

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

1. Purpose

Excellent attendance and punctuality are key to learner achievement. The WEA has high expectations of attendance and punctuality. This includes supporting all learners to take full responsibility for attending all their sessions and being on time.

2. Scope

This policy applies to learners, tutors, course organisers and management teams.

3. Values

Excellent attendance and punctuality:

- ensures that course content is not missed and that learners have the best possible opportunity to achieve
- prevents disruption to the learning of other learners
- reflects expectations in the workplace and more widely e.g. medical or school appointments
- guarantees that class spaces are not taken by learners who cannot attend; impacting positively on prospective learners and waiting lists
- safeguards funding for adult learning; ensuring this is maximised through positive retention rates

4. Policy

Learner Responsibilities

Key points on attendance and punctuality are included in the **WEA Learning Agreement**:

- arrive on time, attend every session and let their tutor know if they can't attend a session
- be able to complete the whole course
- let their tutor know if they are thinking about leaving the course and tell them why
- let their tutor know about any support they might need to complete their course (e.g. financial, learning support or technical support.)

In addition, learners are expected to:

- notify their tutor of their absence before the start of their session, where possible using the message facility in Canvas. If this is not possible, the learner must provide a reason for their absence when they next see their tutor
- give an explanation to the tutor if they arrive late for a session (this can be done privately and not in front of the class)
- discuss with the Learner support and/or Education teams at enrolment and then with their tutor if lateness is to be legitimately consistent throughout the course e.g. travel

arrangements or medical conditions, which make it impossible for the student to arrive at the expected time, so that reasonable adjustments can be made. This should be noted in the Learning Record following Initial Assessment or the 'Before your Course' activity in Canvas

- complete work set by their tutor for late or missed sessions
- understand that if their attendance is poor or irregular their tutor will discuss this with them and give them targets to improve
- be aware that if they do not attend for two sessions in row they will be withdrawn from the course (unless alternative arrangements/ exceptions have been made).

Tutor Responsibilities

Tutors should:

- monitor attendance regularly and enforce expectations consistently and according to the processes contained in this policy
- start and finish taught sessions on time to model the behaviours expected
- communicate attendance and punctuality expectations regularly throughout the course at initial assessment, learner induction (including the Learning Agreement and Ground Rules activity), progress checks and at other points as needed
- provide clear instructions to learners in relation to how they must inform the tutor of planned or unplanned absence or lateness
- make the first/initial contact with a learner to determine reasons for absence and to challenge unplanned absences. This can be done through Canvas. However, where this is not possible, then the tutor should inform the relevant Education Support Assistant (ESA)/ course organiser to do this
- tell learners about the support available to support attendance and punctuality and what action will be taken by if attendance or punctuality falls below an agreed level
- make arrangements to support learners returning to class after a period of absence and welcome them back to the learning environment
- ensure that learners arriving late do not disrupt a class. Learners should be invited to start the task, join in or wait until if that is more appropriate. Learners should be challenged about their lateness, but this process should not disrupt the class and the reason for their lateness should not be raised in front of the whole class.

Important note

The register is a legal and auditable document and therefore needs to be accurate and up to date. It is essential for safeguarding staff and learners, the health and safety of learners in an emergency, for identifying attendance and lateness patterns and support needs; and to ensure funding is legitimately claimed from our funders.

5. Process

- Registers must be taken at the start of all sessions, including recording any lateness accurately in the Notes sections of the register.
- Tutors **must** mark the register accurately within the first 15 minutes of the lesson to reflect the attendance of learners in the session.
- If the register cannot be marked online then it must be marked on a paper register within the first 15 minutes and copy retained until the e-register is marked.
- The e-register **must** be completed within 48 hours after the session.

Due to its importance of registers, failure to comply with the register process as per this policy, will result in a discussion and investigation with your line manager which could lead to formal action being taken under the disciplinary policy.

Withdrawals

If a learner is absent from class for 28 days without an explanation they should be withdrawn by the tutor through the e-register.

Prior to any withdrawal, the tutor should make the first/initial contact with a learner to determine reasons for absence and make a record, this can be done through Canvas. However, where this is not possible, or there is no response from the learner, then the tutor should inform the relevant Education Support Assistant (ESA)/ course organiser to contact the learner.

Following learner withdrawal from accredited provision, it is imperative that awarding body information is updated and registrations are removed. This must be actioned within 5 working days of withdrawing a learner from provision. The course co-ordinator must contact the Accreditation Team – accreditation@wea.org.uk to request that the learner is withdrawn from the awarding body portal. This will be completed by the Accreditation Team within 2 working days of receiving notification from the course co-ordinator. In addition, all IQAs will check with the Accreditation Team that learners registered for accreditation are current. They will undertake these checks prior to the end of each term.

Education Support Assistants/ course organiser responsibilities

ESAs/ course organisers will also keep appropriate teaching staff informed of issues and/or actions to do with learner attendance/punctuality.

Following initial contact by tutors, if there is no response from the learner, ESAs/ course organisers should contact learners to find out why they have not been attending by phoning them and sending a letter, where they cannot reach them by phone. Regular register checks will be conducted by Education Support Assistant (ESA)/ course organiser and fed back to Area Education Managers (AEMs) so they are aware what is happening with each class and can then discuss any attendance issues directly with tutors.

Head of Education & Line Manager Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for ensuring a high attendance and punctuality record for their area and must ensure that all learners are treated consistently and equally via this policy.

Managers must keep all staff aware of attendance records relating to their area and for ensuring the attendance data is regularly monitored and discussed at regional quality meetings and that unsatisfactory attendance in their area is discussed and actioned.

Line managers are accountable for ensure that all colleagues are actively using the attendance policy and procedure to ensure learners are experiencing the best possible learning experience and are safe during their learning with the WEA.

5. Monitoring

Monitoring of attendance will be conducted through:

- At course level by tutors, ESAs/course organisers
- Overseen at Regional meetings, National quality performance reviews, Class Visits and observations of teaching and learning

6. Links to other policies and documents

WEA Learning Agreement

E-register guidance

Class Visit guidance

Date of this Review	Date of next Review	Policy reviewed and updated by:	Policy approved by:
August 2023	August 2024	Head of Quality and Performance	Director of Quality, Estates and Learner Experience