



| TITLE | | REF [as per register] | VERSION |
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| Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Management Policy | | LS017 | 9.0 |
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| LEAD PERSON | Director – Designated Safeguarding Lead | | |
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ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Activate Learning is committed to transforming lives through learning by creating safe, inclusive and aspirational environments where every student can thrive.

We understand that regular attendance and punctuality are fundamental to student achievement, wellbeing, safeguarding and progression into further education, employment or training. We recognise attendance as both an educational priority and a safeguarding responsibility. In line with government guidance, including [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#), we promote a culture where attendance is everyone’s responsibility and where barriers to engagement are identified and addressed early.

We are committed to a supportive, relational approach that balances high expectations with understanding. Attendance is promoted through positive engagement, clear communication and timely intervention, ensuring that all students feel valued, supported and motivated to attend.

This policy sets out Activate Learning’s strategic approach to promoting, monitoring and supporting attendance and punctuality across the organisation.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote high expectations of attendance and punctuality as essential components of academic achievement, personal development and future employability.

It establishes a fair, transparent and consistent framework for monitoring attendance across the organisation, ensuring that expectations are applied equitably and

proportionately. The policy embeds attendance within Activate Learning's safeguarding responsibilities, recognising that patterns of absence may indicate wider risks or unmet needs. It also supports the early identification of barriers to attendance, enabling timely and appropriate intervention.

In doing so, the policy ensures compliance with statutory requirements and funding body expectations, while maintaining a balanced approach that combines clear standards with appropriate support to help students succeed.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Activate Learning students, including:

- Further Education students
- Higher Education students
- Apprentices
- Residential students
- Online students
- Those attending our Alternative or Sub-contracted provision (such as our 14-16 programme)
- Full-time and part-time learners

It applies to all curriculum delivery models, including off-site learning and work placements.

4. Principles

Our approach to attendance is underpinned by the following principles:

High Expectations with Support: We maintain high expectations for attendance and punctuality while recognising that students may experience complex personal, social, health or economic barriers that impact engagement.

Early Identification and Intervention: Attendance is monitored systematically to identify emerging concerns at the earliest opportunity. Early, supportive interventions are prioritised to prevent escalation.

Safeguarding-Centred Approach: Attendance can be a key safeguarding indicator. Patterns of absence, persistent lateness or disengagement may signal underlying risk.

Attendance monitoring is therefore embedded within safeguarding oversight arrangements.

Equity and Inclusion: We recognise that some students may face disproportionate barriers to attendance.

This may include students with:

- Special educational needs and disabilities
- Medical conditions or mental health needs
- Care experience
- Social worker or youth justice involvement
- Young carers / young adult carers or young parents
- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Protected characteristics under the Equality Act

Reasonable adjustments and supportive measures will be considered to ensure equitable access to education, upholding our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Where health, wellbeing, or learning differences impact attendance, the [Fitness to Study and Reside Policy](#) is applied in a supportive manner, rather than relying solely on the [Student Positive Behaviour Management Policy](#).

Collaboration: Improving attendance is a shared responsibility involving students, staff, families (where appropriate), employers (for work placements or apprentices), and external agencies.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Students:

Students are expected to attend all timetabled sessions, assessments and required activities, and to communicate promptly where absence is unavoidable, providing appropriate evidence in line with the Student Attendance and Absence Management Procedure.

By enrolling, students agree to uphold attendance and punctuality expectations as part of their wider commitment to professional behaviours and positive engagement. This is reinforced during the induction period and ongoing through our [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Failure to meet these commitments may result in initiation of the Student Positive Behaviour Management Policy, or financial consequences, such as the withdrawal of bursaries or additional travel support (as per the Student Bursary Policy) or reassessment of Student Finance entitlement. Activate Learning may also impose costs for missed exams or mandatory activities. Students are therefore encouraged to seek support early if personal circumstances affect their ability to attend.

For students under 18, regular attendance updates are provided to parents or guardians. Where applicable, foster carers or social workers are also informed. This ensures consistent communication and engagement with those responsible for the student's welfare.

Staff:

Staff play a vital role in promoting and celebrating strong attendance and punctuality, fostering a culture that prioritises consistent engagement in learning.

They are responsible for promptly addressing and following up any unauthorised absences to support student well-being and participation. When concerns arise regarding a student's attendance or punctuality, staff should demonstrate professional curiosity, exploring potential barriers to engagement and working collaboratively with the student to develop effective strategies for improvement.

It is the responsibility of staff to ensure attendance and punctuality are recorded accurately and promptly using the electronic management system. This information is essential for tracking student progress, identifying attendance trends, and addressing potential concerns.

Registers will be completed on the same day that the lesson takes place unless there is just cause. Where students or apprentices are 'off-site' or studying 'in the field' registers still need to be completed on the same day, but those registers should then be submitted and transferred to REMS and the register marks updated within 48 hours. To maintain consistency across the organisation, staff must follow the Student Attendance and Absence Management Procedure.

Accommodation Managers should liaise with parents and carers, teaching staff and safeguarding teams where appropriate when there is a disparity between the student's residential status and academic attendance.

For students attending our 14-16 provision, regular and punctual attendance at all

timetabled sessions is expected and is an important part of both educational engagement and safeguarding. As these learners remain of compulsory school age, the staff work closely with referring schools, parents or carers, and relevant local authorities to monitor attendance, maintain appropriate communication and address any concerns promptly.

Governors:

The Governors and Corporation Board at Activate Learning have a vital role in overseeing student attendance, ensuring a commitment to creating safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments that value and promote excellent attendance. They monitor attendance and retention data through the Quality Performance Report, which is presented to the Corporation's Quality & Relevance Committee. This process ensures Governors provide effective oversight of strategies aimed at achieving attendance and retention targets.

Recognising the connection between attendance and safeguarding, Governors, through the Safeguarding Committee and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee, maintain a clear focus on the attendance and retention of vulnerable groups.

This oversight reinforces Activate Learning's dedication to inclusivity, safeguarding, and supporting positive educational outcomes for all students.

6. Monitoring and Compliance

Attendance data is formally recorded through session registers and analysed to support:

- Quality improvement
- Safeguarding oversight
- Equity monitoring
- Funding and statutory reporting requirements

Annual attendance and retention targets are established and monitored by the study programme area and the Quality & Consistency team. Attendance and retention are monitored in both the Faculty and Group Quality and Consistency meetings. These targets reflect our commitment to continuous improvement and accountability.

Activate Learning fulfils its responsibilities to external agencies, including the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Local Authorities and Student Finance England, through accurate and timely attendance returns.

7. Supportive Interventions

Where attendance concerns arise, Activate Learning will:

- Engage in supportive dialogue with the student and their guardian (where appropriate)
- Explore underlying causes and remove barriers to education, where possible.
- Consider reasonable adjustments, where appropriate.
- Implement timely and proportionate support plans. Regularly reviewing and updating the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.
- Consider whether additional support from other external partners (including the local authority, children and young people's mental health services, GPs or other health services) would be appropriate and make referrals.
- Escalate concerns where safeguarding risks are identified.

Where a student requires a planned break in learning (for example due to health, parental leave, or exceptional circumstances), arrangements will be managed in a structured and supportive way to minimise disruption to their education and progression.

Where necessary, formal processes may be applied in line with relevant procedures (such as the Fitness to Study Policy or the Student Positive Behaviour Management Policy). However, support and early intervention remain the preferred approach.

8. Safeguarding and Support

Activate Learning recognises that persistent, prolonged, or unexplained absence can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, and that regular attendance often serves as a crucial protective factor. As such, attendance is a critical element of our safeguarding framework, as outlined in the [Safeguarding and Prevent Policy](#).

We work proactively and collaboratively with Virtual School Heads and other relevant professionals to promote the educational outcomes of learners who are looked after, previously looked after, or who have or have had a social worker. We ensure that staff are aware of this cohort and understand the importance of monitoring their progress, attainment and wellbeing.

As such, Activate Learning operates clear systems to:

- Identify students who may be vulnerable, disadvantaged or at risk of disengagement.
- Apply appropriate support and interventions to remove barriers to education.

- Respond to learners who go missing during the college day.
- Escalate concerns appropriately to safeguarding leads and, where necessary, external agencies.

References

[Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

[Fitness to Study and Reside Procedure](#)

[Fitness to Study and Reside Policy](#)

[Learners Who Go Missing During the Day Procedure](#)

[Safeguarding Policy](#)

[Student Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Management Procedures](#)

[Student Positive Behaviour Management Policy](#)

[Student Positive Behaviour Management Procedure](#)

[Student Bursary Policy](#)

[Student Bursary Procedure](#)

[Student Health and Wellbeing Policy](#)

[Health and Wellbeing Procedure for Residential Students'](#)

[Department for Education – Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)

[Department for Education – Children Missing Education](#)

[Department for Education – The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked-After Children](#)

[Department for Education – Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Department for Education – Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

[Department for Education - Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions](#)

[Department for Education – Providing Remote Education: Guidance for Schools](#)