ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY (STUDENTS)

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Version and Date		Actions/Notes
1.0	September 2024	Updated Job titles, attendance target & attendance control strategy
2.0	September 2025	Updated absence control strategies & rationale, addition of flow chart
3.0	August 2026	Overview of Attendance Monitoring process Addition of Attendance Monitoring flow chart Addition of Day 42 attendance procedure Addition of welfare checks and home visits

Approved by SMT:	**November 2026**
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To be published on Student Hub:	Yes

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY (STUDENTS)

Macclesfield College is committed to enabling all students attend the maximum number of classes possible to ensure they achieve their full potential. This policy is applicable to Further and Higher Education students.

Rationale

High levels of punctuality and attendance support achievement in academic and personal goals and preparation for progression to further or higher education, employment and adulthood. The College upholds high expectations for attendance and punctuality at all times.

Expectations and Purpose.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Create a culture in which high levels of attendance and punctuality are the accepted norm
- Raise student awareness of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and to take responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality
- Effectively monitor attendance and punctuality
- Ensure mechanisms are in place to celebrate good attendance and punctuality and to follow up low attendance and punctuality in an effective manner.

Learners are expected to attend 100% of timetabled sessions, including lessons, tutorials, enrichment, and work placements.

- Learners must arrive on time and be ready to learn and ensure they have the correct items with them for the session
- Absences must be reported before 9:00am on the day of absence via the college's absence reporting system.
- Medical or other appointments should be scheduled outside college hours where possible.

Distribution of Policy and Procedure

During induction the policy will be explained to all students.

The policy is posted on the College website, www.macclesfield.ac.uk**.** Parents/carers of students under the age of 19 will be provided with details of how to access the policy in an introductory letter and during new Parent Induction/ Welcome event.

This policy will be explained to all new staff at induction and details of how to access it through the website will also be explained.

Definition of Attendance

Student attendance is defined as participation in a programme of educational activities arranged by the College. In addition to actual attendance within the campus, this encompasses a range of other activities within the category of authorised absence such as:

- Work experience
- Educational visits
- Day and residential visits to outdoor centres
- Debates, sports, musical or theatrical productions arranged by or in conjunction with the College
- Study leave
- Receiving tuition via outreach teaching services.

Monitoring Attendance

Summary of Actions by College Teams

- Attendance is monitored daily and reviewed weekly by programme leaders.
- Tutors will follow up on unexplained absences and lateness on the same day where possible.
- Provide attendance reports to parents and carers via text message (16-19 programmes)
- Contact parents/ carers to discuss any emerging attendance concerns.
- Raise awareness of the implications for low attendance through activities such as induction,tutorial programme.
- Celebrate high and improved attendance through the student awards, contact parents/carers
- Unauthorised persistent absence and lateness will result in sanctions and could lead to withdrawal from the programme of learning.

Recording Attendance and Punctuality

For each student, the register of attendance will include:

- Name/course code and session title
- Session start and end time
- ALL attendances, absences, lateness, in whole or in part, authorised or unauthorised
- Appropriate coding to identify the nature of the absence

Attendance shall be recorded for each class or period of scheduled instruction (including instructional or supervised study activities). The attendance register - to be completed in electronic format on Pro–Solution (unless otherwise agreed with Director of MIS & Exams), is an auditable document. Failure by a teacher/lecturer to provide a true, accurate and complete register promptly may result in disciplinary proceedings. Registers are to be marked during the class and **within 15 minutes** of the beginning of a teaching session.

When additional information is received from a student during a student/staff meeting that requires corrections to be made to a student's attendance record, such corrections are to be made immediately using the Pro-Solution register system.

The following is the procedure for maintaining the attendance registers:

Indicate if a student is/has been:

Mark	Register Marks	Can be marked by lecturers /class tutor	Who can Approve	Positive/ Negative /Neutral
A	Absent (Unauthorised)	Y	Class Tutors	Negative
/	Attended / Present	Y	Class Tutors	Positive
****	Present (Off Site)	N	Centre Principal	Positive
L	Late	Y	Class Tutors	Positive
Y	Left Early	Y	Class Tutor	Positive
G	Authorised Absence	N	Centre Principal	Positive
N	Notified Absence (Unauthorised)	N	Learner Experience/ Centre Principal	Negative
H	Holiday	N	Learner Experience/ Centre Principal	Negative
E	Exam	N	Auto-completed	Positive
R	Work Experience	N	MIS	Positive
*****	Critical Closure	N	MIS	Neutral
W	Withdrawn	N	MIS	Neutral
Q	Not Required to Attend		MIS Only	Neutral
T	Transferred	N	MIS	Neutral
#	Cancelled	N	MIS	Neutral
S	Formal Disciplinary Suspension	N	Senior Executive Assistant	Neutral
C	Completed Early	N	MIS	Neutral
J	Authorised Company Absence	N	Sector Leads (Maxim)	Neutral
M	Medical or Exceptional Absence or Safeguarding Risk	N	Director of Student Services	Neutral

The Withdrawn and Transferred marks will be added when the transfer or withdrawal is requested by the Centre Principal, they will not be available to be marked by the tutors.

Reasons for Absence

Unauthorised Absence - If the College does not know the reason for a student's absence, or are not informed, the computerised register system records an un-authorised mark. This cannot usually be altered afterwards unless the absence could not have been foreseen and the College are informed following the correct procedure
The category of unauthorised absence includes absence deriving from reasons such as:

- Unexplained absence
- Truancy (unauthorised absence for any period as a result of premeditated or spontaneous action on the part of student, parent/carer or both)
- Family Holidays during Term Time

Authorised Absence - The following are examples of absences, which could be considered for authorisation if the correct procedures are followed.

Foreseeable absences:

- A specialist medical/dental appointment which cannot be arranged outside college hours (such as a hospital out-patient or orthodontist appointment)
- A religious holiday (a maximum of three days in a year)
- A visit to a University to attend an open day or for an interview, or a career related interview
- An appointment with a Careers Advisor (although these should normally be scheduled to avoid disruption to studies)
- Attendance at a probation meeting
- Attendance at a funeral of a family member or close friend
- A practical driving test (but not a lesson) either a morning or afternoon
- Genuine disruption to a student's means of transport (such as a bus or train strike)
- Examinations – relating to course

Unforeseeable absences:

- Emergency situations involving a family member or another person the student has caring responsibilities for
- Bereavement

Short-Term, Exceptional Domestic Circumstances - Absences related to short-term exceptional domestic circumstances may be either an authorised or unauthorised absence. Authorised absence under this heading covers situations such as:

- The period immediately after an accident or illness
- A period of serious or critical illness of a close relative
- A domestic crisis which causes serious disruption to the family home, causing temporary relocation.

The College would wish to ensure that all students do not miss out on their entitlement to an education, and all possible support will be provided for the long-term educational needs of students with care responsibilities. If a student is unable to attend due to such responsibilities, the College would wish to provide additional support services to support the student and to ensure that their absence from education will not be long-term. Where such arrangements are in place, this will be categorised as authorised absence. However, where additional services have not been accessed and care responsibilities become long-term, the absence shall be categorised as unauthorised absence.

Absence Control Strategies

The College is committed to promoting excellent attendance and will monitor student attendance regularly to identify concerns at an early stage. Where a student's attendance falls below 95%, an attendance monitoring process will be implemented to provide appropriate support, intervention and accountability.

Attendance Monitoring Stage 1
When a student's attendance falls below 95%, the Tutor will:

- Meet with the student to discuss their attendance and identify any barriers.
- Agree attendance improvement targets and supportive actions.
- Monitor attendance over the following 2 weeks.

At the end of the review period, attendance will be assessed:

- If attendance has improved, the student will be de-escalated from formal monitoring.
- Previous targets will be reviewed, ongoing support will continue where appropriate, and the attendance monitoring marker will be removed.
- If attendance has not improved, the case will progress to Stage 2.

Attendance Monitoring Stage 2

Where attendance does not improve following Stage 1, the student will be referred to the Programme Lead or Course Lead.

This stage will include:

- A formal review meeting with the student and parents/carer.
- Revised attendance targets and support strategies.
- Monitor attendance over the following 2 weeks.

Following the review:

- If attendance improves, the student will return to normal monitoring through the de-escalation process.
- If attendance does not improve, the case will progress to Stage 3.

Attendance Monitoring Stage 3

Students whose attendance continues to cause concern will be referred to the Centre Principal.

At this stage:

- A second formal attendance meeting will be held with the student and parent/carer.
- Previous interventions will be reviewed.
- Further support and reasonable adjustments will be considered where appropriate.
- Clear attendance expectations and timescales will be established.

Following a further review:

- If attendance improves, the student will be de-escalated and continue to be monitored to ensure sustained improvement.
- If attendance does not improve, the matter will progress to a final Stage 4 Disciplinary Meeting.

Stage 4 Disciplinary Meeting

Where attendance remains unsatisfactory despite previous interventions and support, the matter will be referred to the Director of Student Services & Inclusion/Campus Lead.

At this stage:

- All previous attendance interventions will be reviewed.
- Consideration for withdrawal from the course will take place.

For HE learners where withdrawal is the decided outcome, the period between last attendance and physical withdrawal will not exceed 60 days. This mitigates against overpayment of student loans and overpayment of student maintenance grants which would lead to a recovery process.

To allow HE learners time to consider options, where appropriate, the SLC suspension process will be used to suspend loan payments and maintenance payments to learners, again protecting learners against overpayments.

De-escalation

Students who demonstrate sustained improvement in attendance at any stage of the process will be de-escalated. This will include:

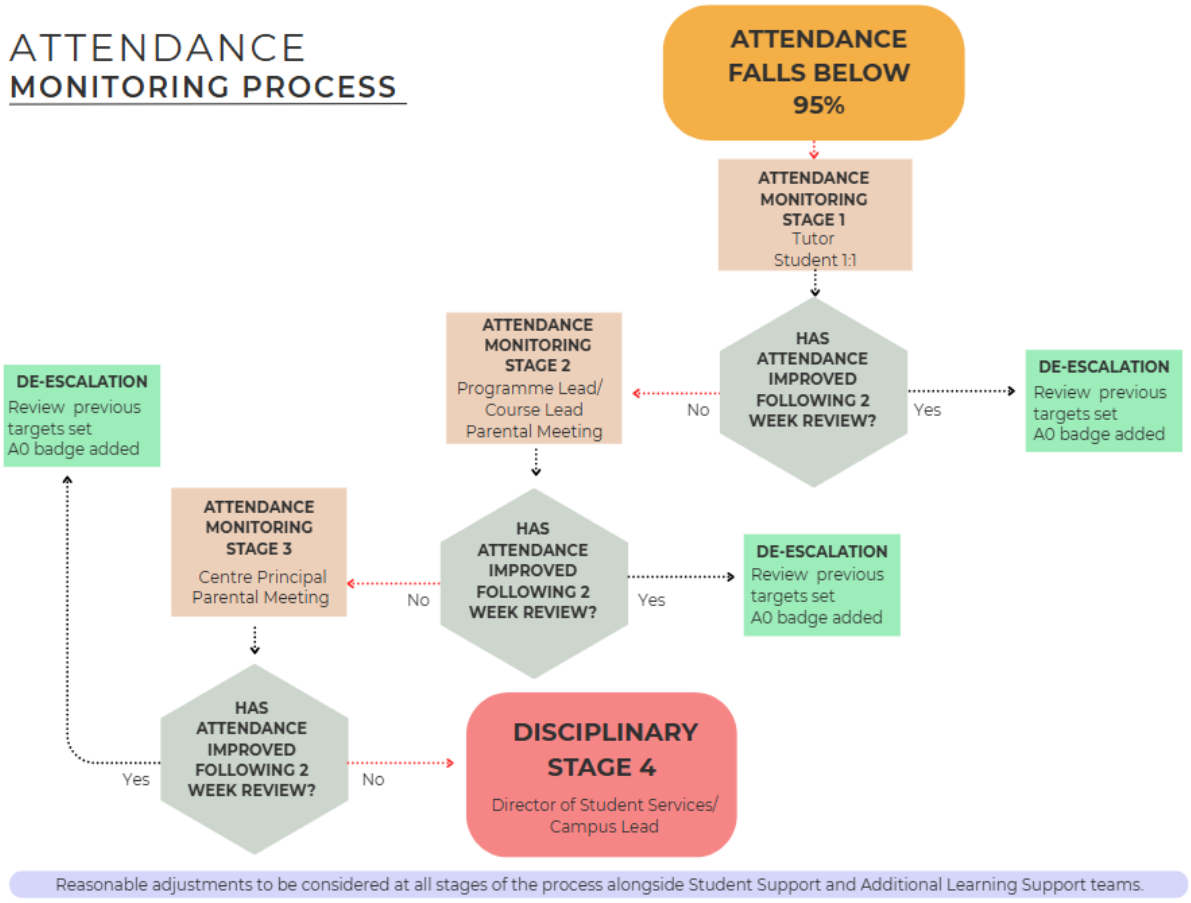
- Reviewing progress against agreed attendance targets.
- Returning the student to routine attendance monitoring.
- Continuing support where required to maintain positive attendance.

Reasonable Adjustments

The College recognises that some students may experience barriers to attendance due to medical conditions, disabilities, special educational needs, mental health or other exceptional circumstances. Reasonable adjustments will be considered at every stage of the attendance monitoring process, working alongside Student Support, Additional Learning Support (ALS) and other relevant services to ensure appropriate support is in place before any escalation is considered.

A student who does not achieve by the planned end date because of unsatisfactory/low attendance and/or failure to meet coursework targets may be charged any additional awarding body registration fees and re-sit fees. A student who fails to attend an examination may be charged the re-sit fee to attend the same examination in a later series.

Absence during term may lead to a reduction of monies paid through student support funds or other such funds. The College recommends that any student following a full-time course does not engage in full time employment and limit's part time employment to a maximum of 10 hours per week during term time.



Day 42 Procedure

All students will be subject to enhanced attendance monitoring during the first 42 days of their enrolment. This period is critical in establishing positive attendance habits and ensuring students are fully engaged with their programme of study. Students whose attendance does not meet The College's expectations during this period may be required to attend attendance review meetings and engage with support interventions. Where attendance remains unsatisfactory, and there is insufficient evidence of engagement or mitigating circumstances, the College reserves the right to withdraw the student from their course.

Appeals

Any appeals will be made to the Course Lead in the first instance. Where the student is challenging the number of recorded absences, they must provide evidence of attendance on the disputed occasions. Similarly, evidence must be provided of any extenuating circumstances which the student wishes to be considered.

If the appeal is successful, the attendance register will be changed to reflect the outcome of the appeal process.

Unexplained Absence and Welfare Visits

Where a student has been absent from college for five consecutive days or more and The College has been unable to establish contact with either the student or their parent/carer

(where appropriate), The College may undertake a home visit to establish the student's welfare, determine the reasons for their absence, and discuss their intentions to return to study.