

## CQA 9 Learner Attendance Policy

All College policies and procedures adhere to the guidelines and ethos of Equality and Diversity.

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## Policy Statement

New College Lanarkshire is committed to providing equality of opportunity, respect for and between individuals, and to the establishment of a learning environment in which staff and learners are supported, valued and empowered to fulfil their maximum potential.

For the purposes of this policy, the term Head of Faculty is understood to include the Head of Business Development, and the term Curriculum and Quality Leader is understood to include the Business Development Manager and the Workforce Development Manager.

In the interests of making this policy readily accessible to learners, a learner guide to the document has been produced and is available to learners on the College intranet.

### 1. Policy

- 1.1 New College Lanarkshire is committed to providing opportunities for learning in a caring and supportive environment which respects the individual. The Learner Attendance Policy and Procedure is designed to assist the College to enable learners to achieve their full potential.
- 1.2 New College Lanarkshire has an obligation to comply with the funding guidelines and policies issued to them by the Scottish Funding Council and the Student Awards Agency for Scotland.
- 1.3 This Policy and procedure will give due consideration to the individual needs of the learner as appropriate, taking into account age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, race sex and sexual orientation.
- 1.4 The College will adhere to this Learner Attendance Policy and the procedures outlined within it, and will operate within the framework of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 1.5 This Policy and set of procedures is written to ensure that there are clear and fair guidelines for learners. It is designed to provide a framework to ensure that all learners and staff are aware of the procedures in relation to absence reporting and monitoring of attendance.
- 1.6 The Learner Attendance Policy relates to all learners studying full-time or part-time College courses. Learners' attendance is expected to be 100% but where a learner requires time off from their course due to medical or 'other' reasons they are required to follow the procedure outlined in the Learner Attendance Procedure.
- 1.7 The College recognises the importance of learner retention and achievement and has a responsibility to identify and support learners whose attendance is causing concern.

- 1.8 Where unauthorised absence affects the progression or likelihood of achievement of a learner, this policy may be used to withdraw learners from their course.
- 1.9 Learners must take responsibility for their own learning, and attendance at all classes at the College is compulsory unless the College lecturer has approved other modes of study.
- 1.10 Where a learner's attendance is giving cause for concern, this will be discussed at a guidance session, where the learner will be given support and guidance to improve their situation.
- 1.11 **Where a learner's attendance drops below 100% in any 4 week monitoring period, payment of all funds will be withheld for that 4 week period. Payments of Educational Maintenance Allowances and Bursaries will only be made for 100% attendance.** Learners will be notified of the monitoring periods on the College intranet. They will also be advised on any award letters issued by the College in relation to all College-managed student support funds.
- 1.12 Learners must arrive on time for classes. Late arrival in excess of 15 minutes or leaving class early in excess of 15 minutes will be recorded as such in attendance registers. Faculties can review reports including information on late arrival, early leaving and absences. If a learner is late, leaves early or is absent more than 3 times, the faculty management team will discuss this issue with the learner and will take appropriate action.
- 1.13 Absence due to medical reasons will only be accepted for a maximum of 5 weeks over the College session. This will be pro-rata for short courses. This can be a combination of self-certificated and medical certificated absence. Absences which exceed this limit will result in the termination of any funding awards and may result in the withdrawal of the learner from their course. If there are exceptional circumstances which prevent the learner from attending College for a period in excess of this limit, the Curriculum and Quality Leader will contact the Student Funding Officer to discuss the learner's situation.
- 1.14 Learners can self-certify sickness or any other absence for a maximum of 5 days in each semester. Sickness which exceeds this limit must be covered by a medical certificate issued by the learner's General Practitioner. The medical certificate should be given to MIS Administrators for recording. Any unused self-authorized days cannot be carried over from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.
- 1.15 Where a learner is studying less than a full-time course or on a short course, the allowable number of self-certificated and authorised absences will be pro-rata. A full time course is defined as lasting 36 College weeks:
- a. 12 week full-time course AND part time study 3 self-certificated absences

**2 weeks maximum absence allowed on medical grounds**

- b. 18 week full time course 5 self-certificated absences

**2.5 weeks maximum absence allowed on medical grounds**

- c. 36 week full time course:

**1<sup>st</sup> semester 5 self-certificated absences**

**2<sup>nd</sup> semester 5 self-certificated absences**

**5 weeks maximum absence allowed on medical grounds**

- 1.16 In exceptional circumstances, absence for periods in excess of the allowable days/instances may be authorised by the learner's Curriculum and Quality Leader. If a learner requires an authorised absence beyond the allowable days/instances, they must contact their Curriculum and Quality Leader in advance or on the first day of the absence. **Learners will not be granted authorised absences retrospectively. Exceptional authorised absences cannot be issued for periods of sickness of the learner** (except where it is part of a reasonable adjustment). However, in cases of sick dependents, the learner must contact the Curriculum and Quality Leader immediately and one day **may** be authorised to allow arrangements to be put in place.
- 1.17 Learners taking holidays out with the College holidays must notify their Guidance Tutor or Curriculum and Quality Leader. Further Education Bursaries, Educational Maintenance Allowances, Childcare and Discretionary funds are not paid for periods where learners take holidays out with the College holidays. Learners must submit a 'Notification of Holiday' form to the MIS Administrator. These forms are available from the Key Support Advisers and Faculty Offices.
- 1.18 Where there has been unauthorised absence for 4 weeks, all funding awards will be terminated.
- 1.19 If a learner's funding is withheld or withdrawn due to unsatisfactory attendance, the learner has the right of appeal. Appeals must be made in writing and submitted to the Student Funding Section.
- 1.20 Monitoring of compliance with this Attendance Policy will be carried out by the MIS Administrators, Student Funding staff and Guidance Tutors.