

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

**Approved: ENERGY COAST UTC GOVERNING BODY**

**Signed: A CROWDER (CHAIR)**

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## INTRODUCTION

Every student at Energy Coast UTC matters. The most important factor contributing to a student's success at Energy Coast is attendance. The link between attendance and attainment is firmly established. Those students who attend more, achieve greater qualifications and are more able to access higher education, employment or training.

Energy Coast UTC encourages 100% attendance for all our students as part of our commitment to the sponsors and employers with whom we work and who help us to deliver our promise of an apprenticeship, training or a university place.

The UTC expects students to attend regularly and arrive at sessions on time in order to take full advantage of the opportunities available to them at the College, at Gen 2 and West Lakes College. We expect that parents/carers will ensure their child arrives on time and supports the UTC's policy on attendance and punctuality.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### THE UTC WILL ENSURE:

- All staff understand their role in ensuring good attendance and punctuality;
  - No students are deprived of their educational opportunities by, either their own non-attendance or lateness, or that of other students;
  - Regular attendance monitoring by the Attendance Officer, in liaison with form tutors and the Assistant Principal (Pastoral);
  - Students with poor attendance and/or punctuality are challenged and students with good attendance and/or punctuality are rewarded through a transparent Rewards system;
  - Students and parents/carers are made aware of the procedures the College will follow if attendance and/or punctuality becomes a concern;
  - Students who are authorised as 'sick' will receive work from relevant teachers within 24 hours;
  - **Further provision of work will be negotiated dependent upon the nature of the illness and likely period of absence;**
  - Weekly meetings of the Attendance Officer and Assistant Principal (Pastoral) are scheduled to discuss students whose attendance is causing concern and to assess if the intervention strategies in place need to be revised;
  - **Monthly meetings of the Attendance Officer and other pastoral colleagues** are scheduled to discuss students whose attendance is causing concern and to assess if the intervention strategies in place need to be revised.
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- The Attendance Officer produces weekly Attendance Reports for all UTC students;
  - **The Attendance Officer produces weekly Attendance Reports for students in receipt of Pupil Premium funding;**
  - The Attendance Officer produces attendance and punctuality data for meetings of the Governing Body.

## PARENTS/CARERS SHOULD ENSURE:

- They fulfil their legal responsibility to send their child to College regularly;
- They are aware that they risk prosecution if they fail in this duty. Only the UTC, within the context of the law, can approve absence. Parents/carers cannot approve absence;
- They are aware of the procedures the College will follow if attendance and/or punctuality becomes a concern;
- They notify the College before 8.30 on the first day of absence, leaving their child's name, the reason for the absence, tutor group and expected date of return;
- They contact the College each day of their child's absence;
- Provide medical evidence if the absence persists for more than 3 days;
- That work is returned to the UTC in the identified timescale for marking;
- They arrange medical appointments outside of UTC hours whenever possible;
- For KS4 students they:
  - Understand that they cannot authorise their child's non-attendance for a medical appointment. Evidence of a medical appointment ahead of the appointment date must be provided;
  - Collect their child from the UTC and sign him/her out and back in after the appointment;
- For KS5 students they:
  - Provide evidence of a medical appointment. The Attendance Officer may ring home to confirm the appointment;
- Their child returns to the UTC before and/or after the appointment;
- They do not arrange family holidays during term time.

If holidays are taken without permission the holiday will not be authorised, an 'Unauthorised' mark will be recorded and the parent/carer may receive a fine if the child is taken out of the College.

The College will notify the Local Authority Access and Inclusion Officer for Attendance if this holiday absence is during the GCSE examination period. The LA may issue a fine or face prosecution.

## THE STUDENT SHOULD ENSURE:

- They take responsibility to arrive at the College for 8.25 for registration at 8.30 and 1.00 for the afternoon session;
- If they arrive late (after 8.10 am or 1.15 pm) they sign the appropriate 'signing in' log, giving the time and the reason for their late arrival;
- They will receive a **U** - Unauthorised Absence mark if they arrive at College after 8.10 am or 1.15 pm;
- They are fully prepared for their work by bringing the correct equipment;
- They attend all timetabled sessions promptly;
- They ensure they are registered for all Enrichment activities;
- They are aware that absences without appropriate medical documentation will be classed as Unauthorised;

- They provide evidence of:
  - A Dr's note after an absence;
  - A medical appointment prior to the date of the appointment;
- They understand that those with poor attendance and/or punctuality will be challenged and students with good attendance and/or punctuality will be rewarded;
- They are aware of the procedures the College will follow if attendance and/or punctuality becomes a concern.

## **ILLNESS**

If a student becomes unwell during the day, he/she will be sent to Reception by the member of staff in charge. Students are not permitted to contact their parents/carers directly.

Trained staff will assess the illness and make decisions through SLT/ELT about whether parents/carers need to be informed and whether a student will be sent home or collected by parents/carers.

## **REFERENCE TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION OFFICER FOR ATTENDANCE**

The LA Access and Inclusion Officer for Attendance will usually give parents/carers up to a maximum of 12 weeks to bring about an improvement in their child's attendance. If after 12 weeks this has not been achieved, the LA Access and Inclusion Officer for Attendance will, unless there are exceptional mitigating circumstances, notify the parents/carers that a summons for them to appear in Court will be issued.

## **COURT ACTION**

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced new powers for designated Local Education Officers, Head teachers (and Deputy or Assistant Head teachers authorised by them) and the police to issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school.

If a **KS 4 student** has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any 12 week period (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or a student persistently arrives late for College after the close of registration, their parents or carers may receive a Penalty Notice fine of £50, which must be paid within 28 days. If payment is made after 28 days but within 42 days, the penalty is increased to £100. Failure to pay the fine may result in prosecution and an additional fine of up to £2500 or up to 3 months imprisonment.

If a **KS5 student** has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any 12 week period (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or a student persistently arrives late for College after the close of registration, their parents or carers will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal. The Principal, in consultation with the Attendance Officer and LA Access and Inclusion Officer for Attendance, may decide to permanently exclude the student.

## **HOLIDAYS TAKEN IN TERM TIME**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Head Teachers/Principals may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. This also applies to family holidays.

Under the new legislation the following absence requests will not meet the criteria for approval:

- Family holidays due to convenience (for example because of parental work commitments, holidays taken at cheaper times of the year etc.);
- Visiting relatives;
- Family Day Trips (to exhibitions, concerts etc.);
- Visiting family/friends who have different holidays.

The decision as to 'exceptional circumstance' is at the discretion the Principal but would include, for example, bereavement and legal matters.

## **AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Authorised absences which are allowed by law are:

- Illness;
- Religious observance.

## **UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES**

Unauthorised absences which are not permitted by law include:

- Caring for a sibling;
- Parent's illness;
- Birthday celebrations;
- Shopping.

## **ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

**All communication with parents/carers to be recorded on SIMS.**

### **FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE**

- If a telephone call has not been received by 8.30 to explain a student's absence the Attendance Officer will telephone and text the parent(s)/carer(s) and all other contact numbers.
- If the Attendance Officer is informed the student is ill she/he will attempt to ascertain from the parent/carer the likely duration of the illness.
- If contact is not made, the Attendance Officer will send an email and Letter 1.

## **SECOND DAY OF ABSENCE**

- The Attendance Officer will attempt contact again to all contact numbers and ask the student's friends if they know of any reason why he/she is not in College.
- A further email will be sent.

## **THIRD DAY OF ABSENCE**

- The Attendance Officer will discuss with the student's Form Tutor and send Letter 2.

## **FOURTH DAY OF ABSENCE**

- If the student has not returned to College and communication has not been established with the parent/carer, the Attendance Officer will discuss the absence with the Form Tutor and Assistant Principal (Pastoral) and undertake a home visit letter to be sent. He/she will contact the LA Access and Inclusion Officer for Attendance to discuss the case. Charlotte- please check this is right and amend if not

## **PERSISTENT ABSENTEES**

- The Attendance Officer will escalate the procedures outlined above for students with a record of persistent absence to ensure the safety of the student.

## **ATTENDANCE PANEL**

- A parent/carer will be invited to attend an Attendance Panel should their child's attendance fall below 85%. This will consist of the Attendance Officer, the Assistant Principal, other pastoral colleagues and the Form Tutor.
- Where there are significant concerns, the panel will also include the LA Access and Inclusion Officer for Attendance, external agencies and the College governor with Safeguarding responsibility if required.
- The minutes of the Attendance Panel will be formally recorded. A detailed action plan will be completed, signed by the LA Access and Inclusion Officer for Attendance, the UTC Attendance Officer, Student, Parent/Carer and Form Tutor. The action plan will be closely monitored by the Form Tutor and UTC Attendance Officer and if a student's attendance fails to improve over the course of a week, the LA Access and Inclusion Officer for Attendance will be notified.

## **A STUDENT'S RETURN TO COLLEGE**

- On a student's return to College, parents/carers must provide him/her with a signed letter, including a Dr's note to explain the absence.
- If an acceptable reason for the absence is provided and accepted by the College, the absence may be marked as authorised.
- The College is under no obligation to accept the reason for the absence if there is doubt as to its validity.

- Where appropriate, parents/carers regularly identifying poor health as a reason for their child's absence, will be asked to provide a medical certificate from their GP.

## **PUNCTUALITY PROCEDURES**

- Students should arrive at the UTC by 8.25 am ready for registration at 8.30 am. If a student is going to be late the parent/carer has a responsibility to inform the College by telephone of the student's expected time of arrival.
- All students who arrive late must report to Reception and sign the 'signing in' log, giving the time and reason for their late arrival.
- If a student arrives after 8.10 am or after 1.15 pm they will be marked as **U - Unauthorised Absence**
- Avoidable and persistent lateness will result in a detention.