



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

HE ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy Owner:	Head of Quality and Student Engagement
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Location:	Gateway

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1. **Purpose**

This policy has been guided in its development by Sector-Agreed Principles of the revised [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#).

- 1.1 To highlight and ensure that all higher education students understand the importance of attending and engaging with all lectures and learning opportunities, including work experience/placement as required by their course.
- 1.2 South West College requires all Higher Education students to attend all scheduled lectures and learning opportunities and sets a minimum attendance requirement of 80% in each academic year.
- 1.3 Where applicable, students understand that professional bodies or awarding bodies may have different requirements for attendance and that failing to meet these requirements could mean they will fail aspects of their course.
- 1.4 To highlight and ensure that all higher education students understand that failure to attend a lecture or learning opportunity disadvantages them and negatively impacts on academic success.
- 1.5 To understand the responsibility of students to attend where group work and collaborative learning is taking place, and the negative impact non-attendance has on other learners.

2. **Definition**

- 2.1 Attendance means being physically present at the lecture or learning opportunity, arriving on time and staying the duration of the session. Attendance can also constitute class participation through a number of technological methods such as:
 - i.) Virtual learning involves any type of online learning whereby learners complete the course in their own time and at their own pace with no face-to-face element.
 - ii.) Blended learning is when a portion of the traditional face-to-face instruction is replaced by web-based online learning.

- iii.) Online face-to-face learning involves any type of online learning that is completed in real-time, with a tutor, using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) e.g. Canvas

2.2 Engagement means to be committed to and interact with learning opportunities behaviorally, emotionally and cognitively.

3. Attendance Monitoring

The monitoring of attendance will be conducted as follows:

- 3.1 Once the course has been set up and students have been enrolled and timetabled on the college system, an e-register will be generated.
- 3.2 The Tutor will record the attendance status of each student on the e-register
- 3.3 The College, via the Tutor can view and monitor student weekly attendance using the College electronic system.
- 3.4 Tutors/Course Directors can identify any attendance issues during the tutorial process and initiate a follow-up of non-attendance in line with DfE guidelines and SWC policies.
- 3.5 Tutors will report any issues or concerns regarding attendance to the Course Director and discuss with students either through the tutorial process or through a scheduled meeting.
- 3.6 Tutors will provide support and guidance to students with issues regarding attendance and engagement; this may include contacting other specialists and support such as counsellors.
- 3.7 The College will comply with the monitoring and reporting requirements of external organisations such as Professional Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), and awarding bodies.
- 3.8 Data collected regarding attendance will be stored and used in compliance with the

Data Protection Act. Please refer to the College's Data Protection Policy for further information.

4. Outcomes of Effective Attendance Monitoring

The impact of effective attendance monitoring should result in the following:

- i.) Increase attendance on higher education courses at South West College;
- ii.) Increase the number of students who stay on their programme of study.
- iii.) Increase success on higher education courses at South West College;
- iv.) Increase the number of students who progress onto the next stage or level of study.
- v.) Increase the number of students who succeed at first attempt at assessment.
- vi.) Ensure students have ownership of their own learning and achievements.

5. Unsatisfactory Attendance

- 5.1 Student attendance may be deemed unsatisfactory if attendance falls below 80%, where a student fails to engage in learning, teaching and assessment sessions, without providing a satisfactory explanation to tutors for their absence.
- 5.2 Unsatisfactory attendance also includes persistent late arrival at, or early departure from, learning and teaching sessions.
- 5.3 Where a student's attendance is deemed to be unsatisfactory, the module tutor should report any issues or concerns to the Course Director and the following actions may be taken in line with the College's Student Disciplinary Policy:
 - i) The tutor and/or Course Director may contact the student to discuss their attendance and seek an explanation for their absence
 - ii) Attendance will be monitored closely with further tutorials provided where necessary.
 - iii) Tutors may offer support through action plans or signposting other support.
 - iv) If attendance does not improve following initial discussions, or targets on action plan have not been met, a meeting will be arranged between the Course Director and/or tutor and the student to ascertain difficulties with attendance and strategies to improve attendance. Strategies/support and an action plan will be agreed by all parties and monitored within the college tutorial process.

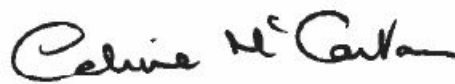
- v) Students may be issued with a formal written warning about their attendance.
- vi) If the student does not respond to correspondence regarding meetings, the awarding body, if required, will be informed and the student may be withdrawn from the programme on the third attempt of contact (not applicable to Open University awards).

- 5.4 If the student is unable to improve their attendance due to ill health or personal circumstance, Tutors may refer the student to the awarding body procedures and the Extenuating Circumstance Policy for further guidance. A suspension from studies may also be an appropriate option discussion.
- 5.5 The student must consider the financial consequences of non-attendance, of the possibility of repeating a unit or a year if not successful, and the impact this has on further study. A formal report on a student's attendance may be made to the student sponsor, including an employer, and the Student Loan Company. Refer to Student Finance NI for further information.

6. Monitoring and Review

- 6.1 The College will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of this Policy. This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required to reflect changes in legislation or circumstances.
- 6.2 The College will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote this Policy effectively and is committed to reviewing this Policy on a regular basis, in consultation with the recognised trade unions, statutory organisations such as the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and in line with models of good practice.

Signed Principal and Chief Executive:



Date:

24 June 2026

Signed Chair of the Governing Body:



Date:

24 June 2026

Related Documentation

Title	Location	Owner
Student Disciplinary Policy	Gateway	Curriculum Director
Extenuating Circumstances Procedure	Gateway	Head of Quality and Student Engagement

Change Log

Location	Change from deletion/addition	Change to
Whole document	New Policy template	Entire document has been reformatted in line with required template (number, sequencing etc.)
1.	Purpose: Intro paragraph has been changed	This policy has been guided in its development by Sector-Agreed Principles of the revised UK Quality Code. For further information, visit https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code .
2.	Tier 4 International Students section removed	
2.1 (iii)	using a virtual classroom tool (e.g. Blackboard Collaborate).	using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) e.g. Canvas
2.2		Inserted: Engagement means to be committed to and interact with learning opportunities behaviourally, emotionally and cognitively.
3.0	Attendance Monitoring section has been re-written (was 4.2 on V1.0)	
4.0	Outcomes of Effective Attendance Monitoring (moved from 3.0 on V1.0 to 1.0)	Bullets have been changed to Roman Numeral format
5.0	Unsatisfactory Attendance – moved from section 6.0 on V1.0.	5.1 to 5.6 has been re-written
6.0	Monitoring and Review – moved from section 7.0 on V1.0	

Communication

Who needs to know (for action)	Senior Management Team Heads & Deputy Heads of Department Course Coordinators, HLA Manager Head of Quality and Student Engagement Higher Education development Coordinator Quality Team, Marketing Team Student Support and Engagement Team Applicants, Students
Who needs to be aware	All lecturing staff

Communication Plan

Action	By Whom	By When
Communicate to all staff	Nicola Nugent	On approval

Action	By Whom	By When
Upload to Student and Staff Gateway	B McIlduff / J Kelly	On approval

Document Development

Details of staff who were involved in the development of this policy:

Name	Role
Julie Kelly	Higher Education Development Coordinator
Brian McIlduff	Head of Quality and Student Engagement

Details of staff, external groups or external organisations who were consulted in the development of this policy:

Name	Organisation	Date
N/A		

Approval Dates

Approved by	Date
Governing Body	24 June 2026

Document History

Issue no. under review	Date of review:	Persons involved in review	Changes made after review? Yes/No If Yes refer to change log	New Issue No.	If changes made was consultation required?	If changes made was Equality Screening required?
V1.0	26.11.2024	J Kelly, B McIllduff	Yes	V2.0	No	Yes
V2.0	May 2026	J Kelly/B McIllduff	Yes	V3.0	No	Yes