

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Approved by **Leadership Team**

Next review date: **November 2026**

Version Number	Date of Issue	Author	Status	Comments
1	August 25	Policy Development Partner	Review	Policy review, format changes and standardisation of policy format.
2	Nov 25	Head of Quality and Performance	Review	Annual Policy review

This policy and any related annexes will be reviewed by Leadership Team annually.

1. Purpose

Excellent attendance and punctuality is key to learner achievement. The WEA has high expectations of attendance and punctuality, as set out in the [Learning Agreement](#). This includes supporting all learners to take full responsibility for attending all their sessions and being on time.

2. 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

3. Scope

This policy applies to learners, tutors, course managers, delivery team leaders and management teams.

4. Policy

Learner Responsibilities

Key points on attendance and punctuality are included in the [WEA Learning Agreement](#) and state that learners must:

- 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, we may be able to help
- let their tutor know about any support they might need to complete their course (e.g. financial, learning, disability or technical support.)

In addition, learners are expected to:

- notify their tutor of unplanned absence before 9am on the first day of absence, where possible using the message facility in Canvas. If this is not possible, the learner must use Canvas to message their tutor before the next session to provide a reason for their absence or explain their absence when they next see their tutor
- notify their tutor of any planned absence in as far in advance as possible, either through Canvas or when they next have a class



Adult Learning Within Reach

- 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)
- let their tutor know as soon as possible if there is an unavoidable reason they will be regularly late (for example, travel or medical conditions) so the WEA can support the learner and make adjustments if needed.
- 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
- understand 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).
- understand that failure to attend regularly or for all of the session may impact on their ability to progress on to another WEA course and/or be entered into an exam or final assessment.

Tutor Responsibilities

Tutors should:

- monitor attendance regularly and enforce it consistently and according to the processes contained in this policy
- start and finish taught sessions on time to model high expectations
- communicate attendance and punctuality expectations regularly throughout the course at initial assessment, learner induction (including the Learning Agreement and Ground Rules activity)
- address poor attendance and/ or of punctuality during progress checks and other Learning Record/ review activity 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
- update their Group Profile if a learner is going to be regularly and unavoidably late (e.g. travel or medical condition) and ensure appropriate support/ catch up tasks are planned for the learner
- make the first/initial contact with a learner to determine reasons for absence (if the learner has not already contacted the tutor) and to challenge unplanned absences This can be done through Canvas. Tutors should follow up persistent and unexplained absences with their Learning Manager who will contact the learner.
- tell learners about the support available to support attendance and punctuality, this includes support from the WEA Pastoral and Progression Advisors
- explain to learners what action will be taken by if attendance or punctuality falls below an agreed level
- plan 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.

Learning Manager responsibilities

Managers will:

- keep appropriate teaching staff informed of issues and/or actions to do with learner attendance/punctuality.
- following persistent or unexplained absence reported to them by tutors, 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.

Learning Manager Team Leaders

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.
- keeping all staff aware of attendance records relating to their area and for ensuring the attendance data is regularly monitored and discussed at meetings and that unsatisfactory attendance is discussed and actioned.
- ensuring that all staff have support and training to enable them to carry out their own responsibilities within this policy.

5. Registers

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.

- Registers **must** be taken at the start of all sessions, including recording minutes of lateness accurately in the Late section 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.

Lateness

If a learner does not attend the first 15 minutes of the session, they will be marked as late in the register. The numerical field in the register must be completed to record how many minutes the learner is late by. The Notes field should be used to record comments on lateness or leaving early.

Tutor failure to comply with the register process as per this policy, will result in a discussion and investigation with Learning Managers which could lead to formal action being taken under the disciplinary policy.

Withdrawals

If a learner misses two consecutive classes 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 Learning Manager 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 Learning Manager 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 5 working days of receiving notification from the Learning Manager. 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.

6. Monitoring

- Course level by Learning Managers
- Observations and Learning Walks

7. Links to other policies and documents

WEA Learning Agreement
E-register guidance
Observation guidance