

Student Engagement Policy 2021/22 – Further Education

1. Policy Statement

To have the best chance of achieving their full potential, regular and consistent attendance is critical for students, as this is a key foundation for their success and achievement of their course learning aims.

Attendance refers to the scheduled time spent on UCA's Further Education programmes, including English and Maths, and this can be categorised as lectures, workshops, studio work, tutorials or any other activities as specified in the student's course handbook and/or learning agreement.

UCA sets high standards for students in terms of attendance, expecting punctuality and 100% attendance, individually monitored throughout the student's study programme/s.

It is accepted that occasionally there may be a legitimate reason for approved absence/lateness/requirement to leave early; however less than 90% attendance or frequent lateness/requirement to leave early will result in students needing to meet with their Programme Director to address this.

Lateness/punctuality is deemed as more than 10 minutes late according to the agreed start time.

Authorised absences will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances. UCA expects all students to notify the University of any absence by contacting their Campus Registry. Students are expected to notify the reason for their absence and where possible in advance.

Examples of authorised absences would be:

- A hospital appointment which cannot be arranged outside course hours.
- A visit to a University, either to attend an Open Day or interview.
- Work experience.
- A funeral of a close relative (immediate family).
- Severe problems with transport i.e. severe weather conditions or public transport strike or if the campus is closed.

Sickness should also be notified to Campus Registry. If students are sick for more than five days, they will need to supply a fit note (or Statement of Fitness) from their GP or hospital doctor.

Any student who has missed more than 4 weeks attendance without any prior notification to UCA may be considered to have withdrawn and will be removed from their programme of study.

Every student will be made aware of the FE Student Engagement Policy and Student FAQs as part of their induction programme.

2. Responsibilities

All students are expected to attend all of their timetabled sessions, unless prior agreement has been made and agreed with the Group Tutor/Pathway Leader. Programme Directors are responsible for the timely response to student attendance issues, and the reporting of such issues to the Head of School, where appropriate.

Parents / Guardians / Carers are expected to be fully supportive of the FE Student Engagement Policy.

All staff are responsible for creating a culture and belief of high attendance and punctuality and achieving FE School targets.

ROLE OF THE GROUP TUTOR/PATHWAY LEADER

The Group Tutor/Pathway Leader has ultimate responsibility for all attendance records. However, all academic staff have a responsibility to ensure that all records are accurate at the time of registration.

Advise students to ensure any non-attendance is explained or accounted for either by submission of the relevant form or in email, in person or by phone to ensure correct entry on register. The implications of unauthorised absence should be explained to the student upon contact.

ROLE OF THE PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

The Programme Director is responsible for ensuring all registers are fully completed.

Programme Directors will discuss attendance rates below 90% or frequent lateness/requirement to leave early with Group/Pathway Leader and agree actions.

For those students under 18 this may include sending correspondence to the parent/guardian or carer.

ROLE OF THE COURSE ADMINISTRATOR

The Course Administrator will be responsible for the provision of timely, accessible and accurate data.

3. Non-attendance stages

Stage 1 – Automatic email – Group/Pathway Leader:

An automated email will be sent to those students who are absent or frequently late/leave early without prior authorisation. A verbal warning may be given, and this must be recorded.

Stage 2.1 – LETTER 1 – Group/Pathway Leader:

LETTER 1 is used to address repeated absences or poor punctuality or failure to inform the University of absence lateness/requirement to leave early. If appropriate a First Written Warning may be issued.

Stage 2.2 – LETTER 2 – Programme Director:

LETTER 2 is used to address continued repeated absences or poor punctuality or failure to inform the University. If appropriate a Second Written Warning may be issued.

Stage 3 – LETTER 3 – Programme Director/Head of School:

Programme Director will submit a written report to Head of School. A LETTER 3 will be sent where the matter has not been successfully concluded at Stage 2.2 (i.e. non-attendance poor punctuality continues). At this stage, the Head of School (in consultation with the Programme Director) will decide if the student should be withdrawn from their course with immediate effect.

The student may have the right to be accompanied to any meeting discussing withdrawal for non-attendance.

The outcome of each meeting will be recorded on the student's file with a written notification of the decision provided to the student.