact on student achievement and attainment.

Attendance & punctuality will be monitored on a weekly basis by Course Leaders who will flag learners or sessions / subjects with poor trends, as seen on the Attendance and Punctuality report published every Monday morning (showing the weeks previous attendance). Each learners full attendance record is also available on Arbor at any time and can be accessed by each tutor or support worker working with the cohort.

Parents and young people will have access to the Arbor student portal where all attendance data will be up to date and available.

Procedure for learners reporting absence

- Students to notify the centre teams via the absence line by phone or text if not attending that day. All absences need to be communicated by 10am.
- Centre teams to relay all absence information to tutors before the start of the first session in order for tutors to follow up on any student's absences from this list.

Reporting

- All lateness **MUST** be recorded in each cohort's Late Sign-IN Book and be accurately recorded in Arbor each day
- Attendance reports can be obtained directly from Arbor or through the weekly whole college Attendance report published each Monday.
- All delivery teams will discuss learner attendance of their group in weekly team meetings, identify “at-risk” students and interventions that need to take place
- CALs will be responsible for ensuring each cohorts attendance and punctuality is being recorded and addressed with the target of meeting at least 90% attendance and punctuality.

Authorised / un authorised absence

We reserve the right to consider issues on a case by case basis, but below serves as our general guide to what could be seen as acceptable reasons to miss college. You should only miss college for serious, unavoidable reasons.

Usually Acceptable: • You are too ill to leave the house* • You have a hospital appointment, or a medical emergency - you may need to provide proof • You have a day of religious observance • There has been a family bereavement • University and Employer Open Days – you will need to provide proof • Work experience – requests for term-time leave for essential work experience will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. These requests should be submitted at least two weeks in advance.

*Note that persistent absence through illness will be investigated to see how we can support you.

4. Expectations of Staff at Dv8.

Quality improvement is the responsibility of all staff at Dv8 and everyone must take responsibility for helping to tackle attendance issues.

Staff are expected to be in the classroom before students arrive for the start of the session. Staff will greet each student by name and check they are ready for learning, with notepad pens and other resources required for the session.

5. Attendance Rewards

Staff must all be aware of and actively promote attendance and punctuality rewards to all students at Dv8, these include:

- A £10.00 voucher for up to 5 students with the best attendance at the end of each term
- A prize draw for the students/s with the best attendance at the end of the academic year with a prize of a tablet for the winner of the draw.
- Actively promote the link between attendance and achievement by promoting results from the previous academic that emphasises this around the centre and in classrooms
- Awarding of points towards termly group competition rewarding attendance / punctuality, quality of work and achievements with group trip out for highest scoring per term
- Postcards highlighting positive behaviour

6. Staff Team Meetings

Attendance and punctuality will be a rolling agenda point

All Curriculum Area Leads (CALs) are expected to:

- Review attendance records of their cohorts on Arbor and through the weekly report and be ready to share them at weekly meetings in the centre.
- Keep abreast of issues relating to student performance and behaviour that may or may not affect their absenteeism and be ready to share this information at weekly meetings.

All team members are expected to work together to listen to concerns around attendance from tutors and help to support them in rectifying issues.

This could include the following approaches:

- give them strategies to support behavioural management that affects punctuality and behaviour in class
- share good practice in the delivery of teaching key parts of the curriculum
- inform them of any personal issues (On a need to know basis) that may affect attendance and offer additional support in the communication of issues relating to attendance to parents/guardians.
- Support the progress (where possible) of students being able to attend 'catch up sessions' to complete work missed.

Where cohort attendance falls below the 90% within the first 4 weeks of the course Curriculum Area Leads and the lead tutors will put in place a support plan for that cohort by:

- Instigating drop ins of that session looking specifically at punctuality, behaviour, phone use and general engagement in learning.
- Support the tutor by working with other teams in Dv8 to make sure that students in that cohort have the support that they need.
- Continue to use the strategies detailed above and to work as a whole staff team to try to support issues and raise attendance figures.

As a team at Dv8, everyone has a responsibility towards making sure that students attend:

- It is especially vital that the whole team and curriculum area leads work together to make sure that attendance in English and Maths lessons improve year on year.
- Communicate clearly Dv8 Sussex's high expectations: learners are expected to be present in 100% of classes and to arrive in time for the start of each session, ready to learn.
- Consistently reinforce the message that poor attendance or punctuality is not acceptable and where it falls below an agreed level this will lead to action, including possible disciplinary action or even exclusion.
- Provide learners with clear instructions about notifying their tutor of their absence and recording it with the centre teams too.
- Tutors and centre teams to accurately and fully complete each class register within the first half an hour of each session.
- Ensure that attendance is only recorded as 'authorised' for absences agreed in advance or for exceptional, and unavoidable, personal circumstances.
- Ensure lateness is recorded in both the online register and late book the number of minutes late and reason for lateness
- Openly and regularly discuss the attendance and lateness levels of a group or of individual students in class and tutorial sessions.
- Directly address issues of attendance/ punctuality in student Progress Reviews with targets for improvement set and monitored. Termly reports on attendance will be sent to students home. Regularly obtain attendance reports for each group and discuss with other Tutors, CALS and Head Of Centre to use in team meetings.

7. Expectations of Learners

The guidance for students on attendance and punctuality is included in the student handbook and should be read alongside this policy.

- Students should make every effort to attend all of their classes, tutorials and self directed study sessions
- Attendance should not fall below 90% - if it does there will be an intervention to support improvements in attendance (see below)
- Students must inform the Centre Team by 10am if they are unable to attend (see below)
- Students must make arrangements to catch up any work missed
- Students must ensure they arrive *before the start of the session* properly equipped, prepared and ready to learn
- Students should not agree to outside work commitments that fall within timetabled college hours; absences owing to work commitments will not be authorised

8. Students with Disabilities, Learning Difficulties or Other Support Needs

NB. LSA / comms to EHCP parents re lateness

Dv8 endeavors to be an inclusive and supportive learning environment with proven success in engaging students that have experienced barriers to learning within mainstream education.

- If a student has a disability, medical difficulty or pastoral issue that is likely to affect their attendance or punctuality they should notify a staff member at the first available opportunity (this may be at the application/interview stage or at any time afterwards as issues arise)
- Dv8 will work with the student and parent/carer to ensure that any appropriate reasonable adjustment or other support is in place and level of expectation set accordingly
- Learning Support and/or Student Services (pastoral and welfare) will liaise with teaching staff to ensure that relevant staff members are aware of strategies and goals agreed to support the student's attendance
- Any review or disciplinary action will consider and be responsive to the needs of students with disabilities, learning difficulties or other emotional, social or behavioural needs. Support will be offered and provided where appropriate

9. Interventions for Attendance

Early intervention is the best way to identify and remove potential barriers to attendance.

Each morning a text message will be sent out to all students who are absent and haven't notified the centre via the methods above.

The following interventions will begin once a student falls below the target of 95% attendance:

Low Intervention	Attendance below 90%	Vocational Tutor or Course Lead has a discrete conversation with students about attendance.
Medium Intervention	Attendance below 85%	A meeting to take place between the student, tutor and student services with clear strategy/target to improve attendance within next 2 weeks. Where a specific barrier has been identified student services may continue to undertake support work with the student. Call to parent/carer (if a student is over 18 we will gain their consent to call)
High Intervention	Attendance below 75%	A meeting to take place between student, parent/carer, tutor and student services. Review of plan and target from previous meeting. If persistent low attendance and failure to respond to a structured action plan continues after 4 weeks the student may be asked to leave the course. If this happens the student has the right to follow Dv8's appeals procedure in regard to this decision.

10. General Actions for Tutors

- Ensure that learners who are behind with their assessments and require extra help are supported to do so. Learning support, where possible, should help students who are attending the 'study space' to complete outstanding work that they want to catch up with.
- Tutors should also provide guidance to students and learning support staff on how individual students can catch up with their work and need to communicate directly with learning support about this. Students should also be encouraged to use the google classrooms to complete work in their own time.
- Always consult with parents/carers (unless it is deemed extremely harmful to do so) to address issues of attendance and punctuality and consult with student services if you are concerned about issues relating to home life.
- Make parents and guardians aware of the ramifications that absenteeism is having on students achieving their qualifications.
- Ensure that sessions start promptly and finish as timetabled; tutors should be in the room before the start of class ready to start at the scheduled time. Sessions should start on time even if there are learners who may arrive late.
- Ensure that session attendance is enhanced by good practice in teaching and learning. This may include a variety of activities that engage learners in challenging and interesting tasks, for example engaging and fun openers to sessions, effective preliminaries that are allocated into session time and the use of a variety of teaching styles and formative assessment feedback.
- Emphasise motivational factors such as career progression routes, expectations of employers, the value of the final qualification in the job market or progression to Higher Education, in order to maintain the learners' interest and determination to achieve.
- Regularly share attendance figures with the class. Posting monthly attendance figures on the wall will encourage a sense of ownership as well as reward and recognition for good attendance. Including using the points system to ascertain cohort success.

11. Delivery Staff Performance Management

If monthly attendance for a whole cohort falls below 90% and stays there or below for a period longer than 6 weeks (including the 4 weeks at the start of term) then clear targets for improvement must be agreed by the CAL, overseen by the Head of Centre. These will be reviewed at each Course Progress Review to review the impact of actions and any further improvements needed.

Long-term underperformance in terms of promoting positive attendance and punctuality by individual tutors may result in capability procedures being instigated, a probationary period being extended or not met and/or may be future employment not considered when future contract offers are being negotiated (for example, with freelance or sessional).