



Student Support Policies and Procedures

Student attendance policy

Aim: To clarify the expectations in terms of student attendance/punctuality and the procedures to report absences

Policy Authorisation:	Management: Senior Leadership Team
Date of Policy Update:	June 2017
Date of Policy Review:	June 2019
Policy Author	Head of Student Support

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Student Attendance Policy (student procedures)

Rationale

Excellent attendance is seen as central to outstanding academic performance and pastoral care. At Blackpool Sixth we expect all students to have 100% attendance and punctuality. Research shows poor attendance and punctuality has a serious detrimental effect on outcomes. This policy is designed to clarify expectations and establish common practice.

a) Introduction

Students are expected to attend all lessons on time. It is recognised that there may be rare occasions where a student may miss lessons due to genuine illness or other extenuating circumstances. In such circumstances students must follow the absence procedures below or the procedures in the special leave policy.

Persistent failure to:

- follow the absence notification procedures;
- maintain regular contact with the college during any period of sickness absence;
- submit evidence of absence in a timely manner;

may be formally investigated in accordance with the college's Managing Students Procedures.

If the college has reason to believe that a student has reported that they are sick, when in fact they are not sick or there are apparent patterns in the student's absence (e.g. sickness absence repeatedly on a Friday or Monday, or before or after a period of leave); this may be formally investigated in accordance with the college's Managing Students Procedures.

Please note: This policy does not cover the following absences that are covered in the Special Leave Policy:

- Holidays in term time
- Compassionate leave
- Study leave for college examinations
- Other special leave e.g. weddings, graduations, religious holidays and extra-curricular representation

Please see the Special Leave Policy for full details authorised and unauthorised absences.

The college will observe the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which protects individuals from unfavourable treatment related to a disability. A disability is defined as "a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term negative effect on a person's ability to do normal day to day activities". The college will make reasonable adjustments to a disabled student's arrangements through the Fitness to Study Procedures.

b) Absence procedures

At the Sixth Form we expect students to let their pastoral mentor and subject teachers know in advance if they are going to be absent from classes due to a scheduled appointment.

For unforeseen absences, we expect students, or their parent/carer, to on the first day of absence email the student's pastoral mentor or telephone 01253 394911 before 09.15am.

Communication must include the student's full name, a brief reason for absence and expected return date. This will be recorded on EMRIS.

Students should also email their subject teachers to get details of any work missed.

In normal circumstances during a period of absence we expect students to maintain daily email contact with their pastoral mentors and subject teachers to ensure the student is able to maintain learning. If the student, parent/carer does not maintain contact, they can expect to receive a phone call from the college.

Authorised absences – if college is notified in advance

- A hospital appointment (appointment card or appointment letter must be presented to pastoral mentor).
- An orthodontist appointment (appointment card or appointment letter must be presented to pastoral mentor).
- Visit to university to attend an open day/interview; a career related interview or audition (appointment letter must be submitted to pastoral mentor).
- Attendance at court or an appointment with a legal adviser (appointment letter must be submitted to pastoral mentor).
- Practical driving test (appointment letter must be submitted to pastoral mentor).

Note: Routine medical appointments (e.g. doctor, optician, physiotherapist and dental appointments) should be made outside timetabled sessions, using the student's study day where possible, and are not considered as authorised absences.

Examples of unacceptable reasons for absence

- Unauthorised holidays in term time.
- Part or full-time work that is not part of the student's programme of study
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting younger siblings
- Driving lessons
- Driving Theory Test

Whatever the reason for absence, it is the student's responsibility to complete work missed as quickly as possible. Staff will support individuals following a period of absence to help students to get back on track. However, if students do not take active steps to catch up on missed work, they may face disciplinary action in line with the managing students policy.

Students who feel unwell whilst in college should report to the Link or the Focus Centre where they will be asked to sit quietly whilst members of staff contact parent(s)/carer(s) to decide whether or not it is appropriate to let them go home. If symptoms persist and students are permitted leave, they will be marked absent for any sessions missed. Students who go home ill without reporting to the Link or the Focus Centre will be marked as an unknown absence and may face disciplinary action.

Student illness, unless supported by a doctor's note, will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

Long-term sickness/medical conditions

The college will make reasonable adjustments to support a student to maintain learning during periods of long-term sickness or medical conditions through the Fitness to Study Procedures.

c) Absence trigger point

Frequent and regular episodes of absence will be managed by the college. The trigger point has been set to ensure that the college takes a proactive approach to managing any concerns surrounding a student's health, wellbeing and attendance and to provide any support with addressing this as soon as possible.

If a student's attendance falls below the 90% trigger point the pastoral mentor will arrange a meeting to discuss reasons for absence and agree improvement targets and support. This will include a monitoring period. Failure to meet the agreed improvement targets may result in further disciplinary action in line with managing students policy.

Students will normally lose their bursary payment if their attendance drops below 90% for a monthly payment period (see bursary policy and procedures)

Linked Policies

- Managing Students Policy
- Special Leave Policy - students
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Bursary Policy
- Bereavement Policy