

CATEGORY: Higher Education

TYPE: Policy

TITLE: Attendance

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Assistant Principal for Teaching & Learning

PURPOSE:

Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group (NSCG) is a College that is '*Committed to Excellence.*' NSCG is recognised as an outstanding organisation where students and staff thrive, achieve and make a positive contribution to the cultural and economic prosperity of Staffordshire and beyond.

The purpose of the policy is to support and monitor the attendance and engagement of all students studying at Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group (NSCG). NSCG recognises that to be successful with their academic studies students need to fully engage with the teaching and learning offered as part of their chosen. Where students do not attend and engage this can mean they are not able to satisfactorily progress with their award and the college will seek to take appropriate interventions to establish their re-engagement with the programme.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to students studying at NSCG on a Higher Education course

POLICY

Students studying at NSCG through a partner HEI

This process will also apply to students at partner HEIs, with decisions being made by appropriate staff at NSCG. The Attendance Appeal Review process remains the same and will be conducted by the partner HEI.

Attendance Requirements

Students are expected to attend every element of their programme of study. This is defined as (but not limited to):

- Attending required lectures, seminars, tutorials
- Undertaking required laboratory work
- Undertaking research or fieldwork
- Submitting essays, assignments and attending examinations
- Placements

- Practical sessions
- Scheduled self-led practical sessions

There may be other additional sessions that course teams may arrange to further enhance students' studies and experience on their course. Whilst these may be optional, we strongly recommend that students engage with them whenever possible so that they benefit from the extra learning being provided. Students undertaking a period of their course as part of an approved work placement are expected to attend the placement in accordance with the placement agreement. Regular checks with the employer will take place to ensure attendance.

Recording attendance

Students will be responsible for their participation in their learning experience by engaging and fully attending all elements of their programme/course. It is anticipated that by students engaging in their programme in this way they will have a better opportunity to successfully progress with their studies.

To enable NSCG to identify where students may not successfully progress due to poor attendance and engagement with their course, the student's attendance and engagement will be monitored for the full duration of their period of their study through the college register system and associated reports.

Students will be able to view their attendance record in the timetable tile on their personalised student dashboard.

Monitoring

NSCG will monitor attendance and engagement regularly. If the College has concerns about a student's attendance and engagement, the department will undertake appropriate interventions by working with the student's personal tutor to gain agreement over re-engagement and provide further assistance as appropriate to support the student.

Absence Monitoring and Withdrawal

On some occasions, for instance illness, a student's absence may be unavoidable. All absences must be notified to the relevant personal tutor immediately.

Students are permitted to apply for a break in studies from their programme of study for personal or medical reasons. Guidance and advice on this process can be sought from their personal tutor.

If a student's attendance and/or engagement doesn't meet expected levels, the student will be contacted. We may use more than one communication route to get in touch, one of which will normally include an email. Students will normally be given a period of two weeks in which to contact their course leader or personal tutor to discuss

their reasons for poor attendance and engagement. Attendance and engagement will continue to be monitored during this time and if significant improvement is not recorded, or the student doesn't get in contact, we will take further action. For example, we might put in an action plan to support their re-engagement, or the student might be withdrawn from their course. Where a student is withdrawn, they will be notified by email.

Non-attendance may affect the release of student loan payments. The college will promptly inform the Student Loans Company (SLC) of any student who is not meeting attendance expectations, as per SLC guidelines.

Attendance Withdrawal Appeal

If a student is withdrawn due to failure to engage with the attendance and engagement process, they can appeal the decision. When students are informed of the decision, this will include details of how to submit an appeal against the decision.

Attendance Appeal Reviews

If a student disagrees with the decision we have reached on their attendance appeal, they can request that the decision is reviewed.

A review is not a reconsideration of an appeal. It is to check that procedure has been followed and that a reasonable outcome has been reached.

The only reasons students can request a review are:

- a) The appeal procedure was not followed properly and this has affected the outcome.
- b) The decision reached was unreasonable in view of all of the circumstances.
- c) They have new evidence which they were unable to provide earlier in the process, for valid reasons.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

If a student disagrees with the decision on their attendance appeal review, they have the right to make a complaint to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator \(OIA\)](#) within one year of the decision.

Breaks in Study

Sometimes a student's engagement may have been low for a longer period of time, or the circumstances that have been impacting on them are likely to go on for a longer time. The student may have missed too much learning or assessment, or they might not be able to commit to study in the way we would expect. In those cases, the student might want to think about taking a break in study.

SLC Attendance Confirmation

- **Timing:** The institution will submit attendance confirmations to the SLC at the required times, as specified by the SLC's guidance.
- **Accuracy:** Attendance confirmations will be submitted accurately and promptly to ensure timely payment of student loans.
- **Documentation:** The institution will maintain appropriate documentation to support attendance confirmations.