

Title: Higher Education Attendance Policy**TYPE:** Policy**PURPOSE:** To explain the requirements of a HE attendance policy**SCOPE:** Staff and applicants**RESPONSIBILITY:** Claudine Barnes (Head of Higher Education)**Legal Context** Higher Education Research Act 2017, Equality Act 2010**1. Purpose**

This policy outlines the expectations and procedures for student attendance on Higher Education (HE) programmes at Solihull College & University Centre. SCUC is committed to providing a high-quality higher education experience for its students and recognises that attendance and engagement is central to student success.

This policy supports SCUC to comply with regulatory requirements, sector expectations and guidance surrounding attendance monitoring at university. It ensures compliance with the Student Loans Company (SLC) and Higher Education Provider Services (HEP) requirements, safeguarding public funding and supporting student success.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled on HE programmes funded through the SLC, including those delivered via face-to-face, blended, or online learning modes.
- 2.2 It will apply to students on programmes funded by the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) from January 2027. It applies to students studying courses validated our partner universities, and it also applies to students enrolled on higher apprenticeships (level 4 or above).
- 2.3 It does not apply to students on 'non-prescribed' higher education courses (i.e. not funded through the SLC, or from January 2027 the LLE).

3. Definition of Attendance

- 3.1 Attendance means participation in a course by a student, including, but not limited to:
 - Face-to-face teaching sessions
 - Online learning activities
 - Blended learning sessions
 - Project activities

- Attendance at placements or work-based learning (where applicable)Dissertation supervision
 - Submission of assignments or coursework
 - Participation in tutorials, seminars, or group work
 - Engagement with virtual learning environments (VLEs) and MS Teams channels
- 3.2 Attendance will be deemed unsatisfactory if the overall attendance falls below 80% (or 85% for students in receipt of bursary) OR there is no attendance *or* engagement *or* contact for a period of 2 consecutive weeks during which scheduled sessions are taking place.
- 3.3 Where a student does not attend in-person for five consecutive weeks where teaching is scheduled, the withdrawal process will begin. If the student is still engaging with the VLE and/or attending remotely, continuation is at the discretion of the Head of School/Head of HE.

4. Expectations

- 4.1 Students are expected to:
- Engage regularly and meaningfully with all aspects of their course
 - Attend scheduled sessions and meet expected hours per week
 - Maintain a minimum attendance rate as defined by the programme (if not defined by programme then this will be 80%, or 85% for those in receipt of college bursary)
 - Submit work and meet deadlines
 - Achieve minimum expected academic performance
 - Notify their tutor or course leader of any absences or barriers to attendance
 - Provide evidence for absences where required (e.g., medical notes)
- 4.2 HE Personal tutors and course leaders are expected to:
- Monitor HE student attendance through registers, VLE activity logs, assignment submissions, and academic reports.
 - Contact learners who are not attending and signpost for support (as appropriate).
 - Inform MIS and data teams if students are placed on temporary withdrawal or have prolonged periods of authorized absence (for example, for health reasons).

MIS reports and updates from academic staff support the monitoring process.

5. Reasonable Adjustments

The College recognises that some students may require specific study arrangements due to personal circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Disabilities
- Long-term health conditions
- Caring responsibilities

In such cases, the College will work with students to agree on reasonable adjustments and alternative engagement methods, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

6. Monitoring and Recording Attendance

- 6.1 Attendance is monitored through registers, VLE and Teams activity logs, and submission records.
- 6.2 Updates from academic staff are provided to Heads of School and Head of HE at course MOT meetings.
- 6.3 HE Admissions are also informed about student attendance for those students in receipt of college bursary and are able to track attendance through college management information systems. The College therefore maintains auditable records to evidence student engagement.

7. Cooling-off Periods and Reading Weeks/Exam Leave

- 7.1 Attendance monitoring will begin after the 'cooling-off period' (i.e. when students become liable for fees, which is from week 3 of the start of the course – see Tuition Fee Policy).
- 7.2 Reading weeks are also recognised in the academic calendar of some courses, and registers will be marked accordingly (student is marked as 'not required' during reading weeks or exam leave periods).

8. Breaks in Learning and Suspensions

The College may be able to accommodate temporary breaks in learning, for example for health reasons may be granted for up to 60 days with additional funding, or a temporary withdrawal is implemented, with a restart date given to the student. HE Admissions will assist learners with suspension of their student loan payments if required.

9. Student Absence

- 9.1 Absences are categorised as authorised or unauthorised. Students must notify the College of absences and provide appropriate documentation.
- 9.2 Authorised absence can be granted for: hospital and other medical appointments, hospitalisation, post-natal recovery (up to 2 weeks), attendance at a close family member's funeral, religious observance, or time out following a Fitness a Study intervention (time determined by the college).
- 9.3 Unauthorised absence: the following instances in a non-exhaustive list of events that would be deemed as unauthorised absence: minor ailments e.g. coughs/colds; holidays during term-time; employment; absence for an event such as a birthday, wedding or house move; computer issues preventing online attendance.
- 9.4 Absence thresholds are defined (80%, or 85% for those in receipt of college bursary, unless defined otherwise in the course handbook) and consequences include formal warnings, support interventions, removal of college bursary, informing Student Loans Company of attendance rate, and potential withdrawal. Strategic suspension may be used after a maximum period of absence, followed by withdrawal if engagement does not resume.

10. Support and Intervention

If a student's attendance or engagement falls below expectations:

- 10.1. Stage 1: The College will initiate contact to understand the reasons and offer support. Should the student fail to respond to the college's efforts to contact them, after a period of 5 weeks with no attendance or engagement, the withdrawal process (stage 4) will begin.
- 10.2. Stage 2: A formal review meeting may be arranged to agree on an action plan.
- 10.3. Stage 3: Interventions include re-engagement strategies and defined timescales for improvement.
- 10.4. Stage 4: If no improvement is made, the student may be referred to the College's withdrawal procedures.

11. Reporting to the Student Loans Company

If, after exhausting all internal support and intervention procedures, a student is deemed to have withdrawn, the College will:

- 11.1 Promptly notify the SLC of the withdrawal in accordance with the provider's service agreement
- 11.2 Ensure that no further funding is claimed for the student
- 11.3 Retain records of all communications and actions taken
- 11.4 Ensure that 80% of withdrawals are notified within 60 days

13. Communication of Policy

This policy is shared with students:

- on the VLE
- on the college website
- From 2026 entry, at enrolment, via in a hyperlink the student handbook

14. Review

This policy is reviewed biennially or in response to changes in SLC or regulatory guidance.

Author	Created	Approved by	Last Reviewed	Next Review Date
Claudine Barnes	August 2025	SLT		September 2027

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Staff Hub/Intranet: Y
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