

Student Attendance Policy

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Introduction

1. The student attendance policy has been developed as part of WE Bridge Academy's commitment to providing a supportive learning environment that enables all students who have chosen to study at WE Bridge Academy to achieve their full potential.
2. WE Bridge Academy recognises the investment that students and their sponsors make when a student enrolls on a course and considers that it has responsibility to act on non-attendance so that students can be supported to complete their programmes of study successfully.
3. WE Bridge Academy has a legal duty to monitor the attendance of students from non-European Economic Areas (non-EEA) who have Student Route visas (formerly called Tier 4 visas) and to report those who do not meet the required number of attendance to United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

Policy Statement

4. Attendance is a key component in student retention, progression and achievement. Regular attendance and academic achievement are closely linked.
5. WE Bridge Academy expects students to:

- attend all learning and teaching sessions on the programme on which they are enrolled. Examples of learning and teaching sessions include classes, lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, and laboratory sessions.
- arrive on time for classes and remain for the duration of the teaching session.

Students who arrive late for a class will not be admitted, except for exceptional circumstances or a pre-approved lateness. They must wait until the end of the next break to join the class. The student will be marked absent without authorisation for the class time that they missed.

Responsibilities

6. Students are responsible for attending all learning and teaching sessions associated with their programme of study. Students must notify the Director of Studies (DoS) in advance (before the scheduled class) if they expect to be absent from timetabled classes. This should be done either via the 'Absence' function on the Student Portal of the Academy website or via email to the DoS.

Authorised Absences

7. The following reasons for absence will be treated as authorised if the student informs the school in advance or as soon as is possible to do so.

- Illness (with a doctor's note)
- Doctor, hospital or dentist appointments (with proof of appointment)
- University appointments (with proof of appointment)
- Embassy appointments (with proof of appointment)
- Family illness or emergency
- IELTS / External exams (exam only)
- Holiday (if pre-approved by school and sponsor if applicable)
- Religious observance

Absences that fall outside these reasons will be recorded as unauthorised. Authorised absence which significantly affects a student's understanding and grasp of course material or causes them to miss significant numbers of learning and teaching sessions, tutorials and deadlines, may be treated in the same way as unauthorised absences. To have an absence authorised the student must complete an 'Absence notification' form stating the reason for the absence and provide any supporting documentation.

8. Module teachers are responsible for reminding students of the importance of regular attendance at learning and teaching sessions and for recording student attendance. The Academic Management Team (Director of Studies/DoS and Assistant Director of Studies/ADoS) are responsible for ensuring that all teaching staff maintain an accurate record of student attendance. They will do this by remotely checking that the attendance register on the Moodle system has been completed for every class on a daily basis.

Absence Monitoring Procedure

9. Teachers record student attendance on the Moodle system. Any absence will automatically be recorded as unauthorised. If a student who is absent provides an acceptable reason for their absence (see 7 above), their record will be amended by the DoS or nominated person authorised.

10. The DoS will monitor student attendance through the automated Moodle attendance criteria.

Sanctions in the Event of Non-attendance

11. If a student misses a large number of classes over a four-week period (30%), this will be investigated. If no good reason is provided for these absences, the students will be advised of the importance of maintaining good attendance. If this informal approach does not lead to an improvement in student attendance, formal warnings may be issued, depending on any mitigating circumstances that may be affecting the student's attendance. Timeframes between escalations in warning will typically be 4 weeks, though these may be longer or shorter depending on the severity of the attendance issue.

There are 4 stages of attendance warning. If a student fails to improve their attendance to an acceptable level after a 4th warning, they may be expelled from the course.

The DoS will inform the Marketing & Admissions Executive, who will in turn inform UKVI through the Sponsorship Management System (SMS) of any student studying on a Student Route visa that is expelled from WE Bridge Academy through failure to adhere to minimum attendance requirements.

Lateness

12. Ten minutes after the start of the lesson, the teacher will slide the door banner from 'class open' to 'class closed'. Students are not permitted to enter the classroom if the door banner is set to 'class closed'. The only exception to this rule is students with a pre-approved lateness, who will be given a 'green card' by the DoS or nominated person to present to their teacher.

Holidays

13. Students wishing to take time off outside of set holiday periods must get approval from the DoS in advance. This must be done in writing via email. Any holidays taken without prior approval will be treated as unauthorised absence and the student will be charged any applicable course fees for the time away. Sponsored students must obtain permission from their sponsors before they can take a holiday.

Police Contact

14. If an adult student is missing from school for 3 consecutive days without contact, the Missing Student Procedure outlined in the Student Welfare Policy will be followed.

Sponsor Contact

15. For sponsored students, all relevant embassies will be informed of any warning issued to students regarding their attendance. Sponsors will also be informed of any students failing to meet the attendance criteria set by the sponsor.

10 Days' Consecutive Absence

16. Any student who misses 10 consecutive days of class without providing an acceptable reason (see section 7 above) will be expelled from the school without going through the stages outlined in 11 above. In the case of students studying at the academy on a Student Route visa, UKVI will be informed of their missing consecutive contact points.

Policy Agreement

17. During their induction, all students will have the attendance policy outlined to them. They will confirm that they understand and agree to the attendance policy on the enrolment form which they sign upon completion of their induction.