



Student Attendance Policy

Date of most recent review: August 2016
Date of Next Review: June 2017
Responsibility: Assistant Principal (Support and Student Services)

Please ask if you, or someone you know, require this document in a different format or language.

1. Purpose

This policy and procedure describe the College system for supporting and monitoring student attendance.

Student Support Funds will not be paid to students who do not meet the required attendance thresholds.

2. Key Principles

- Students should be encouraged and supported to attend 100% of classes.
- Classes should only be cancelled in exceptional circumstances. Excepting College closure, any lecturer who wishes to cancel a class must have prior approval from their Assistant Director.
- Student Support Funds will be paid 2 weeks in advance and 2 weeks in arrears.
- Students should follow the Student Absence Reporting Procedures (Appendix 1) to advise Student Services staff in a timeous manner about any issues that affect their attendance.
- Student Support Funds will not be paid where a student has not followed the Student Absence Reporting procedures and has not met the requisite attendance threshold.

3. Responsibilities

For student attendance reporting and monitoring to be effective several groups of staff need to work co-operatively including individual lecturers, Personal Academic Tutors, Student Services Centre staff and the Student Finance Team.

Students must use the Student Absence Reporting system to advise Student Services staff in a timeous manner about any issues that affect their attendance.

Lecturers are responsible for ensuring that all attendance registers are completed on the same day as the class takes place. New Scottish Funding Council regulations require tighter control on student' attendance monitoring therefore any difficulties in marking registers should be highlighted to the lecturer's Assistant Director.

Student Services Assistants are responsible for considering student attendance records and blocking any Student Support Fund payments as necessary.

The Student Advice Manager or Student Guidance Advisor may take a decision to award a Student Support Funds payment based on appropriate mitigating circumstances.

Assistant Principal (Support and Student Services) is responsible for setting the attendance thresholds required for Student Support Fund payments.

4. Thresholds for Release of Student Support Funds

Scottish Funding Council regulations state that students must attend 100% of classes for any Student Support Funds to be released. This policy defines this requirement as students being permitted a maximum of 5 authorised absences per semester.

Any absence must however be authorised by either the Student Advice Manager or the Student Guidance Advisor. The procedure for students to follow to seek an authorised absence are in Appendix 1.

The decision of the Student Advice Manager is final.

There will be no release of Student Support Funds if a student's absence exceeds 5 absences per semester.

5. Attendance Registers

Lecturers are responsible for ensuring that all attendance registers are accurately completed on the same day as the class takes place. To support this staff will be emailed highlighting any unmarked registers.

Attendance registers must be accurate as they are formal documents which are used to meet our statutory obligations and, where required, information will be provided to other external agencies. Student attendance information may also be used in dealing with complaints.

Attendance registers are audited annually with the potential for any discrepancies in Student Support Funding payments to have to be paid out of the College's own funds.

Any class cancellation can only be with the approval of the Assistant Director and in those circumstances an Administration Assistant will, on request, mark the students on this class register as Authorised Absent. Any requests should be emailed to accommodation.moray@uhi.ac.uk.

This Authorised Absence will be taken into account when determining if a student has met the threshold for a Student Support Funds payment.

There is no other acceptable use of marking students as Authorised Absent, these will not be taken into account when considering any payment to the student, i.e. will be counted as an Absence.

To attempt to reduce the number of payment deductions to students the use of Authorised Absence will be monitored and reported to the appropriate Assistant Director.

Recording a student's attendance as Arrived Late or Left Early remains valid and in such cases this will be considered as the student being present for the purposes of Student Support Fund payments.

Appendix 1



Student Attendance and Absence Procedure

Session 2016/2017

If your absence is due to taking a holiday during College term time:

If you have holidays either pre booked or during course time **you must** notify Student Services by text or absence reporting on your Student portal, **prior** to going on the holiday. Due to Government regulations and Scottish Funding Council guidance Student Funding cannot make payments to students for holidays, so payment will be withheld for your holiday period. The remaining weeks will not be affected as long as you achieve the set level of attendance.

Absence Management

Student Services **may** authorise the following types of absence as shown below:

Absence	Notification	Supporting Documentation
Funeral of close relative or friend	In advance of your absence or day of funeral contact absence line by text or email from Student portal	Notification of funeral.
Court Appearance	In advance of your absence by text or email from Student Portal	Court citation, letter from solicitor/lawyer or court official
Jury Duty Initial day	In advance of your absence by text or email from Student Portal	Court Citation
Subsequent days	During your absence by text or email from Student Portal	Court documentation confirming the dates that you will be required
Hospital Appointments/Clinics	In advance of your absence by text or email from Student Portal	Hospital Letter or appointment card
Emergency Dental or Doctor's appointments	Day of absence by text or email from Student portal	Please provide confirmation that this was an emergency-Doctors/Dental letter

Illness of Children	Only if there is no one else available to care for them	Confirm in text or email this was the reason for your absence and if possible please provide a letter from the child's school, childcare provider or GP stating that the child was ill.
University or college interview	Text or email from your Student Portal	Interview letter or email
On Going Medical Condition	You must notify Student Services of your medical condition either at the start of your course or when you have been diagnosed of the condition. Please make an appointment with Guidance Team who will assess the appropriate number of absences you may require per semester.	<p>Medical letter from your doctor or hospital regarding your condition stating that it may incapacitate you resulting in periods of absence.</p> <p>Supported by a Personal Support Plan through college</p> <p>You will be given a letter if you are granted additional absence days and you must follow the guidelines in the letter.</p> <p>Only one support payment shall be paid longer term absence will not be paid</p>
Job Interview	In advance by text or email from Student Portal	Interview letter or email
Maternity /Adoption Leave	You must notify your Student Adviser of pregnancy or adoption as soon as possible then make an appointment with Student Guidance to discuss financial implications	<p>Ante Natal appointment cards.</p> <p>You will be given a letter granting you additional absence days and you must follow the guideline in the letter.</p> <p>A maximum of 4 weeks shall be paid for absence, no payment thereafter.</p>

ALL documentation and notification should be handed in or sent to **STUDENT SERVICES** in the first instance, as we decide if payment will be made or not. As a matter of courtesy you may wish to discuss or inform your Student Adviser,

especially if you are on a course where you have clients, are dealing with the public or working as a team. **Student Services require all documentation not the Student Adviser.**

The college sets out the following procedure and guidance below to inform all Further Education students of the requirement to receive any student funding payment they are entitled to.

ABSENCES

Attendance is crucial if a student is to achieve whatever qualifications he/she is aiming for.

100% attendance is a requirement for payment of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and 100% for payment of Bursary.

Students who do not achieve these percentages risk having their funding stopped. It is very important that students account for all of their absences.

If your absence is under seven calendar days

If your absence is between one hour and up to 7 days you must report this by text or the online form to the Absence line, you can do this through your Student Portal.

Non-reporting means you will not be paid.

On your first day of absence, please visit your Student Portal and click on **Absence Reporting Tile** and fill in reporting form or send a text. **TEXT** on number **07624808709. Please note this number is for texting only. not for phoning.**

In order to do this you must write **ABSENT** as your first word in message **followed by a “space”** then your **Name, Student Number, Course and Reason**. It is essential you do this, as failure to put **ABSENT then a space** means your text **will not be delivered**.

You will receive a text back to confirm receipt; if you do not receive a text back we have not received it. When you fill in an online form you will not receive a reply.

If you do not have access to a computer or have no credit on your phone you must ask a friend or relative to do this for you.

We must be notified between **8.30am and 9.30am** on the first day of each absence period.

If you have been absent on **5 occasions in a semester your payment will be automatically stopped and no more payments will be made. You can appeal to Student Guidance about this and will need to make an appointment at Student Services.**

If your absence is greater than seven calendar days

If your absence is due to ill health, you are required to comply with the following regulations, to receive a payment.

- If you are absent for more than seven consecutive calendar days you must get a medical certificate from your doctor if you consulted him/her during your absence. You must meet any costs associated with getting a private medical certificate and this can only be given at your doctor's discretion. A maximum of one support payment shall be paid and then it will stop thereafter.
- A Doctor's medical certificate **must** be submitted to Student Services (or by post if necessary), as soon as the doctor has issued this to you. College is open during holiday periods (not Christmas and New Year) for handing in medical certificates.
- Please note that doctors are not required to issue medical certificates for periods of sickness less than seven days and you should not ask your doctor to provide this, especially if you did not consult your doctor during your period of absence from college.
- If you have been absent on extended medical leave for a continuous period, you should contact your Student Adviser to discuss when you will be returning to college and to determine whether you will be able to continue with your course/programme of study. You will only receive **ONE** student support payment during extended medical absence and your payments will be suspended if you have not returned to full attendance before the next instalment is due.

Additional Information

Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave

You must inform your Student Adviser of your pregnancy as soon as you can. The Student Adviser will request a risk assessment to be done to ensure you are completely safe in the surrounding you work in.

You should also make an appointment with Student Guidance to discuss the financial implications when you take your Maternity Leave if this falls within the academic year.

You shall be allowed time to attend ante- natal appointments with supporting evidence.

You are allowed 4 weeks Maternity Leave, where you shall receive your bursary (2 x 2 week payments) and then you should claim Maternity Benefit thereafter. We allow for 2 weeks Paternity Leave but shall not make a payment beyond that if you are still absent.

Do **not** wait until your student funding payment has been stopped to inform us of a problem, as this will be too late and your payment will not be released.

If you are not paid due to poor attendance you can appeal this decision. Please submit an email to MC Student Services (student.services.moray@uhi.ac.uk) explaining the reason for your absence, late notification and any supporting evidence. This will be then reviewed by the Guidance Team.

If you find you are thinking about withdrawing from your course, please make an appointment with your Student Adviser and Guidance person in order that we can discuss and support you with your decision, and if applicable also notify you of any monies that maybe needed to be repaid.