Quality Management System

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Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Alternative Format Statement

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Attendance and Punctuality Policy

1.0 Introduction

Attendance and punctuality are critical employability skills required by employers and essential to the successful completion of College studies. Poor attendance may indicate that a student is becoming disengaged and may be at risk of leaving their course. Alternatively, it can be a sign that support is needed to help a student deal with personal or welfare issues. Bishop Auckland College Group (BAC Group) has wide-ranging support systems in place to assist in these circumstances.

This policy outlines the BAC Group's commitment to student attendance and punctuality and sets out the College's expectations of both students and staff in order to sustain high levels of attendance.

2.0 Student attendance

2.1 Why Attendance Matters

Good attendance is essential for success at college. Students who attend regularly:

- Achieve better results
- Feel more confident and connected
- Are more likely to progress into employment or further study

Missing lessons can quickly lead to falling behind, lower grades, and fewer opportunities.

2.2 All students, including apprentices and those studying in the workplace, are expected to attend 100% of classes in all aspects of their programme of study.

2.3 Students on flexible learning programmes have alternative attendance arrangements in place to those of College-based programmes. Students will be notified of requirements by the course tutor.

3.0 Punctuality

3.1 Students are expected to arrive promptly for all classes. Students who arrive after the timetabled start of a lesson will be marked as late. Persistent lateness should, in the first instance, be challenged by the subject tutor and if necessary referred to the relevant Director of Curriculum who will deal with the issue through the College disciplinary process. If a student knows they will be late for a lesson in advance, they must notify their tutor.

3.2 Persistent lateness may result in non-payment of the Attendance and Behaviour Reward for students who are normally eligible.

3.3 Lateness due to transport issues:

3.3.1 It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they arrive at College on time for lessons.

3.3.2 If, for whatever reason, the bus does not arrive on time, then the student should contact the bus company to confirm whether the service is running and the time of the next bus. Students with smartphones can log on to the bus website and use the 'Live departures near me' facility. This contact should be made whilst the student remains at the pick-up point, preferably. The College will be informed of any issues by the bus company after the event, in order that lateness due to transport issues can be monitored.

4.0 Conditions of progression onto further study at Bishop Auckland College

4.1 Students must have a minimum attendance of 90% and have successfully completed all aspects of their programme of study to be guaranteed a continued place on any course or progression to a subsequent term or the next stage of their current course or apprenticeship. Where students have not satisfied this requirement, they will be required to attend a progress interview with their director of curriculum and/or member of the executive team, in order to discuss any concerns about attendance or commitment to study. The senior manager will decide the most appropriate action to be taken. This meeting may require the attendance of parents/ carers, or the employer in the case of apprentices.

4.2 To guarantee progression to a further year of study, all full-time post-16 students must attend regularly and successfully complete all aspects of their programme of study. This includes the vocational course, maths and/or English (where applicable), an approved work placement, tutorials and any timetabled online learning sessions.

4.3 Students in Durham Gateway and other 14-16-year-olds studying within BAC Group must have achieved all targets set in relation to attendance, behaviour and learning.

4.4 Adult and higher education students must have successfully completed the relevant stage or Year 1 (as appropriate) of their course.

4.5 Apprentices must have successfully achieved completion targets relating to all aspects of their programmes.

5.0 Reporting Absence

5.1 All absences must be reported. Before the scheduled start time.

5.2 Absences for students aged 14-18 must be reported by a parent/carer (not the student) by contacting student support by telephone on 01388 443000, option 2, before 9 am.

5.3 Notification of absence does not count as positive attendance. Even authorised absence affects attendance percentage

6.0 Recording and Communication of attendance and punctuality

6.1 Student attendance is monitored daily, with registers marked at the beginning of each session.

6.2 If the College is not notified of the absence of a full-time student in advance, then contact will be made with the parent/carer (in the case of a 14-18-year-old) or with the student (in the case of a student aged 19 years or over).

In the event that it has not been possible to establish contact within 24 hours, then the absence will be treated as a potential safeguarding issue, and dealt with according to the College's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy (ref: POL- CP-01).

6.3 The College will communicate information about attendance and progress to students and their parent/carers (for 14-18-year-olds on full-time programmes) and employers (for apprenticeships) through a range of methods. This could include the use of regular text messaging, emails, telephone calls and/or letters.

6.4 Mid-year progress reviews: Parents/carers of full-time students will be invited to a mid-year meeting to discuss attendance and progress and review the written mid-year report. Parent/carers are strongly encouraged to participate in these meetings. In the event that attendance in person is not possible, then parents/carers are required to arrange a telephone discussion with the course tutor.

6.5 Requests for references from potential employers: The College is regularly requested to provide job references for students. It is clear that attendance and punctuality are critical skills required by employers, and the College will therefore quote student attendance and punctuality levels in any reference we are asked to provide.

7.0 Attendance Levels and What They Mean

Attendance	What this means	Action
95–100%	Excellent	Praise, rewards, and recognition
93–94%	Good but improvement needed	Encouragement and monitoring
85–93%	Cause for concern	Targeted support and intervention
Below 85%	Serious concern	Intensive support and possible formal action

8.0 Our Approach

8.1 We know that high attendance is linked to high achievement and positive progression to either the next stage in learning or employment, therefore we intervene quickly where attendance falls.

Universal (All Students)

- Clear expectations from day one
- Regular praise and rewards
- Attendance updates shared with parents/carers (14-18)
- Encouragement

Targeted intervention (attendance 85–93%)

If attendance falls below 93%:

- Meetings with tutors to set improvement targets
- Support from Student Progress Mentors (SPMs)
- Contact with parents/carers (14-18)
- Personalised support (e.g. mentoring, motivation strategies)

Intensive intervention (attendance below 85%)

If attendance remains low or there are additional challenges:

- Parent / carers invited in for a meeting with senior leader
- Identification of barriers to attendance
- Actions agreed to bring about improvement
- Regular review to monitor improvement
- Potential withdrawal from course where no improvement

9.0 Weekly Monitoring and Early Action

9.1 Attendance is reviewed every week

9.2 Students below 93% will meet with staff to agree improvement targets

9.3 If attendance does not improve, further action will be taken quickly

10.0 Rewards and Recognition

10.1 We actively celebrate good and improved attendance:

- Rewards for high attendance
- Incentives and opportunities (e.g. trips, enrichment activities)

11.0 Consequences of Poor Attendance

11.1 If attendance does not improve despite support:

- Parents/carers will be involved
- Senior staff will review the situation
- A student's place on the course may be at risk

Our aim is always to support students to succeed, but attendance is essential.

12.0 How We Work Together

Improving attendance is a shared responsibility:

12.1 Students

- Attend all lessons and arrive on time
- Communicate any difficulties early

12.2 Parents/Carers

- Ensure absences are reported
- Support regular attendance
- Work with the college if concerns arise

12.3 College Staff

- Provide engaging teaching and support
- Monitor attendance closely
- Act quickly where issues arise

Working together is key to success.

13.0 Support Available

We understand that barriers to attendance can happen. Support includes:

- Mental health and wellbeing services
- Financial support (travel, meals)
- Mentoring and coaching
- Flexible arrangements in exceptional cases

14.0 Sanctions

If attendance issues cannot be resolved, the following actions may be implemented:

- Students may be required to attend additional out-of-timetable hours to catch up on missed work
- The College disciplinary procedure may be invoked
- The student's place on the course may be revoked
- The student may be required to pay tuition/ examination fees
- Repay any grant, loan or financial support, inc learner support funds, concessionary travel or reimburse BACG for any essential items provided.

15.0 Other related policies

The following policies/procedures are related to the Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy:

- Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedure (ref: BAC-SS-01)
- Attendance and Behaviour Reward Policy (ref: POL-F-05)
- Learner Support/ Discretionary Bursary Funding and Free Meals Policy
- Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy (ref: POL-CP-01)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (ref: POL-ED-01)

16.0 Final Message

Attendance is not just about being present—it's about giving yourself the best possible chance of success. Every lesson counts. Every day matters.

Summary of significant changes

For information about changes made to this Policy see the Change log found on our website.