

WORCESTER SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Attendance Policy and Punctuality Procedures

Date: July 2022

1. Scope

- 1.1 These procedures apply to students enrolled on all courses at Worcester Sixth Form College.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Attendance is compulsory at all classes (inclusive of Maths & English and tutorial sessions) and work-related activities. All these are an integral part of a student's study programme and students are expected to be punctual in their attendance at these.

Students whose attendance falls below 95% in any aspect of the programme of study will meet with their Tutor and persistent low attendance or poor punctuality may constitute a breach of the Student Code of Conduct which would result in disciplinary proceedings and possible temporary or permanent exclusion.

3. Types of Absence

3.1 Planned absence

Students must try to ensure that routine personal appointments, such as doctors, dentists and driving lessons take place outside the timetable except in an emergency.

- i) Where the student knows that he/she will be absent for a lesson due to a medical appointment, driving test, interview etc, it is his/her responsibility to provide the Tutorial Hub with appropriate evidence at least one day in advance. This should be the appointment letter, for example.
- ii) If a student is sent home because he/she is unwell the person responsible for taking the decision must inform the Tutorial Hub.
- iii) Where students will be off-site due to a College-organised activity, the trip organiser will complete the required paperwork and ensure registers are

marked accurately. Student must ensure they have completed and returned a signed parental permissions slip for the trip.

3.2 **Holidays**

Students are strongly advised not to take holidays during term-time.

If planned absence is unavoidable, even if it is just for one day, students must obtain permission from their Head of Year/tutor well in advance by the student obtaining a Notification of Planned Student Absence form from the Tutorial Hub. This form must be completed by the parent(s) and appropriate subject staff to make clear any work that may be missed and which will need completing together with agreed deadlines. An indication of the likely impact on their learning/development will also be made. (Please note that possession of this form does not mean that permission has been given for the planned absence as this is dependent on the form being completed in full and being approved by the tutor, see below). Once this form has been completed the student must take it to their tutor and, where there are concerns, the HoY, at least two working weeks before the proposed holiday, who will decide whether permission can be granted. If permission is granted the tutor/Head of Year will sign the form and give a copy to the student and the Tutorial Hub.

Permission will not normally be given where students arrange holidays on their own, with friends or family members other than parents. Students who do this may be excluded from College. Permission cannot be obtained retrospectively.

The College calendar for term-time and holidays is distributed to all students and parents. It is also available on the College website.

3.3 **Sickness absence**

Student absence due to sickness or other reasons not included within authorised absences will require the student to contact the college on the morning of the absence. This should be by phone or email to their tutor.

All absences are to be reviewed by the tutor.

3.4

If a student is absent for four consecutive weeks and does not make contact with WSFC, the Head of Year will send a letter to establish whether the student wishes to return. If the student indicates that they do not wish to return or does not respond to the letter within 5 working days they will be removed from the college register. Exit interviews will be arranged with the Head of Year or a member of the careers team wherever possible.

3.5

A target of 100% attendance is in place for all students. Those who fall below this target will be subject to the attendance process (attached). This may result in the start of disciplinary procedures as detailed in the student code of conduct. WSFC may not fund or authorise examination entries if teachers feel that the chances of success have been hampered by frequent absence.

4. Responsibilities

Students are responsible for attending all required classes punctually, and for communicating with their teachers on matters relating to their attendance and punctuality.

Guidance for parents regarding reporting absence procedure can be found in the *Guide for Parents* and the College website.

Parents must:

- i) Contact the College on the first day of absence using *the Parent Portal*
- ii) Contact the College again if there is a second day of absence or longer. They should be asked to predict a likely return date. Tutorial Hub staff will pass on requests for work to be sent home if this applies.
- iii) Encourage their child to give them access to the Portal so they can check their contact details are accurate.
- iv) Reinforce the importance of 100% attendance.

Students must:

- i) Attend all lessons and tutorials that appear on their timetable
- ii) Contact the College if they are unwell and ensure they speak to their tutor and subject teachers upon their return.
- iii) Inform the Tutorial Hub at least one day in advance of any planned absence (e.g. medical appointment, university interview) and providing evidence as appropriate.
- iv) Heads of Year will use their discretion in deciding what evidence to accept. Inform the college and the employer if they are unable to attend work experience or a placement.

5. Monitoring process

- 5.1 All attendance will be monitored by the department and the Tutor who is responsible for their own students' attendance.
- 5.2 Any student absent without permission will be required to meet his or her tutor/HOY following their return to college.

- 5.3 Where attendance falls below 85%, parents will be informed by letter and the disciplinary process may be instigated.

6. Punctuality

- 6.1 A student will be considered late if they arrive after the start of the session. Good punctuality means that everyone is ready to begin at the exact start time with no loss of the learning period. Over the course of the year prompt starts enable both staff and students to use the full timetabled period. This can make a real difference to students seeking additional time to discuss learning content in order to improve their understanding.
- 6.2 All lateness will be recorded on registers for any session throughout the day.
- 6.3 After a student has been late three times they will be seen by their tutor and set a target for improvement. If the student fails to improve their punctuality, they will see the Head of Year and the disciplinary procedure will be invoked.
- 6.4 Lateness will be challenged in classes at a convenient moment.

7 Procedure

Authorising Absence in Advance

- Where the student knows that he/she will be absent for a lesson due to a medical appointment, driving test, interview etc, it is his/her responsibility to provide the Tutorial Hub with appropriate evidence at least one day in advance. This should be the appointment letter, for example.
- If a student is sent home because he/she is unwell the person responsible for taking the decision must inform the Tutorial Hub.

Sickness or unauthorised Absence

Students contact the College by phone and email their tutor, and/or parents contact the college.

- 9.5 Students may add an S mark to the Portal to indicate their sickness absence – this will send an automated email to their parents and/or their tutor.
- 9.6 This is a reporting procedure only, used to encourage students to be responsible for reporting absences.

- 9.7 When there are issues with attendance, parents will be contacted by letter.
- 9.8 Students with repeated absences and continued poor attendance (without notification) falling below 85% will put the student's future at College in jeopardy as the Disciplinary process will be followed. Staff need to speak to students and refer if they are repeat/serial offenders.

Reporting Absence, Monitoring Punctuality and Consequent Action

- i) The College may provide an automated email to parents when a student's attendance falls below 50 percent of all registered activities in a given week.
- ii) Pastoral Tutors are able to see up to date attendance data using *the College Portal* and will regularly contact students and parents using a variety of means including phone, text, email and letters when absences occur. Pastoral Tutors are the first line of contact for following up absences.
- iii) Pastoral Tutors will meet with students who demonstrate repeated absence or lateness to lessons. Action taken may include contact or a meeting with parents, forms of positive intervention, liaising with teaching staff where subject issues arise, or being placed on an attendance/punctuality report.
- iv) Pastoral Tutors will record a summary of the meeting with a student, and any action undertaken, as an Interview on the College Portal. Where attendance or punctuality has been raised through an Academic Concern the action taken will be referred to within the Concern as well.
- v) Repeated failure to attend lessons will be treated as a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and the disciplinary process contained within this policy may be followed.
- vi) Significant absence from lessons or lateness may jeopardise a student's ability to progress with their current programme of study.

1. Action taken with students with poor punctuality and attendance

- i) Tutors contact with student e.g. phone, email, face to face
- ii) Interview with student. Forms of positive and restorative intervention undertaken
- iii) Contact with parents and teaching staff
- iv) Disciplinary action taken – weekly attendance report
- v) Meeting with parents
- vi) Referral to Head of Year

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY PROCESS SUMMARY

Academic teacher or Tutor Marks Register	Late if arrives after the start of the lesson Late students must be admitted to class on	After 3 occurrences discuss with teacher to identify reasons and remedial action – recorded as a concern.
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	arrival but must knock and wait for the teacher to admit them at a suitable point.	Repeated lateness – meeting with tutor, parents notified.
	Absent	After every absence ensure a brief conversation with teacher to identify reasons ensure catch up work is set. Tutor will monitor patterns and occurrences of absence. Repeated absence - meeting with tutor, parents notified.
Weekly monitoring	Tutors to monitor individual attendance.	Heads of department monitor attendance by group.

Attendance	Expected Course of Action
Attendance -falls below 100%	Highlighted by tutor/teacher. Causes for absence identified.
Attendance between 95 -85%	Discussion with Tutor - outcome or target for improvement set and recorded on the Portal and student monitored closely.
Attendance less than 85%	Discussion with Tutor and the start of disciplinary process or, in cases of ill health, the fitness to study process. Parents involved.

Student Conduct Policy relevant sections for attendance and punctuality.

Academic

- a) **Attend all timetabled classes and activities punctually** so as not to disrupt the learning of others. Repeated and unexpected absence without notification, or persistent lateness, will result in disciplinary proceedings and sanctions as outlined below. Holiday trips must be arranged outside of College term times. Permission for holidays during term time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and students who take such holidays without first obtaining the permission of the College are likely to be suspended or excluded.
- b) **Inform the College of all absence using the Portal** and attend the whole of your agreed programme of study unless a change has been formally agreed with your Head of Year.

C, SANCTIONS

1. Informal stage – a verbal warning

Where relatively minor infringements of the Student Code of Conduct have been made, and the student has responded positively to it when challenged by any member of staff, it may be appropriate for them to deal with the matter informally with a warning. Details of the nature of the minor infringement will be noted on the interview tab of the Portal and parents informed in writing.

Further infringements of the Student Code of Conduct may lead to a disciplinary meeting at which written warning, suspension or exclusion is a possible outcome.

2. Formal stage - written warning

This may be the disciplinary outcome after a meeting with a student and their parents. Examples of this might include where:

- A student has failed to respond positively when challenged
- Referral to a Head of Department or Head of Year has been unsuccessful
- A student has been found to have breached the Student Code of Conduct following a formal disciplinary meeting.

3. Formal stage – final written warning

This may be the disciplinary outcome after a meeting with a student and their parents. Examples of this might include where:

- A student's failure to respond positively to a previous written warning
- A formal disciplinary meeting where the student's behaviour was determined as mis-conduct, or gross-misconduct but where additional information led to the determination of this outcome.

A written warning will be active for the remainder of the student's time at College and further breaches of the student Code of Conduct will lead to a disciplinary meeting at which suspension or exclusion are possible outcomes. A written warning is not a requirement before sanctions such as suspension or exclusion are employed, nor is it a requirement for a written warning to be followed by a final written warning prior to a suspension or exclusion.

4. Formal stage – suspension or exclusion

This may be the disciplinary outcome after a meeting with a student and their parents.

Suspensions may run consecutively if conditions attached to the ending of a suspension are not met. Where a student is suspended from College they must not come on to the College site or have any dealings with College staff during the period of their suspension. Details of the suspension will remain on the students' disciplinary record during their time at College but the College will not refer to it in external references unless the student is subsequently excluded.

Behavioural reasons for exclusion and suspension

A student may be excluded or suspended for behaviour that:

- causes offence or fails to treat members of the College community with courtesy and respect
- endangers themselves or others
- gives rise to concern for the safety of staff or students
- is illegal
- gives rise to Police investigation in response to a serious criminal offence
- shows disregard of College rules, procedures or policies
- constitutes a refusal to comply with reasonable instructions from a member of staff
- brings the College into disrepute or tarnishes the reputation of its staff or students
- is dishonest or uncooperative in any dealing with the College
- consists of frequent or persistent minor infringements of the student Code of Conduct

No student will be excluded in the above circumstances without an initial verbal warning to themselves and a written warning to the student and their parents, when possible or appropriate, except in a case of gross misconduct where exclusion may be immediate. Where a case results from frequent or persistent minor infringements of the Student Code of Conduct written notification of the minor infringement(s) will constitute a written warning.

Gross misconduct is misconduct at College or outside of College serious enough to make any further working relationship and trust impossible. As such it is likely to lead to the exclusion of the student, which may occur immediately and without the verbal or written warnings that the College would give prior to excluding a student on grounds of misconduct.

Suspension or exclusion may result where a students' behaviour amounts to misconduct or gross misconduct.

Academic reasons for exclusion

A student may be excluded if, after a written warning to the student (copied to their parents wherever possible with an invitation for them to discuss the matter with relevant staff if they wish), he or she is, in the opinion of the Principal or a Vice Principal, incapable of benefiting from the courses offered by the College.

A student may be excluded **on academic grounds** if, after a written warning to the student (copied to their parents wherever possible with an invitation for them to discuss the matter with relevant staff if they wish), he or she is, in the opinion of the Principal or a Vice Principal, **incapable of benefiting from the courses offered by the College.**