



**Sligo College
of Further Education**

Student Attendance Policy

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY OVERVIEW

The Student Attendance Policy has been developed as part of Sligo College of Further Education's commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables all students who have chosen to study at our college to achieve their full potential. Attendance is a key component in student retention, progression, achievement and employability. Regular attendance and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who actively participate in their learning by attending classes regularly are more likely to:

1. enjoy a rewarding experience in which their knowledge, skills and abilities are developed;
2. successfully complete their course;
3. achieve better results.

Sligo College of Further Education expects all of our students to have full attendance in order to successfully complete their course. Attendance which falls below 80%, where there are no extenuating circumstances, is not acceptable. *Absence for reasons covered by a medical certificate fall outside minimum attendance requirements.*

Every course requires a commitment to attend all parts of the programme on offer fully and punctually.

Where a learner has been absent without satisfactory explanation for *10 consecutive college days*, the college will assume that the learner has opted out of the course. Re-affirmation of enrolment can occur only by appointment with the Principal.

In order to ascertain the levels of attendance of individual students, a complete register check is carried out every day and every class.

Student Responsibilities:

Students are expected to:

1. Attend 100% of their timetabled classes punctually;
2. Report any absence due to illness or other reason to the Administration Office;
3. Do everything possible to avoid unnecessary absences by making medical appointments outside class time unless it is an emergency;
4. Avoid going on holiday during term time;
5. Provide medical evidence to the Administration Office for absences of more than 3 consecutive days. *Please note that medical certificates should be provided to the college not later than two weeks after the period of absence began;*
6. Give prior notification to the Administration Office in the event of foreseen authorised absence.

Staff and College Responsibilities:

Sligo CFE will record, monitor and report on the attendance of all students for all of their timetabled classes in accordance with the college procedure for the maintenance of registers. Payment of PLC maintenance grants is administered by SUSI, while BTEA payments are made by the Department of Social Protection. *All such payments are subject to the college confirming 80% attendance. Payment of maintenance grants is dependent on students meeting this attendance threshold.*

There are regular reviews of students' progress on their programme, including attendance, completion of assessment requirements and academic achievement, and appropriate action is taken to support students in achieving their academic aims. In the event of unsatisfactory attendance, the college is committed to advising students of the supports available to them, such as the college's Guidance Counsellor or other outside services.

Those students experiencing difficulties with attendance are requested to contact a teacher, course coordinator or the Guidance Counsellor.

In the Event of Unsatisfactory Attendance:

Where a student's attendance is unsatisfactory, one or more of the following actions may be taken:

1. college staff may contact the student to seek an explanation for their unsatisfactory attendance;
2. students may be invited to discuss with college staff how their attendance will be improved and any support that may be required;
3. students may be precluded from having access to college facilities, including ICT;
4. staff writing references for students will refer to students' record of attendance;

Where a student has missed a significant amount of time, authorised and unauthorised combined, which will result in their being unable to participate effectively on the course, the student may be advised against resuming their place on the course in the current year. *In this regard, a period above 20 days absent would be regarded as significant.*

Disclosure

Attendance records will be made available

1. to individual students, or parents/guardians if student is under 18;
2. to statutory authorities with the right to access to such information on receipt of a valid request for such information;
3. to others in appropriate cases and with the written request of the student (or parent / guardian if student is under 18) concerned.

Date of Ratification: 20th June, 2017

Date of most recent Review: December 2018