



## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out and maintain expectations and responsibilities for student attendance and punctuality to maximise students' potential through development of skills, knowledge and employability
- Safeguard students
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of students, teachers, progress coaches, support staff and managers in ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality

<b>Policy owner:</b>	Vice Principal
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## **College, Vision, Mission and Values**

### **1.1 Vision**

To be London's best College Group.

### **1.2 Mission**

To deliver outstanding, world class education and skills.

### **1.3 Values**

Our College believes in:

- Inclusion and belonging - We embrace diversity and take pro-active steps to be inclusive.
- Mutual trust and respect - We communicate openly and assume positive intent.
- Putting our students first - We put students first in everything we do.
- Always improving - We embrace a mindset of perpetual growth, seeking constant improvements in processes, education and personal development of peers and our students.
- Compassion and empathy – We care about each other, our wellbeing, our development and actively seek to understand and validate the feelings of others.

## **2.0 Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

United Colleges Group is firmly committed to ensuring all learners achieve their qualifications and have an outstanding learning experience during their time at College. We recognise the importance and value of outstanding attendance and punctuality as a means of learners achieving success, including progression to higher levels of study, gaining employment and progressing in their careers.

### **2.1 Purpose**

We want to enhance our student experience and the outcomes for their future by ensuring all learners have a sense of belonging to the college community, enabling them to build positive relationships with other learners and staff.

Frequent absences impact on this experience and learner achievement.

We aim to work with students and employers to reflect the behaviours required in the workplace.

It is recognized low attendance can also lead to, failure to meet course deadlines and ultimately to drop out of college. This policy is aimed at dealing effectively with attendance and punctuality to maintain a positive learning experience for our students. Through a collaborative support team we aim to deal with barriers in order to maximise learning and the achievement of qualifications and to ensure that learners are prepared for their future whether it be in education or the world of work.

We have high attendance expectations and encourage learners to be punctual for classes. It

is our responsibility to monitor the attendance and punctuality of all learners through the register which is a legal and auditable document. We are also accountable for the safeguarding of all young learners and vulnerable adults and attendance monitoring is a vital tool in enabling this responsibility. This policy aims to ensure that:

- All learners are made aware during induction and on an ongoing basis of the importance of attendance and punctuality, their responsibilities and how we will deal with attendance and poor punctuality issues.
- All staff deal with attendance and punctuality in a consistent manner
- All of us understand our role in addressing attendance and punctuality issues and supporting good levels of both.
- The group meets its legal and statutory responsibilities towards Health and Safety and Safeguarding

## **2.2 This policy will apply to:**

- All staff employed by UCG across curriculum, business and support staff with a responsibility to record, monitor, report and support student attendance and punctuality.
- All learners, of all ages and all levels of study enrolled by the Group in order to maximise success and progression to employment or higher levels of study
- Parents/ guardians/ carers and employers where appropriate, as we recognise the role they can play through encouraging good attendance and punctuality.

## **2.3 Expectations**

The College recognises that excellent attendance and punctuality are key to maximising the learning experience, achievement of academic goals and development of employability skills.

The College is committed to actively promoting, supporting and encouraging 100% attendance and punctuality for all our students of all ages on all programmes in preparation for progression to their next steps.

The college expects that all students attend and be on time for 100% of all aspects of their course.

Students below 85% attendance may not be allowed to progress to the next level of study. Staff adopt a consistent approach to applying the Attendance and Punctuality Policy to ensure students are clear on their expected behaviour and attitudes to learning.

Consistent poor attendance and punctuality can result in disciplinary action as laid out in the Learning and Behaviour policy and, ultimately, to withdrawal from the course. Where applicable the Fitness to Study Policy may be followed.

### 3.0 How does UCG approach attendance and punctuality?

Underpinning the entire student experience at the College is The **UCG method**. The UCG Method is a framework for the way we approach the student experience, including our delivery of teaching, learning and assessment, to maximise and sustain student engagement, while ultimately enhancing attainment to secure further opportunities for our students.

**It addresses the way we establish and maintain relationships with our students, from every aspect of the organisation, as well as agreeing systems to monitor and check the success and effectiveness of what we are doing. This method aligns with our college values- Always improving - We embrace a mindset of perpetual growth, seeking constant improvements in processes, education and personal development of peers and our students.**

Good teaching and learning and excellent support and opportunities outside the classroom are a key part of driving high levels of student attendance. We are committed to align Progress Coaches with Career clusters as an additional support mechanism to remove barriers for students in all aspects of college life as a enabler to improve their ability to attend and to ensure that all staff, regardless of their role, work together to provide a compelling experience for students.

The UCG method has 3 key agreements all of which intertwine to underpin the entire student experience:

- **Agreement 1**

Teachers will continuously develop their art of teaching supported by the science of education

- **Agreement 2**

All staff regardless of role will work to create and support a compelling experience for our students

- **Agreement 3**

We will ensure that we make a difference to our students through evidence-based judgements and impactful measures

### 4.0 Attendance and punctuality how will we judge what impact we are having?

We will monitor progress weekly, aiming to show an improved trend of attendance year on year.

Through supportive measures the goal is to have consistently high levels of attendance and punctuality across all ages and all groups

#### How will we do that?

- Progress Coaches working collaboratively with Teachers and support services and will self-assess against agreed set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) through

data for live progress of individual students, cohorts and courses, with managers monitoring reporting at Curriculum and Career Cluster level

- We will initiate the team around the student, taking a collaborative approach as course and support teams to monitor the engagement and progress of each learner, utilising the centralised communication and student record system (Pro Monitor) to actively pick up both positive and negative issues
- We will use measures of attendance, punctuality, progress in class, completion of work, completion and submission of assignments as indicators that curriculum delivery is on track
- Utilise Power BI dashboard for a one stop daily look at Attendance in class

## **5.0 Support for students' attendance and punctuality**

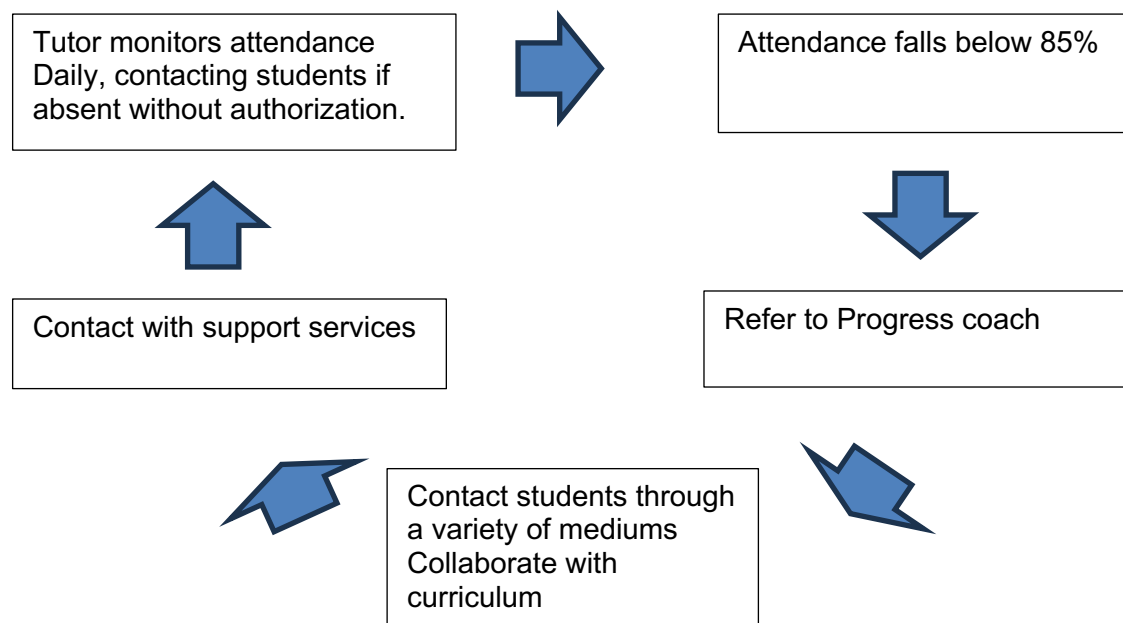
Students can sometimes face challenges, so it is very important to use our trauma informed approach to be able to offer a range of support to eligible learners to ensure that they are able to attend, be punctual and stay on course. Support includes:

- Progress Coaches to support all aspects of the learner journey.
- Free Laptop loan for 16-18-year olds for the duration of their course
- Recognition of good attendance and improved attendance
- Student advisors and support services
- Additional learning support for students with identified learning needs.
- Bursary payments
- Support for childcare
- Travel support

## 6.0 Roles and responsibilities

It is important that everyone understands their role in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality

Flow Chart of Referral



### 6.1 Students will:

- Be Ready: Attend all lessons and exams, unless the absence is authorised
- Attend 100% of all of their course on time and be ready to learn. This includes where applicable, online and in class learning, English, mathematics, tutorials, workshops, practical activities, compulsory visits, work placements and exams and assessments.
- Ensure that every effort is made to make medical or other appointments outside of class time so as not to impact on their learning opportunities
- Seek agreement in advance with their tutor if they are not able to attend normal timetabled activity.
- Notify the teacher before the lesson if attendance is not possible or they are unavoidably delayed
- Make sure that teachers know if there's any reason why they are not able to come to class for a period of time (eg due to prolonged illness). Keep in touch with the teacher so that they can catch up on missed work where possible.
- Let the teacher know if attendance at any online sessions is affected by lack of access to IT/ WIFI/data/ home study space
- Discuss any issues affecting attendance or punctuality with the tutor so that the tutor can help guide them to appropriate support.
- Understand that consistent poor attendance and punctuality can lead to disciplinary action and ultimately withdrawal from the course and the College under the Learning and Behaviour policy or be addressed under the Fitness to

Study Policy.

- Participate fully in class to ensure that they get the most out of the experience and maximise their potential for learning

## 6.2 Parents/carers of under 18s and vulnerable students:

### We would ask that parents/ carers

- Work in partnership with the College to ensure that their son/daughter is attending college as per their agreed timetable and is always on time.
- Respond in a supportive manner if concerns are raised.
- Attend parent/carer events when their son/daughter's progress is discussed
- If the student is unable to attend College for any reason or will arrive late, ensure that College is contacted in advance where possible.
- Access Parents Proportal (where relevant)

## 6.3 Employers and apprentices

- Employers will be informed of any non-attendance by apprentices in a timely manner
- We would ask that employers work in partnership with the College to ensure that students attend and that communication between the College and the employer facilitates high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Students on Work Experience or Industry Placements will inform the college of any non-attendance in a timely manner

## 6.4 Teachers will:

- Actively promote the need for 100% attendance and punctuality through induction, tutorial, setting high expectations from the very beginning and on an ongoing basis throughout the year.
- **Mark all registers accurately and within the first 10 minutes of the lesson. This is a legal and auditable document to record attendance and punctuality. Non-completion or knowingly inaccurate completion of registers will be a matter subject to disciplinary action.**
- Contact learners who were absent without reason from their class promptly the same day and record actions on and liaise via pro monitor with personal tutors/ subject tutors within the agreed timeframes (see personal and subject tutor responsibilities and timelines)
- Contact parents/carers of 16- and 17-year olds within the agreed time frames and record on Promonitor (see personal and subject tutor responsibilities and timelines)
- Respond to all absenteeism and poor punctuality consistently and fairly, considering individual circumstances.
- Provide support to students experiencing barriers to attendance and punctuality and signpost appropriately to student support services.
- Utilise ProMonitor to record any personal/pastoral issues that could affect the

student's attendance and punctuality and communicate with staff involved in teaching or supporting the student. Safeguarding should be copied in only if this is a safeguarding issue by using [safeguarding@ucg.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@ucg.ac.uk) rather than individual team member emails.

- Tutors will hold 121 meetings with poor attenders/ learners with consistent poor punctuality to support improvement, and set improvement targets
- Continuously monitor attendance throughout students' time at College via registers and attendance reports
- Address poor attendance and punctuality through the Learning and Behaviour Policy or Fitness to Study procedures, as appropriate.
- Use MyConcern to notify the safeguarding team where a student aged 16-18 or a vulnerable adult 19-24 with a known safeguarding concern misses College for 1 week with any unauthorised absence, where the teacher has not been informed of reasons for absence or the absence causes a safeguarding concern. The safeguarding team will triage the information and liaise as needed with the tutor regarding any actions needed. **The primary responsibility for taking action on the student's attendance in line with the policy remains with the tutor.**
- Ensure that any missing marks where these have arisen in exceptional circumstances are dealt with in a timely manner.
- Communicate promptly with student support services where staff have been working with or supporting the student.

**CARES** guide to handling punctuality issues in a trauma informed way:

1. **Check In Privately:** Speak with late students one-on-one to understand their challenges and offer support.
2. **Active Starts:** Begin class with inspiring and purposeful activity
3. **Respond with Neutral Language:** Use welcoming phrases like "Glad you're here" instead of negative or scolding comments.
4. **Encouragement** – positivity will always triumph over punishment
5. **Support** – UCG's Trauma Informed approach is about the support we provide to our students



- Discuss action taken to improve attendance or punctuality for individuals /groups with Curriculum managers and monitor the impact of action taken on an ongoing basis.
- Ensure that if a learner has an unexplained absence for 4 weeks or more and attempts to engage the learner have not led to reengagement that students are withdrawn from the course of study in a timely manner where appropriate with clear reasons and explanation of actions provided on actions taken on the withdrawal request on ProSolution.
- Ensure that the learning experience in their class delivers an impactful, enjoyable experience, so that learners understand the value of high levels of attendance and arriving on time – creating a culture of high expectations of learners

### **6.5 Managers will**

- Monitor consistently and act where classes have low levels of attendance, working with the tutor to ensure that all appropriate action is taken to improve individual and group attendance and punctuality as needed.
- Ensure that teachers have access to both individual and class information to allow them to monitor the impact of actions taken to improve attendance and punctuality where needed.
- Monitor the completion of registers, taking action where needed
- Ensure that missing marks are dealt with in a timely manner by teachers.
- Induct and ensure appropriate training / information sharing about attendance and punctuality policy, requirements and procedures
- Ensure that KPI structures and processes are embedded through team and individual tutor meetings.
- Celebrate and promote positive attendance
- Ensure that support structures are fully utilised to support learners' attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that withdrawals are carried out in a prompt manner

### **6.6 Support staff will**

- Understand their particular role in ensuring that an excellent student experience is the focus of all activity in the College, whatever the role, whatever the department.
- Communicate in a timely manner with curriculum staff where there has been interaction with the student – via Promonitor where the support staff have access to this or via other means where necessary.

## **7.0 Trauma Informed Practice**

The College is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

In cases where disciplinary action is necessary due to violations of college policies the following trauma-informed practices will be employed:

- Disciplinary proceedings will be conducted with empathy and understanding, recognising that students may have experienced trauma that could impact their behaviour. Staff members involved in the disciplinary process will receive training on trauma-informed practice to ensure that interactions are conducted in a compassionate and supportive manner.
- Students who have experienced trauma may require additional support to address underlying issues and prevent future attendance issues. Disciplinary proceedings will be accompanied by offers of support services, such as counseling, mental health resources, or academic accommodations, to help students navigate challenges and succeed academically.

### **7.1 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

The College has paid due regard to equality considerations during the preparation and implementation of this Policy and the final policy has gone through an Equality Impact Assessment.

These considerations included the potential for any differential negative effect on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership.

The College's judgement is that there is no such negative effect on those grounds and, consequently, no potential breach of the Equality Act 2010

### **8.0 Links to College values and other College policies**

This policy should be used in conjunction with the following documents, policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding & Prevent Policy
- The UCG method
- Learning and Behaviour policy
- Fitness to Study policy
- Health and safety policy