

Version	Author	Review Date
Version 9 – August 2023	EE/NH	August 2024
Version 10 – March 2024	EE/NH	August 2024
Version 11 – September 2024	EE	August 2025

Aims

Central to raising standards in education students need to attend regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves students vulnerable to falling behind. Students with poor attendance tend to achieve less, therefore Bridge Training is committed to meeting our obligations with regards to attendance through our ethos and values by

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring that every student has access to education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building relationships with families to ensure that students have the support in place to attend.
- Supporting and challenging punctuality

If there are problems that affect a student's attendance or punctuality Bridge Training will investigate, identify, and strive in partnership with parents/carers, support workers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible and monitor the effectiveness of interventions.

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 due to illness or injury 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.

This policy meets the requirements and guidance from the Department of Education (DfE) and the ESFA in relation to the keeping of registers and funding regulations in Post 16 education.

Roles and responsibilities

The Attendance Lead is responsible for:

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Analysing Data to devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues when earlier interventions have been unsuccessful.

- Leading Attendance across Bridge Training
- Provide CPD to staff to maintain knowledge of registration, attendance, and punctuality procedures as well as attendance and punctuality figures.
- Establish programme timetables 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 via a Change to ensure that registers are always up to date.
- Withdraw a student from their course if he/she is absent at any time of the year (as per ESFA guidance) without authorisation or intervention.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues when earlier interventions have been unsuccessful.
- Monitoring expectations and processes
- Monitoring absence and notifying parents/carers if a student has not arrived.
- Updating records / registers when notified of illness or absence.
- Monitoring absence and producing a monthly report for tutors and the Attendance Lead to support them in analysing attendance
- Notifying the tutors of students who have phoned in an absence.
- Following the procedures outlined in the attached process when attendance is at or falls below 60%
- Ensure all planned registers are inputted accurately onto the MIS
- Contacting EHE students reported as being absent by 10.00am (or one hour after planned start time) to identify reasons for their absence and pass this information onto the relevant staff.
- The authorising of **all** Authorised Student Absence (as defined in Appendix 1) should be in agreement with the Attendance Lead as evidence will need to be retained for the purposes of audit.

Data Entry will be responsible for:

- Making timely changes to registers where required to account for attendance issues (young carer responsibilities etc) to ensure accessibility and inclusion for all groups of students.

Student Support are responsible for:

- Informing the attendance officer at the earliest opportunities if a message / email has been received.
- Send suggestions/queries of timetable changes via email to the Attendance Officer to agree/suggest alternatives if the request does not comply with condition of funding rules
- Following the procedures as defined when student attendance is between 60%-80% and setting targets on the ILP.

Tutors and Learning Support Workers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance every lesson, using the correct codes. (In circumstances where the scheduled teacher is absent the Attendance Officer has the responsibility for ensuring the register is completed)

- Liaise with Attendance Team where there are concerns about attendance to check if there are interventions already in place.
- Convey the importance of good attendance and punctuality for a successful education.
- Consistently challenge absence or lateness.
- Following the procedures as defined when student attendance is between 80%-100% and setting targets on the ILP.
- Chasing Initial Absences as defined in the attendance process
- Chasing of one-off absences as defined in the attendance process
- Supporting student attendance for Functional Skills - where the FS teacher does not see the student at all – during tutorials, setting targets etc.

Parents/carers and/or students are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time.
- Call or text Bridge Training to report an absence before 0900 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence) and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide Bridge Training with more than one emergency contact number for the student.
- Where possible, make medical/dental or general appointments outside of Bridge time.
- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Be required to attend all planned and timetabled assessments including examinations.

The Advisory Board will:

- Hold managers to account by analysing reported data against targets set.

Recording Attendance

All students will be placed on an attendance registers and registers will be taken at the start of each session; it will be marked in accordance with the codes in Appendix 1

Unplanned Absence

The student/parent and/or carer must notify Bridge Training of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 0900 or as soon as practically possible. The Attendance Officer will mark absences due to illness in advance (if informed). If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, we may ask the student/parent/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. All sickness absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if Bridge Training is notified in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage students to make such appointments out of timetabled hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out for the minimum amount of time necessary. For any other absences Bridge Training must be informed via email or text as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Approval for term-time absence will only be granted during term time if it is 'exceptional circumstances'. Bridge Training considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request, the Attendance Officer and/or Attendance Lead will authorise on a case-by-case basis.

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student / parent and/or carer belongs.

Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with Bridge Training.

Lateness and Punctuality

Timekeeping is essential for students to achieve their full educational potential. It is vital for students to form good habits to prepare them for adult life and their future careers.

Accurate recording of punctuality, attendance and timekeeping are extremely important for enabling Bridge Training to analyse data around lateness and is vital for keeping students safe.

Unexplained Absence

Where any student we expect to attend does not attend or stops attending, without reason, Bridge Training will,

- Text the student / parent and/or carer to ascertain the reason.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained.
- Text the student/ parent and /or carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

Staff absence

Where teaching and/or support staff are absent, where possible cover will be arranged to cover whole or part of a session(s).

If pre-16, then parent/carers will be informed of a student leaving early and the reason why. If post16 then the individual student will be informed.

If the Lesson is cancelled, then staff will ring students, parents/carers at the earliest opportunity and the registers will be marked by the Attendance Officer using the 'X' code (See Appendix 1).

Home Study / Independent Study

In cases of the above and/or where independent study has been planned into the curriculum, then work will be set on the Bridge Training Learning Platform. If work is submitted, then a positive mark will be given to show that planned study work has been submitted. If no evidence is submitted, then the student will be marked as U.

Funding implications for long term/persistent absence

The ESFA will not fund students with four week's consecutive absence from Bridge Training without medical notification, the guidance states: *An institution may continue to record funding for reasonable student absences of up to 4 consecutive weeks (28 days) if the student continues in learning after the absence. Institutions must withdraw students from their programmes if they do not return to learning after being absent for 4 weeks. ESFA does not distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence for funding purposes.*

Financial support may be withdrawn, in the case of persistent absence (below 60%), for those students in receipt of a bursary and/or discretionary under the 16-19 student bursary scheme see Appendix 4.

Strategies for promoting attendance

Tackling absence can be most effective when several different approaches are adopted. Bridge Training uses initiatives to encourage attendance, but these are partly dictated by a number of factors including

- parental interest
- geographical location
- social and economic circumstances.

Bridge Training will aim to raise the awareness of attendance through the following:

- Posters, leaflets, website, and social media to promote attendance.
- A robust and inclusive induction and transition process of where the importance of attendance is reiterated.
- The setting of targets on the ILP – steps to show progress and improvement.
- Parental/Carer involvement and participation (partnership and ownership)
- Communicating positively frequently with parents/carers and students where attendance has been an issue and communication positive achievements in completion of targets on the ILP.
- Targeted intervention and support in areas of specific need eg
 - Reduction in timetables to support SEMH.
 - Meet and greet students /travel training.
 - Targeted transition, Student Support, external support / referral
 - Change in timetable / vocational area
 - Breakfast club and emergency food vouchers
 - Seating in classrooms
 - Home visits

Attendance Monitoring / Analysing Attendance

Attendance and absence data will be analysed regularly to identify students (or cohorts) that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families.

Policy 5.3 – Student Attendance & Punctuality



Using data to improve attendance

Bridge Training will

- Provide regular attendance reports to the Senior Management Team
- Facilitate discussions with students and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

Reducing persistent and severe absence & Targets

Persistent absence is defined where a student misses 20% or more of timetabled session and severe absence is defined where a student misses 40% or more of timetabled sessions.

Bridge Training will

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers and/or students who Bridge Training considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Follow the procedures outlined in the attached processes documents.

Bridge Training understands that students are at different points in their life when they enrol on a course and so maintaining a high attendance rate, when their home lives may be chaotic, or they have been out of education or employment for some time, may be setting them up to fail.

For this reason, we acknowledge that not all students will be able to achieve the expected 80% attendance rate as their starting point. Therefore, students will have a base attendance percentage and the expectation that targets will be set to increase their attendance from their baseline percentage.

Exams/Registrations

Any students with severe absence (missing more than 40% of timetable lessons) will not be registered any exams/qualifications until the attendance improves to an acceptable level.

Bridge Training also have the right to withdraw any candidate currently registered for qualifications that have severe absences.

SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities)/Vulnerable Children

BTL consistently and fairly promote high standards of attendance for all students and provide additional support where necessary to ensure that all students can achieve and learn as well as possible. BTL does not assume that because a student has SEND, it must have affected their attendance on a particular occasion – this is a question of judgement for BTL on the facts of the situation alone.

BTL will consider whether the students SEND has contributed to the missed learning time and if so, whether it is appropriate and lawful to sanction the student (see Equality Act 2010 and SEND Policy). BTL will consider whether any reasonable adjustments

need to be made to the sanction in response to any disability the student may have. It is important that BTL seek to try and understand the underlying causes of the missed learning time and whether any additional support is needed.

Any student that is considered vulnerable, for example, is a looked after child, has a child protection or child in need plan currently in place are not exempt from consequences listed in this policy, BTL will consider whether the vulnerable students current circumstances have contributed to the missed learning time and if so, whether it is appropriate to sanction the student or whether any reasonable adjustments can be made and additional support is needed to avoid further occurrences of missed learning time.

Behaviour

Any of the below could result in the student being placed on to Support Plan with targeted intervention and support put in place and recorded on to our MIS systems. This will be reviewed on a regular basis and if there is little to no improvement, this could result in removal from programme and signposting/referrals to external agencies being made.

- Where a student is persistently absent from class, late arriving to BTL or late back from break or lunch or leaves early on a regular basis.
- Where a student attends a lesson but there is no engagement throughout the duration of the lesson, the student will be marked as 'N' on the registers, this Mark shows that though the student may have been physically present, they did not take part and therefore carries an unauthorised penalty and will go against their attendance percentage.
- Where a student attends onsite but does not enter the classroom, they will be marked as unauthorised on the registers but will still be recorded as present onsite on the student signing in sheets for the building.

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	Monitored by Tutors/LSW's to avoid any further drop in attendance. Student is on track to achieve and has increased their attendance from the previous month or maintained 80% - 100% attendance
AMBER Medium risk	The student has maintained the same attendance as the previous month or has maintained between 60%- 79% -

	Student Support involvement with targets set on ILP to measure progress
RED High risk	The student's attendance has dropped from the previous month to 60% and below - the Attendance team to follow process as set out in Appendix 2 and 3

The Attendance Lead and Attendance Officer will work in conjunction with the teachers and Head of Curriculum to monitor targets and review progress on a regular basis.

Pre-16 Students (EHE and Private Funded - School)

Bridge Training recognises that students that have been home educated for a period may struggle to integrate into a new educational environment, both academically and socially.

For all pre-16 (school aged children), parents/carers/guardians will be informed of non-attendance, whether in full or leaving site early (without prior agreement) at the earliest opportunity. Tutors/LSW's are to notify Attendance Officer immediately if a school aged student leaves site, in the absence of the Attendance Officer then the Attendance Lead needs to be notified to make arrangements instead.

Letters/correspondence regarding attendance monitoring will be addressed to the parent/carer/legal guardian in terms of targeted plans, meetings etc.

For private funded (school) students only – the school must be notified of attendance on each day of the planned timetable as stated in the service level agreement (SLA) as to whether the student has attended or not. If the student is not in attendance, then Attendance Officer is to make contact with student/emergency contact to source a reason for the absence and share this with the school (if obtained).

If a student leaves site before the agreed time of day, the school will receive an additional email detailing any reason for this (if known).

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Impact	Scenario	
Register Marks for Teachers and/or Attendance Officer - Positive				
A	Authorised	Positive	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances (see above planned absence) - <i>add in secondary options for an authorised mark as below</i>	
			Excluded	Student has been excluded.
			Not required	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
				Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
				Student from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with Bridge Training
			Travel	Genuine travel issues eg strikes / weather / rural transport
			Mental Health	To be used on instruction from Student Support – if currently working with Bridge
			Snow Day	Bridge unable to open due to unsafe weather conditions / staff unable to get to site
			Inset Day	Whole or partial closure due to INSET day as per curriculum calendar
			Bereavement	Of a close family member
			Meeting with professionals	Safeguarding – Child in Need / Child Protection meeting / CAMS
			Not enrolled	Previous sessions started earlier or later in the year
E	Taking Exam	Positive	Student has been booked in for an exam – as per the exam timetable	
I	Independent Study	Positive	Pre-planned only and in agreement with the Head of Curriculum (written evidence and/or timetable must support this mark)	
K	Work related Activity	Positive	Student is on an organised visit/trip or work activity as planned and/or arranged by Bridge Training	
M	Medical / Dental	Positive	Student is at a medical or dental appointment - proof must be shown to the Teacher/Attendance officer	
P	Present	Positive	Student is present	
Register Marks for Teachers and/or Attendance Officer - Negative				
J	Left Early	Negative	Leave before the end of session	
L	Late	Negative	Student is late for a session	

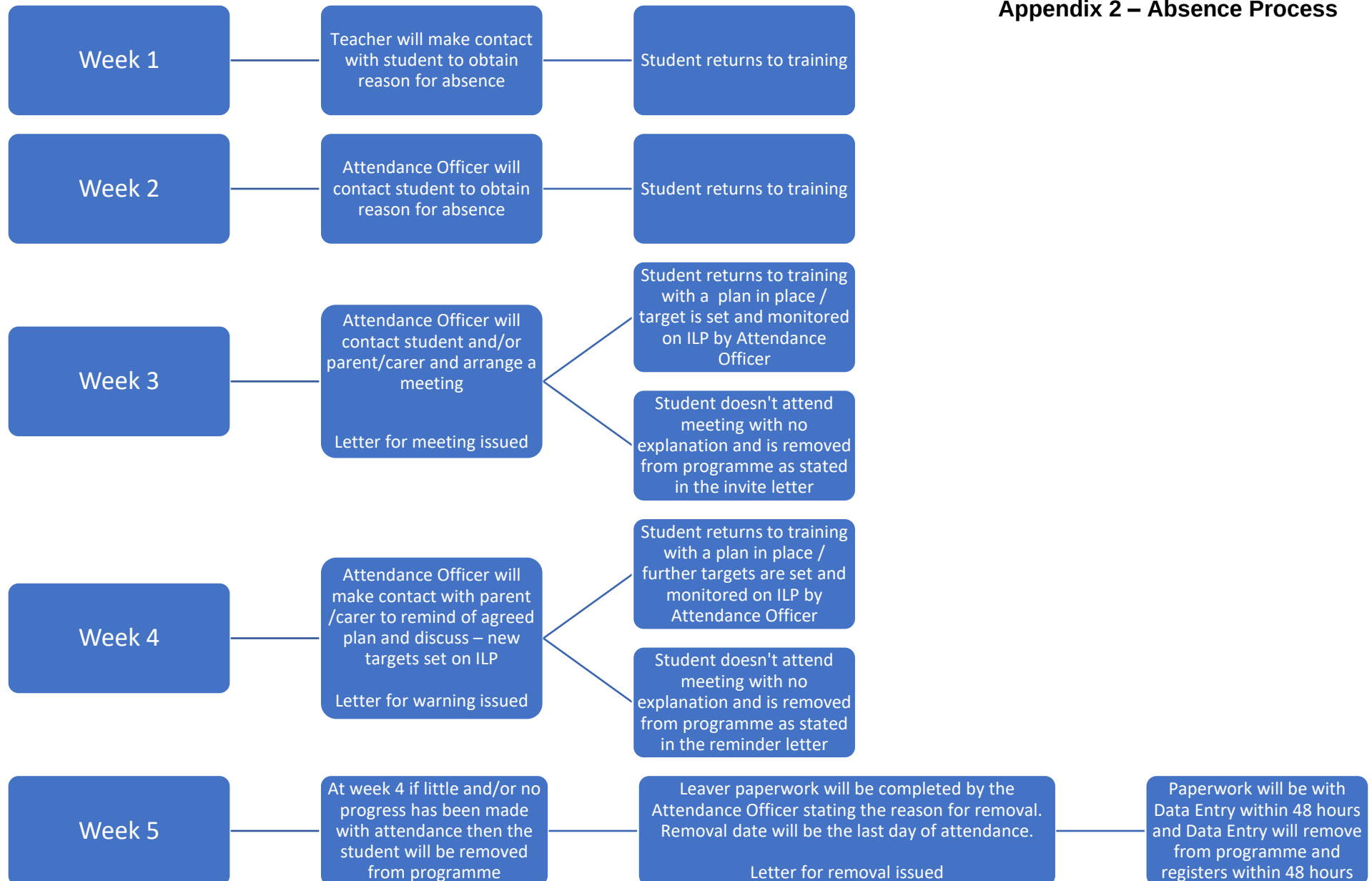
Policy 5.3 – Student Attendance & Punctuality



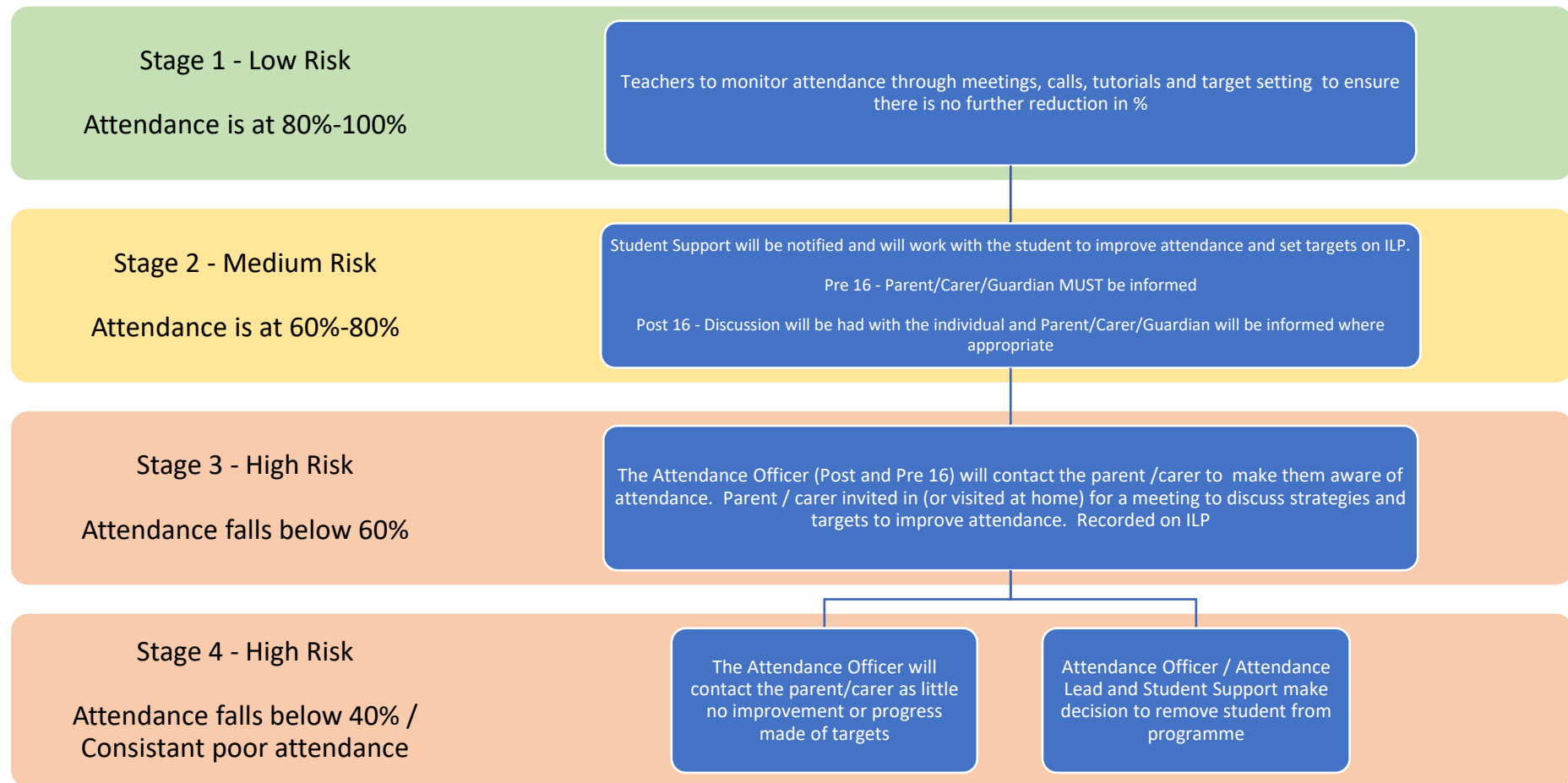
Code	Definition	Impact	Scenario
N	No Engagement throughout lesson	Negative	Student is present but has a negative attitude to learning and has not engaged in the session
S	Sick	Negative	Bridge Training has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
U	Unauthorised	Negative	Unauthorised holiday / Bridge Training not happy with the student's reason for absence or Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when and if the reason emerges)
F	Student has arranged a shift working	Negative	Student has arranged a working shift within timetabled training hours
Register Marks for Teachers and/or Attendance Officer – Not counted in attendance %			
C	Completed	Not counted	Achieved the qualification and has finished the element of training but has not yet been removed from register
W	Withdrawn	Not Counted	Student has left programme / or student has left the course
X	Teacher Absence / Class Cancelled	Not Counted	See above for definition 'Staff Absence'
Z	Suspended	Not Counted	Investigation currently in place and student not allowed to attend site and/or circumstances that have been agreed with Student Support for an agreed period of time as the student plans to return to training
Q	Student not required on site	Not Counted	AH only – to be used for the student ambassadors register

Policy 5.3 – Student Attendance & Punctuality

Appendix 2 – Absence Process



Appendix 3 – Process for monitoring interventions



Note: There may be exceptional circumstances due to poor attendance such as death of a close family member or they are a young carer or there are severe mental health issues. If this is the case, then this will be documented on the ILP, and alternative measures and strategies implemented.

Appendix 4 – Bursary and Free School Meals

16-19 Bursary / Free School Meals – Positive Marks

If an absence is recorded under the category of a positive mark (as defined in Appendix 1) – payment will be made.

16-19 Bursary / Free School Meals – Negative Marks

If an absence is recorded under the category of a negative mark (as defined in Appendix 1) – then no payment will be made.

16-19 Bursary / Free School Meals – Not Counted Marks

- Codes C / X (see conditions for staff absence above) – will be paid
- Codes W / Q / Z – will not be paid (emergency food vouchers can be issued for Code Z in exceptional circumstances)