



WEST THAMES COLLEGE

NAME OF POLICY

West Thames College Higher Education Attendance Policy for Students

Lead	Approved By:	Date Approved:	Next Review Date:	Where Published:
Name of Lead Staff Member Katrin Lehmann	Name of Person/ Group who Approves Quality and Equality Committee		September 2027	Website

Introduction

This attendance policy aims to ensure that students enrolled on Higher Education courses at West Thames College meet the attendance requirements set by the college. Student attendance is reported to the **Student Loan Company (SLC)** by the college each term, in-line with SLC guidance. Reports of low attendance can trigger investigation by the SLC and suspension of payments, or a requirement to repay loan instalments already received.

West Thames College is committed to supporting students in achieving their academic aspirations. Maintaining high attendance is crucial for student success. This policy aims to provide clear guidelines and support mechanisms to help students meet their attendance requirements.

This policy outlines the expectations, monitoring processes, and consequences related to student attendance.

Expectations

1. **Attendance Expectations:** Students are expected to attend 100% of their classes.
2. **Punctuality:** Students should arrive on time for all sessions. Repeated lateness may be recorded as absences.
3. **Notification of Absence:** Students must inform their course teacher of any expected absences in advance or as soon as possible in cases of unforeseen circumstances, such as illness or emergencies.

Monitoring and Recording Attendance

1. **Attendance Registers:** Attendance will be recorded for every session using an electronic register system.
2. **Weekly Reviews:** Attendance data will be reviewed weekly by course teachers to identify any issues early.
3. **Monthly Reports:** Monthly attendance reports will be generated and reviewed by your curriculum team to ensure compliance with the SLC requirements.

Reporting Absences

1. **Short-term Absences:** For absences of one day up to five days, students must provide a written explanation (e.g. a note from a healthcare provider).
2. **Long-term Absences:** For absences exceeding five days, students must provide additional documentation, such as a medical certificate or other relevant documentation.

Consequences of Poor Attendance

1. **First Warning:** If attendance falls below 85%, students will receive a first warning letter will be required to meet with their course teacher to discuss any issues and agree a plan for improvement.
2. **Second Warning:** Continued poor attendance will result in a second warning and a formal meeting with the relevant Curriculum Director to produce an attendance action plan and offer additional support if needed.
3. **Final Warning:** If there is no improvement after the second warning a further review will be held as you place on the course may be at risk.
4. **Withdrawal of Funding:** Persistent failure to meet attendance requirements may lead to the withdrawal of financial support from the SLC and possible suspension or exclusion from the programme.

Support for Students

1. **Pastoral Care:** Students experiencing difficulties affecting their attendance can seek support from their teacher who may refer them to the college's support team or to other support agencies.
2. **Academic Support:** Additional academic support may be provided to help students catch up on missed work.
3. **Counselling Services:** Students can access counselling services for personal or emotional issues that may impact their attendance.

Appeals

1. **Appeal Process:** Students have the right to appeal any decisions made regarding their attendance record through the college appeals and complaints process. This can be found on the college website.

Communication and Review of Policy

1. **Communication:** This policy will be communicated to all students enrolled on Higher Education Courses during their induction and will be available on the college's website.
2. **Review:** The attendance policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant with SLC requirements and continues to meet the needs of students.