

**ST PATRICK'S**



**St Patrick's College**

# Student Attendance Policy and Procedures

## 2017 - 2018

Version: 7.7

**Approved by the Academic Board, October 2016**

Publication Date: 24/10/2016

Last Amendment: 25/09/2017

---

### **Quality Assurance Mapping**

The following policy and procedures have has been aligned to the following legislation and/or external quality assurance frameworks:

**i. QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (*Examples*)**

- Chapter B2 - Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education;
- Chapter B4 - Enabling student development and achievement

**ii. The Data Protection Act (1998)**

With reference to *'Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers'* published by HM Government, March 2015

## 1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1. The Student Attendance Policy has been developed as part of the College's commitment to provide a supportive learning environment that enables all students studying at the College to achieve their full potential. The policy aligns with Expectations set out in Part B of the UK Quality Code and applies to all students.
- 1.2. The College recognises the investment that students and their sponsors make when enrolling on a programme and believes that, as a responsible institution there is a duty to monitor attendance and to act on non-attendance, so that students can be supported to complete their programmes of study.
- 1.3. In cases where awarding bodies have specific attendance regulations and procedures, requirements are published separately in the appropriate programme handbook.
- 1.4. Additionally, regulatory bodies, such as Student Finance England, may have additional requirements; in such cases, students are responsible for obtaining current information from the Student Services Team.

## 2. Principles

- 2.1. Attendance is a key component of student retention, progression, achievement and employability. Regular attendance and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who actively participate in their learning by attending classes regularly are more likely to:
  - i.* enjoy a rewarding experience in which their knowledge, skills and abilities are developed,
  - ii.* successfully complete their programmes,
  - iii.* achieve better results
- 2.2. The College expects students to attend all formal taught sessions, however it is understood there may be occasions when a student's attendance may be affected by mitigating circumstances. Where students have a valid reason for missing taught sessions, it is their responsibility to inform the college and provide any supporting evidence that may be required.
- 2.3. Students who are unable to attend classes for any reason should message their administration via MyPage, stating the name of the unit and the time of the session that they will be missing, along with an explanation as to why they are unable to attend and upload any evidence that supports the claims made.
- 2.4. If MyPage is not working, then students are expected to email [studentsupport@st-patricks.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@st-patricks.ac.uk) stating their names, student ID numbers and attaching evidence, or to

## Student Attendance Policy and Procedures 2017-2018: Version 7.7

deliver evidence personally to staff members in Student Services. Students may then be contacted by staff members to discuss matters further.

- 2.5. Provided that students follow the relevant procedure, formal interruption of study may be authorised by the Attendance Monitoring Team upon receipt of valid evidence; authorised absences will not count against the student's calculated percentage attendance.
- 2.6. The College will monitor student attendance and any uploaded excuses on a daily basis; where a student's attendance falls below 50% in any term without valid reasons known to the College, an attempt will be made to contact the student to discuss their situation. In such instances the student and their reasons for absence will be referred to the Admissions and Attendance Panel (AAP) who will specify appropriate action; this may be:
  - Implementation of additional support or coaching for committed students struggling with their attendance,
  - The setting of conditions for continuance and the date(s) these must be met,
  - Withdrawal of access to funding,
  - Suspension or deferral of studies.
- 2.7. Where the AAP has to remove a student on the basis of unexcused non-attendance, the College will duly inform regulators and funders and students may be liable to repay a proportion of the funding they have received; normally this will be from the last recorded day of attendance.
- 2.8. The College expects that legitimate excuses will be exceptional and reserves the right to apply sanctions, such as suspension, should any student have been found, on investigation, to be abusing the system, for example, by claiming legitimate reasons for absence when none exists.
- 2.9. Students are also expected to arrive on time for classes and remain for the duration of the teaching session. Late arrivals and early departures from teaching sessions are disruptive, discourteous, unprofessional and unfair to other class members and lecturers.
  - i.* Students who arrive up to 30 minutes late for a session may enter the classroom and will be counted as attending the session, so long as they have a valid reason for lateness which can be evidenced;
  - ii.* Students who arrive for lessons up to 30 minutes late with no excuse, or more than 30 minutes late will not be recorded as attending the session;
  - iii.* Persistent latecomers or early leavers, even if entering or leaving within the first 30 minutes of a lesson, will be warned. If such behaviour continues, then the Lecturer must notify the Registrar and Director of Student Services, who will investigate matters further and will take appropriate measures, including referral to the AAP if necessary.

### **3. Procedures for Monitoring Attendance**

- 3.1. Every Monday of the teaching term, members of the Attendance Monitoring Team will produce attendance reports of the previous week. The Team will send emails requesting reasons for non-attendance to all students who have attendance below 50%. If Students have been absent from a class continuously for two weeks, then phone calls will be made to individuals and the student may be referred to the Attendance and Admissions Panel.
- 3.2. The Registrar and Director of Student Services will issue a suspension letter to students who have attendance records of 0-29% in a single term. Students will have five working days to respond to the Registrar. Thereafter, the names of Individual students who have failed to meet the deadline will be referred to the Admissions and Attendance Panel, where final decisions will be taken. Students who are withdrawn from the programme, will be de-registered from the College and lose access to SLC funding.

### **4. Responsibilities**

#### **4.1. Students are responsible for:**

- i.* Fully attending all learning and teaching sessions associated with the programme of study.
- ii.* Notifying their lecturers /supervisors in advance (in person, by phone or by email) when they have to be absent from timetabled classes.
- iii.* Obtaining prior permission (in person or by email) from their Programme Manager or the Head of School for planned absences lasting two days or more during term time and providing details to a member of the Student Services Team after permission has been obtained.
- iv.* Notifying the College on MyPage in respect of unplanned or unforeseen absences from classes within 24 hours and providing a medical certificate or other supporting evidence to explain the absence. Where in doubt, a student can contact [studentsupport@st-patricks.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@st-patricks.ac.uk) to confirm what evidence they need to provide.
- v.* Arranging to meet with the Class lecturer, Unit Leader, the Programme Manager and/or the Head of School to discuss and agree arrangements for undertaking any work missed during the period of absence.

#### **4.2. Academic staff are responsible for:**

- i.* Impressing upon students of the importance of regular attendance at learning and teaching sessions.
- ii.* Ensuring that the attendance and punctuality is registered properly during taught sessions.

## Student Attendance Policy and Procedures 2017-2018: Version 7.7

- iii.* Undertaking regular reviews of student attendance in respect of progression on academic programmes, particularly in Unit Assessment Boards and Boards of Examiners.

### 4.3. **Student Services Staff are responsible for:**

- i.* Advising students of the College Attendance Policy during Induction.
- ii.* Liaising with lecturers to record student attendance in accordance with the College's procedures.
- iii.* Informing academic staff members of issues raised and actions to be taken about individual students in respect of attendance and punctuality.
- iv.* Monitoring and reporting on students' attendance and punctuality records and contacting students in respect of authorised absences, with the help of teaching staff.
- v.* Referring unresolved issues concerning attendance and punctuality to the appropriate Head of School and the AAP.
- vi.* Ensuring that paperwork regarding student attendance is up-to-date.
- vii.* Informing students at the earliest opportunity of alternative arrangements for class sessions when lecturers are absent.
- viii.* Directing students identified to be 'at risk' towards the support services available within the School or the College.
- ix.* Referring students directly to the Registrar and Director of Student Services for confidential discussions concerning attendance issues.

### 4.4. **The College's Senior Management Team is responsible for:**

- i.* Overseeing the implementation of the Attendance Policy and Procedures across the College and regularly monitoring its effectiveness.
- ii.* Ensuring that students and staff members are informed of attendance requirements at their induction and formally advised of updates thereafter.
- iii.* Developing appropriate systems at School and College level for students to notify the designated Programme Manager/Module Leader of planned absences and to report unexpected absences to the Academic Administration office.
- iv.* Setting and monitoring annual targets for attendance rates across all College provision.

## 5. The Admissions and Attendance Panel (AAP)

- 5.1. The College's Admissions and Attendance Panel is responsible for reviewing and specifying appropriate actions in all instances where a student's attendance has fallen below 50%. It is the means by which the College will ensure that all decisions potentially affecting a student's continuance on a programme are made fairly, impartially and with reference to genuine evidence about the student's personal circumstances. It is also responsible for ensuring that student statuses are accurately reflected on the various database, both internal and external, to which they are registered.
- 5.2. All final decisions made in relation to a student's low attendance, including withdrawal from studies and/or their access to funding must be reviewed and ratified by the AAP. The panel will take into consideration the following factors when determining actions:
- Overall level of attendance to date,
  - Achievement on the programme to date (including whether applicants are capable of completion in the given time),
  - Mitigating circumstances justifying low and non-attendance,
  - Any other relevant information relating to individual cases.

*Further information on the remit and functions of the AAP can be found in its terms of reference.*

## 6. Data Protection

- 6.1. College staff dealing with attendance matters will may often be in receipt of potentially sensitive information regarding students' or applicants' personal or medical circumstances in order to excuse non-attendance. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence as per the guidelines set out in the College's *Data Protection Policy*. Such information will be kept securely in the College's archives for up to 1 year following the departure of the student from the College, after which it will be securely erased from the system.
- 6.2. Student's personal information provided to the College is not under any circumstances shared with an external party without the expressed written consent of the student except where the College is required to fulfil a public function or protect vital interests of the information subject<sup>1</sup>. See the College's *Safeguarding Policy* for more information about the information sharing processes adopted by the College.

## 7. Review

- 7.1. These terms of reference will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team; any substantial revision or amendments to it will be reviewed and ratified by the College's Academic Board following review by a designated Policy Working Group.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' published by HM Government, March 2015*

# Student Attendance Policy and Procedures 2017-2018: Version 7.7

## Document Information

Document owner(s)*:	<b>E. Hardy; Registrar and Director of Student Services</b>
Date of next review:	<b>September 2018</b>
Document Status:	<b>IN USE</b>
Dissemination:	<b>To be made available on SPC public website, abbreviated guidance will also be found in the College's Student Handbook and S.T.A.M.P.</b>

*\*The document owner is responsible for maintaining and updating the content of this document and ensuring that it reflects current practice at the College.*

## Version History

<b>Version</b>	<b>1 to 5; 2013 – 14</b>
Original author(s):	Dr Tommie Anderson-Jaquest Dean, Quality & Standards and PMAC (SMT) members in 2014 <i>Until 2013, policies and procedures were implemented within individual Schools. In 2014, the decision was taken to introduce a College-wide policy founded on main principles and to update, clarify and standardise procedures for staff and students across all Schools and Departments.</i>
<b>Version</b>	<b>6 (6.1 to 6.2); 2015 – 16</b>
Revised by:	Dr Tommie Anderson-Jaquest Dean, Quality & Standards and PMAC (SMT) members in 2014
Revision summary:	<i>Incorporated procedural updates provided by Head of the Academic Administration Department and deleted internal operational details – in particular, the red light green light system.</i>
Approved by:	<b>Academic Board</b> <b>2015</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>7 (7.1 to 7.5) ;2016 – 17</b>
Revised by:	Dr Tommie Anderson-Jaquest Dean, Quality & Standards
Revision summary:	<i>Version 7.0 – 7.4 Reflect the views of Academic Board and SMT in 2016 that Attendance Policies and Procedures must be strengthened in order to improve the quality of the College's data on retention, progression and completion. Changes made in the V 7 series include: (1) Students given more responsibilities for recording and monitoring their absences via MyPage; (2) Responsibilities re-allocated to the Student Services Department. (3) Policy content strengthened, and requirements clarified.</i>
Approved by:	<b>Academic Board</b> <b>Senior Management Team</b> <b>2016</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>7.6; 2017 – 18</b>
Revised by:	N. Cardy; PM Internal Audit and Processes Dept.
Revision summary:	<i>Reformed and incorporated document control table. Alignment with revised Admissions and Attendance Panel ToR Updated all sections with addition of sections 5, 6 and 7</i>
Approved by:	N/A N/A

## Student Attendance Policy and Procedures 2017-2018: Version 7.7

---

<b>Version</b>	<b>7.7 ; 2017 – 18</b>
Revised by:	Klaas van Mierlo: Chief Operating Office
Revision summary:	Additional content to existing sections. Changes reviewed by Registrar and Dir. Student Services
Approved by:	<b>Academic Board</b> <b>25/09/2017</b>

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---

<b>Version</b>	
Revised by:	Name; Title
Revision summary:	
Approved by:	DD/MM/YYYY

---