Attendance and Engagement Policy

Part A: RQF Level 4 and below courses: applies to Pre Programme, GCSE, UFP, A Levels, Extended Diploma, Music Foundation, Foundation in Art and Design, Drama Foundation and any other courses at/below RQF level 4

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Key Staff	Head of School, DSL, Senior Attendance Champion, Attendance staff, Senior Academic staff and Pastoral staff
Lead on Updating Policy	Attendance Managers, Senior Attendance Champion, and Head of School

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1. Aim

Enable all students to maintain 100% attendance in order to promote their achievement and success.

Good attendance is an integral part of academic success and progression, therefore monitoring student attendance and responding quickly to poor attendance is vital.

All students are expected to attend and arrive on time to all classes. It is our aim to encourage all students to achieve this; this includes careful consideration of authorisation of any absences and ongoing help offered to support students throughout their studies.

2. Principles to be followed to achieve the aim

Ensure all school staff are proactive in following up issues and that there is prompt, accurate and comprehensive liaison with all parties.

There will be recognition of critical times in the life of a student after absences (e.g. after long term illness or bereavement) when we need to be proactive to ensure that the student is well supported, and good attendance is picked back up. Every case must be judged on its merits. The school will ensure that those missing classes because of mental or physical ill health, or those with SEND, will be given extra support.

3. Statutory guidelines and responsibilities

UKVI

The school will observe the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). Maintaining satisfactory attendance is part of the visa conditions for students studying under a visa in the UK. It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure accurate attendance monitoring and prompt follow up occur across all courses.

- We will cease to sponsor students who repeatedly fail in meeting attendance requirements.
- The school will cease to sponsor any Sponsored student who misses 10 consecutive contact points. A contact point is defined as an entire teaching day (Monday to Friday). In addition to timetabled classes, contact points may also include meetings with residential staff or welfare/pastoral staff, if necessary, in welfare cases
- A student who has missed 10 missed contact points may, in exceptional circumstances, be allowed back into the school. The student will be required to document any reason for the absences and continued sponsorship will be at the discretion of the Principal/Rector.
- When the school ceases to sponsor a student, this will be reported to UKVI via the SMS and the Student/Child Student visa will then be curtailed by UKVI.

In accordance with the statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024),* the school policy will be made accessible on our website. The policy will also be emailed to all parents of new incoming students and as a reminder at the start of each academic year.

The school must alert the LA about any compulsory school age student who misses 15 consecutive or cumulative days due to illness, as they may need additional support from the LA.

4. Senior Attendance Champions

The school recognizes that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and have designated senior leaders with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with students, parents and external agencies where needed. The Senior Attendance Champion is expected to set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff and have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school.

CATS Cambridge Senior Attendance Champion	Philip Bond	DSL

5. Student responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that they attend every lesson throughout their studies and arrive on time. Students are responsible for their own attendance, following school processes and meeting school expectations. With regards to Sponsored Visa students, it is a condition of their visa to attend the course for which their visa was granted. Students are responsible for notifying the Attendance Officer as soon as they know they will be absent. If students are aware in advance that an event will result in them missing lessons they must seek authorisation in advance. Students must provide appropriate evidence for any absences. Contact information for the school Attendance Officer can be found in the Student Handbook/Pre-Arrival Handbook and on Teams or Canvas.

6. Staff responsibilities

Staff must support students to maintain 100% attendance.
Academic staff are responsible for the day-to-day monitoring and reporting of absences (via the school's information management system). Teaching staff must complete the register for every lesson during the first 10 minutes. They must promptly amend the register when a student arrives late to their lesson. Please note that registers will be open for 30 minutes during which time the pupil is registered as late, and after which, even if they arrive, they are counted as absent for statistical purposes.

Senior management and attendance staff, headed by the Senior Attendance Champion, are responsible for identifying patterns of absence, offering support when needed and issuing follow-up warnings and taking other actions as appropriate.

7. Categories of Absence

The school will use the appropriate national attendance and absence codes (as stated in School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England)(Regulations) 2024 wherever possible, subject to the student record system restrictions. Authorised absences are absences approved by and agreed on by the school (such as medical absences, University Open Days, auditions and interviews). Students should aim to have less than 10% authorised absence except in exceptional cases.
Absences can be authorised by the Head of School/Senior Academic Team/Medical and Welfare staff.

UKVI state that authorised absence should be 'reasonably granted'. This means we should actively consider the intentions of the student, i.e. whether they are genuinely intending to continue their course and the impact of any absence on the student's ability to complete their course. If either of these factors is in any doubt, we may need to consider alternative action, such as withdrawal or deferral.

Late return to the school and/or early departure caused by flight schedules will be considered by the school on an individual basis and only authorised when there is a very good reason.

Educational visits (such as university open days/interviews/auditions) will usually be authorised if evidence is provided to the Attendance Officer. There may be restrictions regarding the number of days' authorisation given for these types of visits.
The school recognizes that as a multi-cultural and mixed faith community there are events that will fall in term time where a student may request to be absent. Authorisation for these absences will be subject to approval by senior staff. Unauthorised absences are absences from any timetabled class that have not been approved.

8. Attendance data retention and policy review

Admission and attendance registers will be kept electronically, and all entries in these registers will be preserved

for 6 years.

The LA have the right to examine and take extracts of attendance registers from the school if required.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier if guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated. The review will include the views of all stakeholders, including parents and pupils.

In developing and implementing this policy, the school has considered its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

9. Procedures

The policy is aimed to reflect the age range of students attending the school. New teachers will receive an induction on their role in attendance matters.

9a. Strategies for supporting students to maintain 100% attendance

Positive support may include:

- Daily waking up of students in accommodation.
- Use of a Student Contract and/or Report Card accompanied by regular review meetings.
- Signposting students to other support teams in school and, if necessary, arranging a meeting with school pastoral or welfare staff to try to understand the root cause for the absence.
- CATS Cambridge only - Informing primary contacts about each absence which (if by email) requires an acknowledgement or is followed up by a phone call.
- Contacting students at the end of each school day if they have been absent.
- Certificates or public acknowledgement and an entry made on the Shackleton for 100% attendance over at least a term.
- After a long-term authorised absence:
  - Staff awareness so there can be individual responses to student need.
  - Some work set prior to return under the management of tutors/teachers.
    - Enhanced monitoring attendance on return, to encourage and motivate the student.

Sanctions which may be applied:

- Gating in residence and/or early curfew.
- Detention and/or Saturday supervised study.
- Exeat refusal.
- An increase in discipline stage with concomitant sanctions and this information being relayed to parents.
- Meetings with senior staff to ask for an explanation and emphasize why lessons must be attended. This should happen the first time a student misses a lesson for a reason which will not be authorised.
- In the case of British Compulsory School Age students, a formal attendance meeting with the Local Education Authority.
- Withdrawal of sponsorship (Student-route students only).

9b. Actions by Attendance Officer for students missing from lessons may include

- CATS Cambridge - Follows up the hourly absences report.
- Checks apparent errors in absences (e.g. if a student is known to have signed in to school or has been seen by Day Supervisor) teacher will be emailed to confirm absent mark.
- Checks medical authorisations and exeats.
- Students who appear on the absences reports and live independently, are phoned by the Attendance Officer. The conversation is logged on the school information management system.
- For students living in school accommodation, the Day Supervisor is alerted to look for student in the residence and Health Centre. If student is not found, the Day Supervisor will call student and add a note to the system.
- Where absent students cannot be reached by phone, contact is also made via email.
- If student is under 16 or appears for a second time on the hourly absences report
  - Day Supervisor is alerted to look for student.

- Attendance Officer or Day Supervisor phones student and logs any conversation on a Shackleton note.
- Looks for student together with the Day Supervisor.
- If the Attendance Officer finds that a student has had unauthorised absences for a certain number of consecutive days, as per the Missing Student Policy, the Attendance Officer will add a Student Welfare note to the system and also notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy DSL, the Vice Principal/Provost and the Principal/Rector by e-mail.

- Day Supervisor:
- Looks for student (checks classroom, room, smoking area, Health Centre).
- If not found, calls the student and adds a note to Isams. Then continues to look for the student together with the Attendance Officer. If the student cannot be found DSL is notified.
- Teachers:
- Should alert the Attendance Officer and Day Supervisor if a missing student joins their lesson.

9c. Other actions from Attendance Officer may include

- Ensure that all registers are marked and issue reminders to staff as soon as possible so that they may still recall the lesson in question and students who attended.

- Ensure that N-marks are followed up and changed within 5 days
- Identify patterns of absence and students with high levels of authorised absence (10% or more) and alert the relevant school staff for follow up action to take place.
- Compile and review the following data reports:

1) Daily 0% (null) attendance report at the end of the day.
2) Weekly absence report to Personal Tutors
3) Weekly Programme of Study report
4) Attendance History report (updated weekly)

9d. Procedures for Academic Tutors/Teachers

- It is the tutor's/teacher's responsibility to mark students as absent, present or late for every class using the register on Shackleton management information system.
- Lessons normally run between 9.00am and 5.45pm but hours can vary depending on the programme of study.
- The register remains open for 30 minutes and should ideally be marked at the beginning of each lesson during the first 10 minutes.
- If a student is not in the lesson when the register is taken, they should be marked absent. If they arrive during the first 30 minutes of the class, then the register should be updated with a late mark (L) (and the amount of time the student is late by).
- If a student arrives after the first 30 minutes of the class (after the register has closed), then the register should be updated with a U mark.

  If it is a substantial lateness, then a note should also be made on Shackleton so that it can be followed up. The class tutor should challenge lateness in class and seek a reason, issuing a sanction when appropriate in line with the Behaviour Policy.

9e. Procedures for Personal Tutors (PTs)

The role of the PT is to provide pastoral support but also sanctions when needed according to the behaviour policy.

10. Medical Absences

Students are responsible for the proper reporting of absences due to medical reasons. Contact information for the school Attendance Officer and the school Nurse can be found in the Student Handbook/Pre-Arrival Handbook and on Canvas. If students are unable to attend school due to illness they must:

- Contact the Attendance Officer as soon as they know they will be absent.
- Absences due to illness for students who are under 18 and living independently with a parent, should be reported

by the parent. All absences must be confirmed with the Attendance Officer.

- Students who can self-certify can do so for one day, three times per term. Medical absences longer than one day will require the student to see the Nurse or provide a medical certificate from a registered GP.
- If asked for certification, students must obtain a letter from a registered UK doctor confirming sickness and specifying the period of time students will not attend classes.
- Medical documentation from outside of the UK will be accepted only with a translation.
- Medical certificates from alternative medicine providers will not be accepted.
- The school may refuse to authorise absences if students have more than 10% authorised absences. If there are multiple or frequent self-certificates submitted, we may refuse to authorise absences and may request a medical certificate from a registered GP.

Appendix A - Register Codes

All schools must now use National Codes for absence (as stated in School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England)(Regulations) 2024.

Code		Type
/	Present morning session	Present
\	Present afternoon session	Present
L	Late arrival before the register is closed	Present
N	Absent	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised absence
K*	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Present (external)
V*	Attending an educational visit or trip	Present (external)
P*	Participating in a sporting activity	Present (external)
B*	Attending any other approved educational activity	Present (external)
D*	Dual registered at another school	Authorised absence
C*	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance	Authorised absence
M*	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence
J*	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence
S*	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Authorised absence
R*	Religious observance	Authorised absence
I*	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence
E*	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
Q*	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Authorised absence
O*	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence
G*	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence
Z*	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Null
#*	Planned whole school closure	Null
T*	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence
X*	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Null
Y*	Any unavoidable cause	Null

* Depicts marks only authorised attendance team members can enter

The school will use the appropriate national attendance and absence codes (as stated in School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England)(Regulations) 2024 wherever possible, subject to student record system restrictions.

Government codes we are currently unable to use	
W	Attending work experience
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Pupil is absent from school for part of the week (on a part-time timetable) - then also use the code for the reason why absent.
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause