

Attendance Policy 2024-25

1 Overview Information

Lead Responsible:	Directors of Studies
SLT Responsible:	Vice Principal
Effective Date:	September 2024
Annual Review Date:	July 2025
Original Filename:	Z:\Executive Support\VP\Policies\Attendance Policy\2024-25\Attendance Policy 2024-25.docx

1. Overview

Excellent attendance and punctuality are a key component of a students' ability to succeed and reach their full potential whilst studying with the college. Attendance drives attainment and our courses are designed so that students acquire knowledge, information, and experience in classroom, practical, workshop or work environments, therefore attending all lessons is vital.

Put simply, poor attendance and punctuality often lead to poor grades and significantly narrow the options available to our students once they have left college. Being on time and present are expectations at the workplace. The close monitoring and encouragement of attendance is therefore a priority for the College.

2. Policy Statement

Attendance refers to the scheduled time that students are expected to spend on College programmes. This includes all components of a study programme, including maths and English, vocational lectures, practical sessions, workshops, directed independent study, work/industry placements, tutorials/progress reviews, and volunteering as specified on timetables. Enrichment activities are recorded in ProMonitor separately from the main programme and will be monitored on a regular basis.

Full attendance at college is expected and is critical to students' success and achievement of their learning goals. Students are expected to agree to the College's Code of Conduct at the beginning of their programme, which includes full attendance as a baseline requirement.

Poor attendance can lead to missing learning and deadlines, resulting in falling behind with studies and can negatively affect one's enjoyment of learning, progression, and career prospects. The College will attempt as far as possible to ensure that students remain fully engaged and succeed on their programme.

The College acknowledges that many causes of absenteeism exist and will work with students and their parents/carers on an individual basis to address the needs of each student. Parents/Carers, as the responsible adults for children attending at the College, are expected to actively support this policy and as such will be informed of their child's attendance via the Course Manager and through discussions at Progress Meetings. Attendance concerns will be identified and addressed by teaching staff with the student and in some instances parents/carers of those students under the age of 18 or other particularly vulnerable students will be contacted.

The College celebrates good attendance and will reward students with various means, including certificates and awards.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all students undertaking a full or part time course, a professional short course, or an Apprenticeship, in Further or Higher Education.

4. Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- Attend all their timetabled lessons, unless prior agreement has been made with the teacher responsible for their group.
- Notify their absence to the college through My Portal or alternatively by calling the Attendance Line before lessons start on each day of their absence.

- Contact their course manager to discuss the possibility of an alternative study arrangement, if they expect prolonged absences. All conversations, agreements and targets are recorded and reviewed in ProMonitor and My Portal.
- Contact Student Services if they wish to discuss reasons for prolonged absenteeism, and where further support (including Attendance Monitors and Coaches) can be offered.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Know and keep a copy of their child's timetables.
- Encourage their child's full attendance at all lessons and monitor their attendance when concerned through the Course Manager.
- Notify the College using the Attendance Line on each day of absence of their child, at least 15 minutes before lessons start.

College Staff responsible for delivering a timetabled session are to:

- Record register marks in the first 15 minutes of a lesson, using the correct codes for absence, where applicable.
- Update Attendance comments on ProMonitor immediately when a student is absent.
- Where a student is aged 14 – 16, on roll at another school or provider, and absent from a timetabled session, college staff will notify the provider within 1 hour of the start of that session, to inform them that their learner is not at Capel Manor College and not in class.

College Staff responsible for a student group are to:

- Weekly monitoring attendance using ProMonitor Attendance Reports and act where a student's attendance falls below target.
- Record a comment on student's ProMonitor record in the Attendance Section when student is absent or expected to be absent.
- Notify other staff delivering timetabled sessions, if a learning activity (e.g. study trip) will affect students' attendance.

Team Leaders, Heads of Schools, and Directors are to:

- Ensure that timetables and associated registers for each component of the study programme are correct, including for work/industry placements.
- Plan educational activities in advance and ensure all relevant stakeholders are aware if they will affect the attendance of timetabled sessions.
- Monitor the overall attendance of each of their students and invoking the disciplinary process as necessary.

The Curriculum Quality Managers, Quality Practitioners, and the Vice Principal are to:

- Monitor the overall attendance of courses and Schools and support those responsible to address challenges.
- Report to the Academic Board and Governors on attendance-related matters and themes.

5. Registers and Registrations

The **register** is the method by which the College will record the attendance on all timetabled activities. The attendance information collected from these registers will have an impact upon the level of funding received by the College, the legal status of a student to remain in the country, the authorisation of student bursary payments, the authorisation of student loan payments, and may be used as evidence within a criminal investigation.

The **registration system** used by the College is REMS. This is the only system and method with which College employees are expected to record attendance. ProMonitor is the system that College employees are expected to use to comment on and monitor attendance.

Staff members timetabled for a register are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the class list on the register, informing MIS and their Line Manager of errors or omissions promptly. **All changes to registers must be passed on to the MIS Team as soon as they are known** and by use of the Helpdesk system.

It is essential that all staff members accurately and promptly record students' attendance and absence for each teaching session, whether on-site or off-site and ensure that the central systems are updated within the first 15 minutes of that session. If it is not possible for an electronic register to be accessed (e.g. field trip) the timetabled staff member must pass the completed register on to a named colleague, who will then complete the REMS register on their behalf. **All registers must be marked at the time of the time-tabled activity, on the system the College uses for registers.**

All timetabled activities must have a corresponding register and be marked accurately by a responsible member of staff. In the event of the session being covered by a staff member, other than the one normally assigned to it, **the covering staff member is responsible for finding and marking the electronic register on REMS.**

The following table details the approved register codes, their definition and how they are to be used:

Register Mark	Meaning	Description
/	Present	Student is in class on time for the full session
A	Authorised Absence	Absent from class due to approved reason (see Section 6)
U	Unauthorised Absence	Absent from class with no prior notification or approved reason given (see Section 6)
H	Sent Home	Absent from class and sent home after attending College at least one time-tabled activity that day (see below)
S	Sickness	Absent from College due to illness
L	Late to class	Attending a class or time-tabled activity <u>more than five minutes</u> after the scheduled start time
E	Work Experience	College organised work placement or work experience activity
M	Exam	Student is absent from class because they are attending an exam session. A separate register will be taken for the exam
X	Special Leave	Adult student is absent from class because they have had a request for Special Leave approved
P	Withdrawal	Student has left the course and is in the process of being withdrawn

6. Unauthorised and Authorised Absences

The following are examples of an **unauthorised** (U) absence:

- Holidays.
- Part- or full-time work, which is not part of the student's programme of study.
- Leisure activities.
- Birthdays or similar celebrations.
- Babysitting younger siblings.
- Shopping.
- Driving lessons.

The above is not an exhaustive list and staff members should use their discretion as appropriate. Where an absence genuinely could not be foreseen, the student will inform the College as soon as possible, on the day of absence.

Where a student has failed to notify the College within the day of absence, it will be considered as unauthorised. The only exception to this is where the student can later supply a valid reason.

All **authorised** (A) absences must be notified within a minimum of two days in advance to the College staff member responsible for their student group and all relevant teachers. Below is an exhaustive list of authorised absences:

- A medical appointment, which cannot be arranged outside College hours (the student is expected to attend those sessions that is practically possible to do so on the day of appointment).
- A need to look after a family member or another person, in an emergency, for whom the student has caring responsibilities.
- A visit to a university to attend an open day or an interview, or a professional career interview.
- An appointment with a Careers Adviser (although these should normally be scheduled to avoid disruption to studies).
- Participating in a significant extra-curricular activity, such as competition, related show or sport. Authorised absence should only be granted where the activity reflects a significant level of personal achievement (for example, taking part in a regional or national event) or for some other one-off event.
- Attendance at a probation meeting or court.
- Jury service.
- Attendance at a funeral of a close friend or family member.
- Recognised religious holiday.
- Driving tests.
- Study / exam leave including “reading weeks”.
- A College representatives’ meeting (e.g., Governors or Focus Group meetings).
- Transport problems including severe disruption where these were not known about in advance.

Any absences that do not appear on the list above will be not deemed as a legitimate authorised absence and thus will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to **send a student home** (H) who had previously attended at least one timetabled activity that day. The reasons for sending a student home in such circumstances will vary and often will include the student feeling unwell or because of disciplinary action.

However, on all such occasions where the student is under 18 or known to be particularly vulnerable, it is the responsibility of the member of staff completing the register to ensure that the student’s parents and/or guardians have been contacted and have agreed that the learner can either travel home independently or will be picked up from College, within a reasonable time frame.

7. Monitoring

The School Management Team (Team Leaders, Curriculum Leaders, Heads of School, and Director of Studies) will monitor the operation of this policy by reviewing regular reports on student attendance from ProMonitor.

The Curriculum Quality Team will monitor and review attendance through Quality Performance Reviews, with each team and on a regular basis.

The Senior Leadership Team will review attendance data from relevant reports.

Staff members will follow up instances of unauthorised absences using the Attendance/Punctuality ProMonitor comments. This must be further followed up with action plans and attempts to contact the student, and their parents/guardians/carers for underage or vulnerable students, if absence persists without notification. **Every staff member on a course is responsible for following up with individual student attendance, and will be led by the staff member responsible for the student group, towards course-level actions for maintaining or improving attendance.**

Intervention is triggered immediately under any of the following conditions, and is overseen by the teacher responsible for the group:

- A student receives three comments under Attendance / Punctuality linked to unauthorised absence or lateness. In the fourth instance, a Cause for Concern is recorded.
- In the first instance of unauthorised absence for Maths or English, a Cause for Concern is recorded.
- Actual attendance, as reported on ProMonitor, falls below 90%.

Intervention includes:

- An initial intervention meeting within a week of any of the above triggers. The discussion and actions resulting from the meeting must be recorded in the relevant meeting section on ProMonitor.
- A follow-up, review meeting two weeks after the initial intervention meeting.
- The parent / carer / guardian for 16 to 18 or vulnerable students must be invited to any attendance intervention meetings.
- If attendance targets are not achieved within the two-review period, then further action takes place as a Stage 1 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.
- Further review meetings must take place every two weeks after Stage 1 is invoked and until attendance targets are met.
- As soon as attendance targets have been met, a compliment should be recorded and an attendance improvement certificate sent home.

The Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy **will further be invoked** for persistent poor attendance and/or poor punctuality.

If a student has had **four consecutive weeks of unauthorised non-attendance**, they will be withdrawn from the College, in line with funding regulations. Management Information Systems will provide the 4 Week Absence Report for Managers to review and confirm.

Where a student has applied for an Advanced Learning Loan to cover the cost of their course, their attendance will be reported to external agencies, normally by the Management Information/Admissions department as stipulated in the terms and conditions of the loan.

The College will set a minimum target for student attendance each year and will advise both students and parents/carers, if their attendance falls below this level. Currently, **targets are:**

From	Label	To
100%	Green	90%
89.9%	Amber	85%
84.9%	Red	-

Teaching staff members, Student Services, Careers and Employability Advisors, and any other relevant external agencies will work with parents/carers to ensure that students are fully supported and encouraged to attend all timetabled lessons and scheduled work placements.

The College will actively promote excellent attendance and seek ways to reward students who have achieved 100% attendance through its Attendance Rewards Programme (Appendix I).

Appendix I

Rewarding Students for Good Attendance

Attendance should be celebrated termly, as well as at the end of a course.

Students that have 100% attendance

Students close to 100% (95% at lowest) but not exactly at that level, can be put forward by their teachers for the 100 Club, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be approved by the Director of the Department in which they belong.

Students who have greatly improved their attendance

Attendance will be refreshed every term. There will be 3 tiers for termly attendance:

1. GOLD - 95+% Attendance
2. SILVER - 95% > Attendance ≥ 90%
3. BRONZE - 90% > Attendance ≥ 85%

How do we celebrate attendance?

Termly Capel Pizza of Attendance for those students that have achieved GOLD improvement. This will include a mini-party at lunchtime, with pizza delivery, soft drinks, music, etc. GOLD students will also receive a certificate and letter from Vice Principal sent home. SILVER students will receive certificate and letter from Vice Principal sent home. BRONZE students will receive a certificate.

The 100 Club

Students belonging to the 100 Club will receive a pin badge and one paid (entry and transport) day out to Thorpe Park or Kew Gardens at the end of the year.

Staff promoting high class attendance

Each Department should celebrate high class attendance on a termly basis and the teachers who have promoted it. These teachers will receive a Shine Award, letter of recognition from the Director or the Vice Principal sent by post to their home address and will be interviewed and featured in the Staff News Bulletin.