



## Student Attendance Policy

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Attendance Policy of London Churchill College is intended to assist the College in enabling students to achieve their learning potential and simultaneously comply with regulatory requirements;
- 1.2. This procedure sets out the requirements in relation to student attendance and progression;
- 1.3. Students are expected to take responsibility for own learning which includes attending classes regularly, punctually and making a commitment to undertake coursework, assignments and assessments to an agreed timescale and standard.
- 1.4. The policy is based on the Student Loans Company (SLC) Guidance published in June 2019-20: <https://www.heinfo.slc.co.uk/media/5935/attendance-confirmations-quick-guide.pdf> and <https://www.heinfo.slc.co.uk/media/9734/att-mgt-service-definition-v40.pdf>

## **2. Equality Statement**

- 2.1. The Attendance Policy encompasses the College's commitment to providing equal opportunities to ensure its students are treated equally regardless of gender reassignment, race, religion or belief; disability; age; marriage and civil partnerships; pregnancy and maternity; sexual orientation; gender.

## **3. Student Attendance and Procedure**

### **3.1. Student Attendance**

- 3.1.1. Good attendance and punctuality are key factors in progress, attainment, successful outcomes and employability. The College expects students to attend their timetabled classes, to be punctual and to make good progress in coursework and assessment;
- 3.1.2. Student punctuality will be recorded on registers and this information may be used when asked to provide references. Persistent late-coming and/or leaving early, for no legitimate reason, will be dealt with under the College's processes defined in this policy;
- 3.1.3. Some students, due to their disability or wider personal circumstances, may have lateness and/or leaving early approved as a reasonable adjustment on a case-by-case basis. This includes students who are carers. If students require an adjustment, they should raise the matter with their Personal Tutor (PT). An Individual Assessment and Learning Plan (IALP) will be devised and regularly reviewed as part of a learning agreement, should the arrangement be more than short-term.

### **3.2. Recording procedure**

- 3.2.1. Tutors will capture attendance in the class via the LCC Online Student Management System. All tutors are advised to complete the attendance record procedure within the lecture period. To maintain the integrity of the attendance record, alteration access of any attendance entry is limited to the same day the class take place, for all tutors. In case of attendance record



disputes or any required rectification, tutors are required to inform relevant colleague in the Monitoring & IT Departments.

### **3.3. Recording Presence**

- 3.3.1. Present (Recorded on Register as mark 'P');
- 3.3.2. Students must be punctual for all lectures. Students will be marked as present if they are up to 15 minutes late. Students who arrive between 15 and 30 minutes late will be marked as Late (Recorded on register as mark 'L'). Students who are over 30 minutes late may be refused admission to that session at the tutors' discretion and their attendance will be recorded as absent;
- 3.3.3. The College will not tolerate proxy attendance on behalf of fellow students. If any proxy attempt is identified, both students may be subjected to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or termination from the College;
- 3.3.4. If a student is persistently late, the College may subject him/her to a penalty which is equivalent to 1 absence for 8 late attendances recorded;
- 3.3.5. It is the responsibility of the students to adhere to any changes in the attendance policy. They will be notified if any changes are made.

### **3.4. Absence**

- 3.4.1. Absent (Recorded on Register as mark 'A');
- 3.4.2. The College recognises that students' personal circumstances may impact on their attendance, punctuality, progress and achievement. The student may become unwell or have difficulties in attending due to wider circumstances;
- 3.4.3. The student, where possible, should engage with the College during periods of absence by maintaining regular contact with relevant staff. Where this is not possible, a representative (e.g. family member) may keep the College advised on the progress of the absence;
- 3.4.4. Described below is how the College records absence, absence types, the responsibilities of students and staff and intervention measures.

### **3.5. Recording Absences**

- 3.5.1. Students will be marked absent if they do not attend a timetabled class and there is no agreed appropriate alternative register mark. This shall be the default mark for non-attendance and considered by the College to be an unauthorised absence;
- 3.5.2. Academic administration maintains a Poor Attendance Enquiry Form and uses this as a resource for the Student Attendance and Retention Action Plan to mitigate impact of non-attendance on Key Performance Metrics.

### **3.6. Action for Non-Attendance**

- 3.6.1. College monitors the contact periods attended by the student as well as the cumulative percentage of attendance for a term. Students will be monitored each term separately for their attendance; i.e. - attendance rate is not carried forward to the next term. The warning notifications could be sent in the form of a letter, email or text message or a combination;



- 3.6.2. **Notification of Non-Registration Letter** will be issued after a student has missed the first two weeks of classes/sessions of an academic term. Such letter will notify the students that registration/enrolment will be cancelled; (applies to new starters);
- 3.6.3. **First Warning Letter** will be issued at the midpoint to those students whose unauthorised absence rate is more than 50%. Such letter may:
- Remind the student that classes have been missed;
  - Remind the student of the importance of attending all classes;
  - Request an explanation as to why classes have been missed;
  - Invite the student to contact the College;
  - Ask the student to contact the College as soon as possible to discuss absences.
- 3.6.4. **Final Warning Letter** will be sent to students who have already received the first warning letter and who failed to provide adequate an explanation/information with documentary evidence. Such letter may:
- Remind the student that classes have been missed;
  - Invite the student to meet with one of the members of the attendance management team or any other authorised person to discuss any problems they might be experiencing that could be the cause of their poor attendance unless they contact the above individuals within 10 working days from this letter.
- 3.6.5. **Notification of Suspension Letter** is to be issued to any student who has received the final warning letter and failed to meet one of the members of the attendance management team or any other authorised person. If no response is received from the student, the subsequent action should follow the guidelines set in the Suspension of Studies Policy.
- 3.6.6. **Withdrawal Letter** is to be issued to any student who has received the suspension decision and failed to meet the conditions of return to study, he/she will be withdrawn from their programme of study in accordance with the guidelines set in the Withdrawal of Studies Policy. The withdrawal decision will be taken by the College Assessment and Progression Board.

### **3.7. Authorised Absence**

- 3.7.1. Authorised Absent (Recorded on Register as attendance mark 'E')
- 3.7.2. Authorised-absence is a short-term absence agreed between the student and a member of curriculum staff on the basis it is:
- a reasonable request;
  - will not adversely affect progress;
  - is usually no more than one teaching week (or the equivalent) in any given instance;
  - the frequency of such requests by the student is not deemed by the College to be excessive.
- 3.7.3. Examples of authorised absences include, but not limited to:
- Bereavement;
  - Caring responsibilities;
  - Community Service;
  - Funeral;
  - House removal;



- f) Ill health, or ill health of child or dependent;
- g) Jury duty;
- h) Medical or dental appointments for self, or a child or adult who is dependent on the student;
- i) Religious Holidays (but not other holidays);
- j) To attend an appointment where scope is limited for the student to this schedule outside timetabled classes (e.g. children's hearing, court, driving test, interview, social work, Students' Meeting / events);
- k) Other appropriate reason as agreed by the curriculum staff member.

### **3.8. Medical Absence**

- 3.8.1. Recorded on Register as attendance mark 'M'
- 3.8.2. Short-term and long-term medical absence shall require appropriate medical certificates and must include the student's full name and address;
- 3.8.3. A short-term medical absence shall be no more than two consecutive teaching weeks. Each instance must be covered by a medical certificate and be sent it to attendance officer.
- 3.8.4. Processing shall be completed by the College within ten working days from the date of submission. The attendance mark for the covered dates will be updated to show the value 'M' on the attendance register(s);
- 3.8.5. A medical absence greater than two consecutive teaching weeks will be considered as a long-term medical absence. This will become a managed absence with the requirement for regular dialogue (see section below).;
- 3.8.6. The student is responsible for ensuring medical certificates are submitted to cover the date range of the absence;
- 3.8.7. Handwritten amendments or annotations on documentation cannot be accepted.

### **3.9. Management of Long-term Absence**

- 3.9.1. If an absence exceeds two consecutive teaching weeks, it will become a long-term absence. This section applies to ALL forms of long-term absence, including long-term medical absence.
- 3.9.2. It is the responsibility of the student (or representative) to engage with the College and to keep the College informed of the progress of the absence and, as appropriate, to complete and submit agreed work on time.
- 3.9.3. It is the responsibility of the College to continuously review the absence, set work where appropriate and maintain effective communication throughout the absence.
- 3.9.4. The College shall keep the student advised of the work currently being undertaken, facilitate support via the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), as well as any other appropriate means. The extent to which this is practical will depend upon the type of learning required. These supportive measures are likely to be less effective when the learning is experiential (i.e. skill acquisition) or where group work plays a significant contributory factor.
- 3.9.5. The College should also consider the effect of the absence on progress and achievement. Although not prescriptive, the following are likely to be the characteristics and consequences associated with sustained periods of absence:



- a) Missed learning opportunities;
- b) Missed experiential learning, including placement activities;
- c) Missed opportunities to undertake group work, project work and networking opportunities;
- d) Missed assessments, including remediation.

3.9.6. The College would hope to support students through their absence, however, as time progresses, it may become necessary to consider withdrawal from the course. This is most likely to occur when progress cannot be sustained or is not being sustained.

### 3.10. Interventions for Absences

- 3.10.1. The College undertakes daily intervention for those students who are absent from their scheduled classes. A dedicated team communicates with absentees daily to record the reason(s) for absence and provides any necessary support to update them on learning and teaching;
- 3.10.2. If an absence is less than three consecutive teaching weeks and the student has returned to College, an attainment action plan will be developed and agreed, noting how and when any outstanding work [including assessments] will be achieved and review dates agreed;
- 3.10.3. If an absence is three consecutive teaching weeks or more, where appropriate, the College will issue the student a Final Warning Letter and the student will be invited for an Intervention Meeting with the Registrar or nominated deputy. The purpose of the meeting is to review the absence, current progress and how best to support a return. The student will be advised that an advocate can accompany him/her to the meeting.
- 3.10.4. The outcomes of the Intervention Meeting will be either Option 1 or Option 2:
- a) **Option 1:** An attainment action plan is agreed, noting how and when any outstanding work [including assessments] will be achieved, review dates are agreed and the student returns to the College on an agreed date;
  - b) **Option 2:** If a student does not agree the attainment action plan, the Assessment and Progression Board will make a final decision on attainment and progression.

### 3.11. Important Actions for Intervention

- 3.11.1. The notification of the meeting should be sent by both email and letter;
- 3.11.2. The correspondence should clearly reflect the reason for the meeting;
- 3.11.3. The opportunity to be accompanied should be made clear;
- 3.11.4. After the meeting, the outcomes should be confirmed by letter;
- 3.11.5. The letter, in the cases of withdrawal, should be signed by the Registrar and sent to the student's home address within 10 working days. The letter shall include the effective date of withdrawal, which shall be the last date of attendance (including certificated medical absence) and result for completed units should be input as soon as possible;
- 3.11.6. Notes of the discussion for options should be taken and retained in line with GDPR.



### **3.12. Holidays During College Term-Time**

- 3.12.1. The Student Loans Company (SLC) Guidance stipulates that the Student Funding department cannot make payments to students for holidays during term time. The exceptions are as follows:
- a) Religious holidays should be recorded by the College as an Authorised Absence.
  - b) Campus or College closure or significant disruption resulting from an event such as adverse weather or industrial action shall be centrally recorded on all affected attendance registers as 'H' by the Programme Manager or nominee;
  - c) Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave
- 3.12.2. While the College wishes to support those students requiring maternity, paternity or adoption leave, it cannot offer the same conditions as it offers to its staff. There is no statutory entitlement for students to receive payment for maternity leave, and long periods of absence are linked to lack of curriculum progress. If a student is likely to be absent for a period of any longer than 3 weeks, a student progress meeting must take place (see Section above). Additional guidance is available in the student portal;
- 3.12.3. Unacceptable levels of attendance will be managed through the College's Students' Behaviour process.

### **3.13. Repeat Unit Attendance**

- 3.13.1. Students who attend repeat units must study the complete unit. For a repeat unit attendance, the standard attendance procedure must be followed.

### **3.14. Parents and External Services**

- 3.14.1. The College will develop, agree and maintain an Individual Assessment and Learning Plan (IALP) through discussion with the student and their 'Named Contact'. This will take into consideration the student's wider personal circumstances, any reasonable adjustments, support requirements and other relevant factors to best ensure positive learning experiences, improve life-chances, sustained progress, successful outcomes and progression. The requirements and responsibilities of the student will also be captured within the plan. The plan will be reviewed at regular intervals in partnership with the student.

## **4. Student Progress**

### **4.1. Consideration for Progression and Engagement**

- 4.1.1. Curriculum teams will continuously monitor student progress and achievement. Students can expect to be given regular feedback. Students may also monitor their attendance and achievement using the student portal;
- 4.1.2. Action should be taken by the Academic Department, at the earliest opportunity, where it becomes clear that a student is not progressing satisfactorily or not fully engaging with their studies. A meeting should take place between the student and the curriculum team to establish reasons. If the student is being supported by the College support services, the



Programme Leader (or nominee) should ask a representative from the service to attend the meeting. An attainment action plan should be drawn up which will detail any support requirements and responsibilities. This plan should be reviewed at regular intervals and action taken as appropriate;

- 4.1.3. Where it is clear that the student is not making every effort to achieve, the matter should be dealt with under the College's processes defined in this policy. This includes attending but not progressing in studies;
- 4.1.4. Academic staff should ensure that they have made suitable, reasonable adjustments to enable continuation of learning for the student. The team should consider:
  - a) How accessible are learning resources and other materials to support continued participation;
  - b) The appropriateness of communication methods, for example, via social media platforms;
  - c) Whether all reasonable adjustments have been made to ensure the student has the opportunity to continue engaging in learning;
- 4.1.5. Academic Teams should consider whether students have:
  - a) Kept up to date with learning by obtaining lecture notes, online resources or other learning materials from the College staff;
  - b) Demonstrated that they have engaged in independent study to keep up to date with their learning;
  - c) Handed in assignments or classwork;
  - d) Continued to meet their learning objectives;
  - e) Engaged with the College in any other way which demonstrates that they are continuing to participate in their studies.

## **5. Student Funding**

- 5.1. Timely input and updating of attendance marks is critical in ensuring that students receive payment of funds on the expected date.

### **5.2. Student Payments**

- 5.2.1. The IT and Monitoring Department will use system generated reports on register attendance data to make payments to students in arrears;

### **5.3. Register Attendance Marks, Use and Impact on Funding**

- 5.3.1. A = Absent - Student funding will be withheld;
- 5.3.2. P = Present – used to record the student as in attendance, Student course fee loan will be released;
- 5.3.3. L = Present but Arrived Late – used to record that the student arrived after the start time, No impact;
- 5.3.4. LE = Present but Left Early – used to record that the student left before the end time, No impact;
- 5.3.5. E = Authorised Absence - No impact if the mark is entered legitimately at the time of recording;
- 5.3.6. M = Absence for Medical reasons - No impact if the mark is entered legitimately at the time of recording;





- 5.3.7. H = Exceptional Event that closes a campus or limits normal College activity (e.g. adverse weather, industrial action) or class cancelled for unforeseen circumstance. No impact.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

6.1. Name of policy/procedure/decision: Student Attendance Policy & Procedure

6.2. This section sets out the requirements in relation to student attendance, progress, impact from an equality perspective and protected characteristics by posing the following questions and issues:

### **6.2. Equality 'Neutral'**

6.2.1. The following issues will be addressed:

- a) Who will benefit from this (students/staff/stakeholders)?
- b) Is there likely to be a positive impact on people who share protected characteristics, and if so, how?
- c) Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality "neutral"? [i.e., will not have a differential impact on any equality group/s]

### **6.3. Good Attendance**

6.3.1. Good attendance is a highly relevant factor in student attainment. The College recognises that there will be instances where 100% attendance is not possible, and this section should benefit all staff and students in understanding the processes which should be followed.

### **6.4. Protected Characteristics**

6.4.1. Is there likely to be an adverse impact on people who share protected characteristics? If so, who may be affected and why? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality "neutral"?

6.4.2. It is not likely that this EIA will have a negative impact on people who share protected characteristics. The reason for this is that the EIA anticipates that personal circumstances may affect attendance and makes reasonable allowances for this. For example, students may self-certify for religious holidays, medical appointments, antenatal appointments and caring responsibilities. This should reduce the potential for negative impact on people as a result of their religion or belief, disability, and/or pregnancy and maternity;

6.4.3. Gender is also relevant in terms of self-certification, as it is known that more female students than male students are primarily responsible for childcare.

### **6.5. Students with Disability**

6.5.1. References are made throughout the EIA to ensure that accommodation is made for students with disability. For example, lateness may be approved as a reasonable adjustment on a case-by-case basis. Similarly, the Academic Department should make reasonable adjustments for students whose attendance has been affected by his or her disability to accommodate their attendance.



## **6.6. Monitoring EIA**

- 6.6.1. Registrar will report annually to PEG on actions taken to ensure that the impact of this procedure is monitored;
- 6.6.2. Any complaints about the implementation of this process will be monitored as a minimum every time a complaint is received. We also monitor student retention and achievement rates three times per academic year (on a termly basis) with reference to protected characteristics and take action to address potential equality issues.

**End**