Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Document Control	
Document Type:	Policy
Department:	Curriculum
Relevancy:	The Manchester College
Owner:	Vice Principal - Curriculum
Approver:	Deputy Principal
Published Date:	August 2026
Version:	1
Accessible to Students	Yes
Security Classification:	External
Last Review Date:	August 2026
Next Review Date:	31st August 2027

Version	Date	Revisions
1.0	Sept 2026	

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1. Purpose

The Manchester College wants you to build the knowledge, skills and behaviours you need for success in college, work and life after college. The Deal explains the standards and behaviours expected from you at The Manchester College. For more information, visit [The Deal | The Manchester College (tmc.ac.uk)]



The Deal sets out what is expected of you during your time at the College and explains how attendance and punctuality will be supported and managed if concerns arise.

It also explains how you can report an absence or lateness, and what may happen if attendance or punctuality does not improve.

2. Who this applies to?

- This policy applies to 16–19 Study Programme students, including relevant 19+ students and students aged 19–24 with an EHCP. If you are studying a 16–19 Study Programme, your weekly timetable will usually include your main qualification, a Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours session (employability), a tutorial, and, where required, English and maths qualifications. This is also known as a programme of study.

- This policy also applies to adult students studying adult courses.

3. Definitions

- **Attendance:** refers to students attending any timetabled sessions with a register.
- **Punctuality:** refers to being on time to a lesson. If a student is not on time to lesson, they are deemed to be late.
- **Timetabled Sessions:** refers to time where a student is scheduled on college programmes including taught classes, workshops, work placements, tutorials or online sessions as specified in a student's timetable and/or individual learning plan.
- **Absenteeism:** is a student's singular or repeated non-attendance to timetabled sessions without good reason.
- **Student:** refers to those enrolled onto a full-time 16-19 study programme and/or a full time or part-time adult course.
- **Registers:** in this policy relates to the College's electronic register system.
- **Teacher/Lecturer:** is used in this policy to describe members of staff responsible for educating students at the College.
- **Achievement Tutors (AT):** regularly monitor and review student progress and achievement for those students learning on 16-19 Study Programmes, with the exception of the Access department where the Achievement Tutor works with adult students studying adult courses.
- **Senior Achievement Tutor:** coordinates and manages attendance and progress functions for students studying 16-19 Study Programmes, ensuring the consistent implementation of key policies, effective interventions, college-wide initiatives, and targeted support for high-risk students to maximise achievement and success.
- **Identified Teacher (Adults courses only):** in this policy refers to the main teacher responsible for a group of students that are predominantly adult students and are studying adult courses, in some circumstances this may also be the Lecturer or Programme Leader.
- **Attendance and Progress Monitors (APMs):** work with students enrolled on 16-19 Study Programmes only. They regularly review, monitor and work to improve students' attendance.
- **Department Team Leader (DTL):** is a manager who has oversight of staff who teach on a range of student cohorts.
- **Course Leader (CL):** is responsible for a range of student cohorts and their academic performance whilst learning at the college on 16-19 Study programmes.

- **Programme Leader (PL):** is responsible for a range of student cohorts and their academic performance whilst learning at the college on adult courses.

- **Head of Department (HoD):** is ultimately responsible for all staff and students within their department.

4. Why attendance matters?

At The Manchester College, we want every student to achieve their goals and progress successfully into employment, apprenticeships, university or further study.
Regular attendance and punctuality are key to success. Students who attend regularly are more likely to:

- Achieve their qualifications
- Develop professional workplace behaviours
- Build positive relationships with peers and staff
- Progress to their next destination

The College monitors attendance not only to support achievement but also as part of its safeguarding responsibilities.

5. Expectations of students

- The core expectation for attendance and punctuality for all students across the College is **100%**
- Attend all timetabled lessons, tutorials, workshops, online sessions, exams and work placements
- Arrive on time, be ready to learn and with the equipment needed for the session: **Right place - Right time - Right equipment**
- Report every absence or lateness promptly using the College reporting process
- Give a clear reason for absence and provide evidence where requested.
- Tell the College in advance about planned absences, acceptable evidence may include medical appointment confirmations, hospital letters, interview invitations, driving test booking confirmation or other supporting information. The College reserves the right to consider individual circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
- Engage with attendance support, meetings and any Attendance Improvement Action Plans where appropriate.
- Please remember that **holidays during term time are not authorised**. If you take a holiday during term time, you will be marked as absent, even if you tell us about it in advance. These absences will count as negative attendance against your attendance record and will affect your overall attendance.
- All appointments where possible should be arranged outside of college time.

6. How to report absence or lateness

Method	Information
Telephone	03333 222444, select Option 3
Attendance and Progress Monitor	You can contact your Attendance and Progress Monitor via MS Teams or their college telephone number found on MS Teams.
Email	Use the relevant campus attendance email address listed in **section 13**
Timing	Absence should be reported before **08:45am**. Lateness should be reported as soon as possible.

- Where absences or lateness occurs, students are expected to provide a valid reason

- All absences should be communicated to the college no later than **08:45am** on the day of absence. Any lateness should be communicated as soon as possible. Teaching staff are expected to challenge lateness, where appropriate, as well as celebrate excellent attendance and punctuality.

7. Planned Absences and Attendance Marks

To ensure attendance records are accurate, students must inform their Achievement Tutor, Attendance and Progress Monitor, or Identified Teacher (for adult courses) as soon as they know they will be absent.

- ***N Mark - Not Expected***

An N Mark (Not Expected) may be recorded when a student has an approved planned absence for one of the following below reasons, evidence must be provided unless stated otherwise:

- Careers interview
- Driving theory test
- Funeral or bereavement (evidence not required)
- Job or apprenticeship interview
- Medical appointment
- Significant safeguarding issue (evidence provided by safeguarding team)
- University interview, open day, or related event

Students must notify the appropriate member of staff in advance so that the absence can be recorded correctly.

- ***S Mark - Future Sickness Absence***

An S Mark may be used when a student is expected to be absent due to illness and this is

known in advance (max 1 week), for example where medical advice has been given that the student will be unable to attend for a period of time.

Students, parents/carers (where appropriate), or adult students should notify the college as soon as possible.

- ***R Mark - Religious Observance***

An R mark may be recorded for absence connected with religious observance. Requests will be considered individually, and students should notify the College in advance wherever possible

- ***Reporting Future Absences***

If you know you will be absent from college, you must inform your Achievement Tutor, Attendance and Progress Monitor, or Identified Teacher (for adult courses) as early as possible. This allows the college to record the absence correctly and ensure your attendance record is accurate.

- ***Term-Time Holidays***

Holidays taken during term time are **NOT authorised** and will be recorded as unauthorised absences, even if the college is informed in advance.

Unauthorised holiday absences will negatively affect your attendance record and may result in further action being taken in line with the college's Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

Good attendance is essential for academic success, progress, and wellbeing. Students are expected to attend all timetabled lessons, arrive on time, and take responsibility for communicating any unavoidable absence to the college.

- ***Leaving Classes Early***

Students are expected to remain in all timetabled lessons for their full duration and to return promptly following any scheduled break.

If a student leaves a lesson early or does not return after a break, staff will seek to understand the reasons for this and identify any support that may be needed. This may include exploring any personal, wellbeing, safeguarding, or academic concerns that could be affecting attendance.

Where a student repeatedly leaves lessons early or fails to return after breaks without a valid reason, this will be considered unacceptable behaviour and may be dealt with in accordance with the College's Student Disciplinary Policy.

Students who need to leave a lesson for a legitimate reason must obtain permission from the relevant member of staff before doing so.

8. Support and reasonable adjustments

The College will work with you to understand any barriers to attendance and punctuality. Support may include tutor support, attendance support, wellbeing, safeguarding or pastoral support, learning support, reasonable adjustments, careers advice or referral to specialist services where appropriate. Where support and reasonable adjustment are required, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

9. Adult students studying adult courses

Adult students are expected to attend 100% and arrive on time. If concerns arise, the College will normally seek to support improvement before formal action is considered. Note formal action relating to adult attendance and punctuality issues will be managed through the Student Disciplinary Policy.

Approach to adult attendance and punctuality

Support Discussion	Your teacher/other identified staff member will discuss concerns, explore barriers, and agree on support or actions.
Review Meeting	If there is not enough improvement, a review meeting may be held with curriculum managers.
Formal Action	Persistent absence or lateness without valid and evidenced reason may be managed through the Student Disciplinary Policy.
Possible Impact	Poor attendance may affect financial support, exam entry, progression, continued enrolment, or an Advanced Learner Loan.

Note: It must be noted that, adult students paying for their course via an Advance Learner Loan are subject to the 4 weeks non-attendance rule. This is where the College, as the Learning Provider, is expected to confirm the non-attendance of a student with the Students Loan Company. If this is the case, then this may result in a suspension of the adult's loan by The Student's Loan Company.

Student commitment: The earlier you tell us about a difficulty with your attendance and/or punctuality, the more effectively we can help you stay on track and achieve your goals.

10. 16-19 Study Programme attendance management

If you are enrolled on a 16–19 Study Programme, the Attendance Management process will be used to support improvements in attendance and punctuality where needed. The College will work with you to identify and address barriers across your programme, including your main qualification, English or maths, tutorial and Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours sessions.

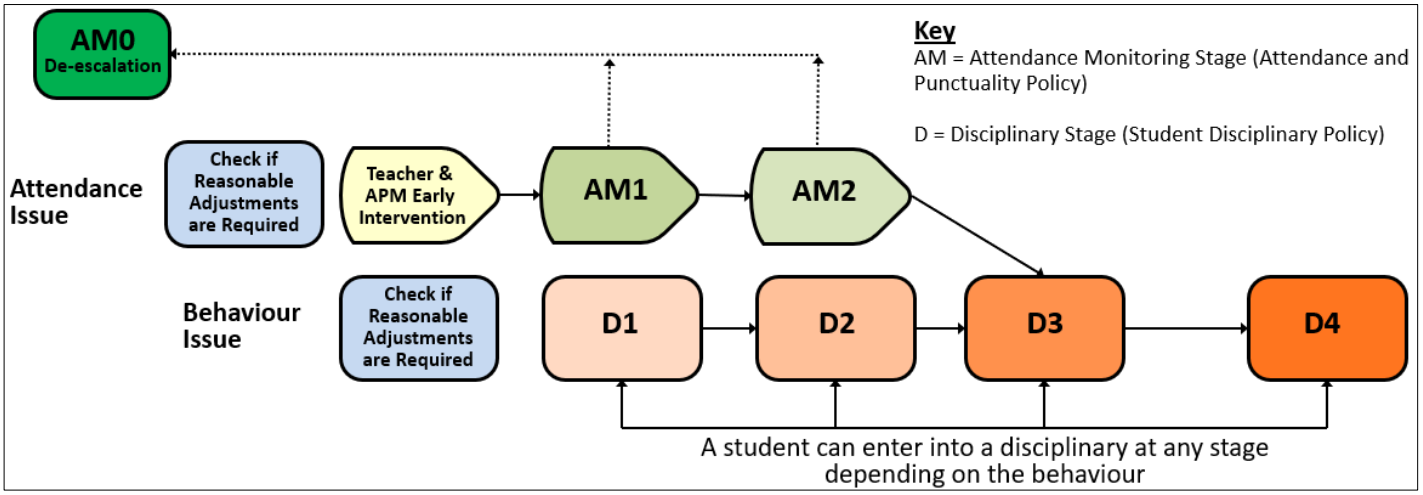
Attendance Management stages are triggered using published attendance and punctuality thresholds shown in the appendix. The College will normally seek to identify and address concerns at an early stage before formal attendance meetings are arranged.

Attendance Management is primarily a supportive process. The College will normally seek to understand and address barriers to attendance before disciplinary action is considered.

Stage	What this means?	Possible outcome
Early Support	Staff speak with you if attendance or punctuality starts to decline see appendix for attendance triggers. Your Attendance and Progress Monitor will contact you, and your next of kin where applicable, each day you do not attend college. We will look at any support you may need to help you remove barriers to attendance and punctuality.	If attendance /punctuality improves, no formal stage may be needed. If there is no improvement you will move to the next Attendance Monitoring Stage – Stage AM1
Attendance Monitoring Stage 1 (AM1)	A supportive conversation takes place, and a four-week Attendance Improvement Action Plan is provided.	Improved attendance/punctuality over the 4 weeks means the AM1 will be de-escalated to Stage AM0 (See AM0 above). No improvement may lead to the next stage - Stage AM2.
Attendance Monitoring Stage 2 (AM2)	A formal attendance meeting is arranged with you and your next of kin where appropriate. Further actions will be agreed upon. Attendance will continue to be monitored. A formal meeting may only be rearranged on one occasion. Where you fail to attend the second time, decisions regarding the meeting outcome will be made in your absence.	Improved attendance/punctuality means the AM2 will be de-escalated to Stage AM0 (See AM0 above). Where reasonable support, adjustments and opportunities for improvement have been provided, and there has been insufficient improvement, the matter may progress to Stage D3 under the Student Disciplinary Policy
Attendance Monitoring Stage 0 (AM0)	If your attendance and punctuality improve during the review period, you will move to AM0. This means the formal attendance stage has ended, but your attendance will continue to be monitored. If concerns return during the same academic year, you may return to your previous attendance monitoring stage.	Your attendance concern has been 'de-escalated'. Well done, keep up the great work! However, if attendance and/or punctuality declines again, you will return to your **previous AM stage**

Student commitment: The earlier you tell us about a difficulty with attending, the more effectively we can help you stay on track and achieve your goals.

Diagram 1: shows the Attendance Management process and how this can escalate to the Student Disciplinary process if persistent poor attendance continues.



Note: Formal Attendance Management meetings will normally only be rearranged once. If a student does not attend the rearranged meeting without good reason, the College may make a decision based on the available evidence in the student's absence.

If a student, next of kin, or, in the case of adult students, another supporting individual behaves inappropriately during a meeting or hearing after being asked to moderate their behaviour, the manager overseeing the process may politely bring it to an end.

10.1 Attendance Management and Progression

If you successfully complete your programme of study and are on AM1 or AM2 at the end of the academic year, your AM status will be reset. This means that if you progress internally at the College into the next academic year, you will start with a clean attendance and punctuality record.

If you have been escalated to Stage D3 due to persistent poor attendance, your academic performance, behaviour and attitude will be reviewed at the end of the current academic year. After this review, the College will decide whether you can progress to the next academic year. If progression is agreed, your attendance, punctuality, academic performance, behaviour and attitude will be monitored during the first four weeks to make sure the course remains suitable for you. If progression is not agreed, you may not be able to continue into the next academic year.

11. Communication with NOK/Student Support Network

Where appropriate and in line with the student's circumstances, age, recorded contact permissions and any safeguarding considerations, the College may contact the student's next of kin (NOK) or identified support network.

Students, NOK and support networks are encouraged to work with the College so concerns can be identified early and effective support put in place.

If concerns continue, the College will keep you informed and may also contact relevant people in your support network where this is appropriate.

Copies of attendance communications can be accessed through your portal. If you have an EHCP or significant support needs, relevant members of your support network may be included where appropriate.

12. Non-attendance and withdrawal

Before we consider withdrawing you from your programme, we will make reasonable attempts to contact you, offer support and look at any evidence that shows you plan to return to College.

If you do not attend College for four continuous weeks or more and do not respond to our attempts to support you, you may be withdrawn from your programme unless there is clear evidence that you intend to return.

13. What should you remember?

- Attendance and punctuality are part of professional behaviours and support success on your course.
- Reporting an absence does not remove the impact absence may have on progress and achievement.
- The College will consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
- If attendance improves and targets are met, students can move back to normal monitoring.
- If students do not engage with support or attendance does not improve, disciplinary action or withdrawal may be considered.

14. Campus attendance contacts

As explained in section 5, you can use the campus attendance email addresses below to contact your campus if you are absent or running late. Please note that the preferred method is to call the College or contact your Attendance and Progress Monitor, as set out in section 5.

Campus	Attendance email
Citylabs	Attendancecitilabs@tmc.ac.uk
City Campus Manchester	AttendanceCCM@tmc.ac.uk
Harpurhey	AttendanceNMSF@tmc.ac.uk
Nicholls	AttendanceNich@tmc.ac.uk
Openshaw	AttendanceOpenshaw@tmc.ac.uk
Wythenshawe	AttendanceWythenshawe@tmc.ac.uk

Student commitment: The earlier you tell us about difficulty, the more effectively we can help you stay on track and achieve your goals.

15. Associated Policies, Procedures and Strategies found on the college website

- Student Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- TMC Student at Risk Policy
- TMC Medication Policy
- Continuing Studies Policy

16.Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Are there concerns that this policy could have an adverse impact on any of these protected is action required?		**If Yes, is action required?**
Age	No	
Disability	No	
Gender reassignment	No	
Marriage or civil partnership	No	
Pregnancy and maternity	No	
Race	No	
Religion	No	
Sex	No	
Sexual orientation	No	
EIA Summary		
Person responsible for EIA	Stuart Steen	
EIA Outcome & statement		
This policy sets out the guidance for Attendance and Punctuality of all students attending The Manchester College. In writing this policy all of the above has been taken into consideration so that no protected characteristic is disadvantaged. The College recognises that attendance requirements may have differing impacts on students with protected characteristics or additional support needs. Reasonable adjustments, support measures and individual circumstances will be considered to ensure the policy is applied fairly and proportionately. The College will apply this policy consistently, fairly and proportionately. Decisions will take account of individual circumstances, safeguarding concerns, medical needs, disabilities, caring responsibilities and any agreed support arrangements.		

Appendix: Attendance Management table for 16-19 Study Programme students

AM0	On an AM1 or AM2 Upward trend in attendance i.e. 86% last 4 weeks	Send De-escalation to AM0 email. Continue to monitor attendance. If a negative pattern of attendance and/or punctuality re-occurs within the same academic year, the student will immediately be re-escalated back to their **previous AM status**.

Stage	**Trigger**	**Persons Responsible**	**Reasonable Adjustments**	**Meeting Required** *Invite to be sent via EBS Correspondence*	**Meeting Attendees**	**Meeting Outcome:** Actions to be completed by the AM meeting Chair	**Timescale to demonstrate improvement**
Early Intervention		**Teachers**	Support and challenge student attendance and punctuality. Celebrate high attendance and punctuality.				
		APMs	Contact NOK/Student each day a student is absent. Support and challenge the student attendance and punctuality.				
AM1	Term 1 Trigger	AT and APM (SAT to oversee allocation of student groups)	Check for Reasonable adjustments for SEND and/or EHCP and/or Support need)	1:1 conversation with the student & Phone call to NOK	N/A	**Send AM1 Email containing Improvement Action Plan (Where applicable, send to the Student Support Network)	**4 weeks from meeting** Improvement YES= de-escalate to AM0 NO= escalate to AM2
	Term 2 Trigger						
	Term 3 Trigger						
AM2	No/not enough improvement in attendance and/or punctuality in the last 4 weeks	DTL and CL		Yes -Formal meeting required. **Phone call to NOK (& student support network if applicable) to arrange the AM2 meeting date and time, followed by sending AM2 invite confirmation email.	**Chair:** DTL or CL (*SAT or HoD if other identified management are unavailable)* (if applicable Student Support Network)	**Send AM2 Meeting Outcome Email containing the Improvement Action Plan to all parties involved (Where applicable, send to the Student Support Network)	**4 weeks from meeting** Improvement YES = de-escalate to AM0 NO= escalate to D3 (requires SAT sign off)

Move to D3	No improvement in attendance and/or punctuality in the last four weeks escalate to Stage D3 of the Disciplinary Policy. See Disciplinary Policy

Attendance Intervention Trigger - by Term

Term 1 SEPT – DEC	Term 2 JAN - MAR	Term 3 APR – JULY
➢ Any one aspect of the student's ***study programme*** falls below 90% attendance i.e. Vocational, English or maths, Tutorial etc. ➢ Punctuality falls below **90%**	➢ A student's ***Overall Attendance*** drops below **86%** Or 2 sessions missed for English or maths (Attendance last 4 weeks 50% for English or Maths lessons) ➢ Punctuality falls below **90%**	➢ A student's ***Last 4 Weeks*** **attendance** drops below **86%** Or 2 sessions missed for English or maths (Attendance last 4 weeks 50% for English or maths lessons) ➢ Punctuality falls below **90%**