

LEARNER ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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Philosophy

Bridge Training Ltd (BTL) promotes a learning environment where it adheres to assist students in achieving to their maximum potential. BTL believes that if students are to benefit from their education and achieve their potential, good attendance and punctuality are crucial. BTL endeavours to do all that it can to ensure maximum attendance for all students and to identify and address any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance.

If there are problems that affect a student's attendance or punctuality BTL will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers, support workers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times. A similar approach will be adopted with students whose punctuality is considered to be an issue.

Rationale

It is acknowledged that the following factors contribute to improving student attendance, motivation and retention:

- Identifying and supporting 'at risk' students as soon as warning signs appear.
- Having a well-known and coherent infrastructure of support in place, including additional learning support and internal and external welfare support.
- Delivering well-structured and managed course programmes, integrating 1:1 reviews, additional learning support and the implementation and updating of ILPs and enrichment activities.
- Having a clear and fair Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure which incorporates robust systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality, following up absences promptly and firmly and consistently applying appropriate rewards systems.

This policy outlines BTL's system for monitoring attendance and lateness. It should be read in conjunction with BTL's Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure. The policy aims to promote:

- Clear, open channels of communication to inform students, parents/carers, support workers and staff of any issues with attendance and/or punctuality;



- The creation of realistic targets for whole organisation and individual attendance and punctuality;
- Regular evaluation of attendance and punctuality procedures, systems and interventions;
- The implementation of effective reintegration programmes following a period of absence (that is longer than two weeks) from BTL due to illness or injury, holiday, or alternative education off site and the promotion of positive staff attitudes to students returning after such absences;
- Strategies to challenge students with poor attendance and/or punctuality and to reward students with good attendance and/or punctuality.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy Statement

- As retention, achievement and student attendance are inextricably linked, BTL expects all students to attend all planned and programmed sessions included within the student's learning programme, including assessments. The components of a study programme will include theory and practical sessions, English and/or Maths classes (depending on previous attainment), work placements and prescribed enrichment sessions.
- Students will be required to make a commitment to attend all components of their programme at the start of their course (the 'Individual Learning Plan').
- Students are required to attend all planned and timetabled assessments including examinations.
- BTL will apply consistent and rigorous procedures to monitor student attendance and will offer appropriate support to facilitate and encourage students to comply with attendance targets.
- The session register is the formal auditable document used by BTL to record attendance and punctuality. BTL will ensure that this record is consistently marked and accurate.
- Students who fail to meet the minimum standards set by BTL will be notified initially by letter (sent out on a six-weekly basis), where BTL's attendance requirements will be reiterated, and students will be made aware of the next step-process if their attendance remains at the same level. Attendance and punctuality will also be monitored and challenged through the use of the ILP, student review and Behavioural Contract processes. Students who fail to respond positively to these processes will be deemed to have breached the BTL's Code of Conduct and will be subject to BTL's Disciplinary Procedure.

Principles

BTL will ensure that:

- Staff receive CPD to maintain knowledge of registration, attendance and punctuality procedures as well as attendance and punctuality figures;
- Staff convey the importance of good attendance and punctuality for a successful education;
- Regular liaison between the IAG Manager, the teaching and administration staff to ensure communication regarding students' attendance and punctuality takes place;
- Students and their parents/carers understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality through positive reinforcement and working in partnership with us



- All components of a programme are purposefully planned to maximise the development of each student and prepare each student for success in terms of the end qualification(s) and progression. Each component is an essential part of the learning programme and to miss any of them, or any part of them, will undermine the effectiveness of the programme and have a negative effect on success rates.
- Missing or being late to a programmed session can be disruptive for the whole group. Missing or being late to a session without good reason is therefore disrespectful to both staff and fellow students.

Targets

- BTL sets annual retention and attendance targets which are closely monitored on a monthly basis.
- In order to encourage students to reach the required 80% attendance level, BTL will issue rewards to students that meet this level. These rewards will be based on students achieving an average attendance of 80% or above **ACROSS ALL AREAS** on a monthly basis

Students Reporting Absence

- Students who are absent on any day when they have scheduled sessions should contact reception by 9.30am.
- Students on a work placement should contact their employer direct if they cannot attend their placement.
- It is the responsibility of the appropriate staff within BTL to ensure that a student is contacted to investigate the reason for absence and the likely return date.

Attendance and Punctuality - Definitions

(i) Student 'present'

A student is marked in attendance if they are present at the time of registration and remain in that session until its conclusion, as determined by the class teacher.

(ii) Student 'absent' (unauthorised)

A student is marked 'unauthorised absence' (U/A) when he/she does not attend any part of the scheduled session.

(iii) Lateness

A student is late (and marked 'late' on the register) if he/she arrives after the scheduled start of the session.

(iv) Authorised absence

This is absence that has been discussed with and agreed by the student's teacher or the IAG Manager prior to the absence occurring. Evidence of appointments should be sought and only authorised once given to the teacher/IAG Manager.

Attendance and Punctuality - Procedures and Guidelines for staff

- The accurate marking and inputting of session registers is a contractual requirement for all teaching and administration staff and non-compliance with these procedures will be taken seriously by BTL. It is the responsibility of the IAG Manager to ensure that all teachers are made aware of the register marking codes and trained in which occasions to use each code.
- Programme timetables will be established prior to the start of a course to facilitate the production and use of registers as soon as the programme begins. Subsequent timetable changes will be minimised and recorded in the standard way to ensure that registers are always up to date.
- All session registers should be completed during or immediately after each session. In circumstances where, by virtue of the activity being undertaken, this is not practicable registers will be completed by the end of that day.
- In circumstances where the scheduled teacher is absent the substitute teacher has the responsibility for ensuring the register is completed.
- Absence or lateness will always be challenged by teachers. For school students, this should be reported by the teacher to reception as soon as possible on the day the absence or lateness occurs. For study programme learners, absence and lateness should be closely monitored and reported to the IAG Manager if there is cause for concern. BTL will ensure that teachers are able to track the attendance of their students on a daily basis.
- If there is a sudden change in a student's attendance pattern (i.e starting to come in late, leaving early, a sudden drop in attendance etc) they will be required to meet their teacher or the IAG Manager, to discuss and investigate the reasons for their absence/lateness. The results of this discussion, including recommendations on appropriate support, will be recorded on BTL's Management Information System (PICS) and, if appropriate, a behaviour contract drawn up with the student and signed by both BTL staff and the student.
- A student will be withdrawn from their course if he/she is absent at any time of the year for four consecutive weeks without authorisation, does not respond positively to the process of Disciplinary Procedure or reaches the stage where his/her attendance does not reach the required standard. If a student has a valid reason for this absence, this needs to be discussed

with the IAG Manager who, with the teacher(s) concerned, will look at whether the student can continue with their course.

- Teachers will monitor the attendance and punctuality of their students each week.
- The IAG Manager will regularly analyse attendance and punctuality rates. Attendance and punctuality will be discussed regularly at Management Meetings and within staff meetings.

The Monitoring Procedure for 'At Risk' Students

- If a student is receiving support from the IAG Manager, their attendance target will be agreed as part of their ILP personal and social targets. For example, it may be agreed that 80% at present is unmanageable, due to personal circumstances, and so a lower goal may be set, with the view that this will increase over time with appropriate support being put in place. The IAG Manager will liaise with the teacher(s) in this case and agree an attendance target between them.

The Purpose of Risk Rating Students

- A student's 'level of risk' is determined each month, based on their attendance percentage. They are then risk-rated according to the level of severity of risk, using a RAG rating system whereby:

RED = HIGH RISK

AMBER = MEDIUM RISK

GREEN = LOW RISK

- Based on this rating, the following measures will be implemented:

Risk Level	Intervention
GREEN Low risk	No intervention necessary. Student is on track to achieve and no issues have been identified
AMBER Medium risk	Student has been flagged as having fallen below the initial threshold of absence/lateness (has not hit the 80% mark but is averaging over 60%) and they have been spoken to see if there are any support measures that need to be put in place. They have been reminded of the attendance policy and attendance targets have been set.
RED High risk	Student has had a significant amount of absence/lateness (their attendance is below 60%) or has had multiple warnings regarding their attitude/behaviour An Educational Review Meeting will be held with the student, IAG Manager,



	teacher(s) and the parent(s)/carer(s) to look at reasons for absence and whether the student can remain on the course.
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- For any student receiving a RED or AMBER risk rating, targets will be set by their teacher and monitored on a weekly basis by the IAG Manager, until the risk reduces to GREEN, or the student is removed from training.
- The IAG Manager will work in conjunction with the teachers to monitor these targets and review their progress on a regular basis. These reviews may be in the form of one or more of the following:
 - i. One-to-one review meetings between the teacher and the student to identify reasons for non-attendance, poor timekeeping etc.
 - ii. Multi-agency group (MAG) meetings, held by the IAG Manager and involving the appropriate teacher(s), and any other agencies working with the student, in order to identify the most appropriate outcome for the student concerned (eg transition to an alternative provider, timetable alteration etc)
 - iii. Behaviour contract – to set short-term targets if no improvement has been made from the targets set by the teacher following the client support meeting. BTL believes the Behaviour Contract to be a final opportunity for a student to show an improvement in their attendance/attitude and will set consequences of these targets not being met.

Appendix A

16-19 Bursary - Authorised Absence

- If a student wishes an absence to be recorded as 'authorised absence' and claim their 16-19 he/she must inform their teacher prior to the event and provide the evidence indicated below:
 - i. A medical appointment that cannot be arranged outside training hours.
 - ii. Appointment card or letter.
 - iii. A special religious holiday.
 - iv. Letter from parent/care
 - v. A university/college open day or university/college/careers or job interview.
 - vi. Work experience that is an integral and agreed part of a course.
 - vii. An emergency need to look after a family member or other person for whom the student has a caring responsibility.
 - viii. Letter from parent/carer or relevant social service. Personal tutor authorisation.
 - ix. Attendance at a probation meeting.
 - x. Participation in a BTL-related activity, including representing the course or BTL in inspections/agreed student involvement events.
 - xi. Bereavement and attendance at a funeral - close relative or friend.
 - xii. Severe disruption to transport (strike action/severe weather/serious road accident)
 - xiii. Driving test.
 - xiv. Jury service.
 - xv. Notification letter
 - xvi. Severe weather conditions that cause the closure of the college or recommendation that students from certain regions do not travel to the college

Appendix B

16-19 Bursary - Unauthorised Absence

- Holidays not agreed to prior to the holiday occurring
- Leisure activities.
- Birthdays or similar celebrations.
- Child-minding or looking after people for whom the student is not identified as a carer.
- Shopping.
- Driving lessons.
- Medical appointments which can be arranged outside the scheduled programme timetable.