

Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board

Dundrum College of Further Education College

Attendance and Engagement Policy

1. ETHOS

Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB) is committed to providing a supportive environment to enable all learners to achieve their full potential. DDLETB recognises learners are responsible for their own attendance, punctuality and engagement and encourages them to develop self-discipline and take personal responsibility in order to achieve success on their chosen course.

Experience shows learners who actively participate in their learning by attending all classes are more likely to:

- Develop the knowledge, skills and competencies required to successfully complete the course
- Effectively manage on-going assessment requirements
- Foster a strong sense of class participation and active engagement in college activities.

Dundrum College of Further Education, as a constituent College of DDLETB, is required to maintain attendance records and these will be forwarded to funding and other relevant government agencies as requested.

For the purpose of this policy, punctuality is implicit in the term attendance.

2. GUIDELINES

Dundrum College of Further Education, as a constituent College of DDLETB, is committed to:

- 2.1 informing learners of attendance requirements and consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- 2.2 operating an attendance management system
- 2.3 implementing attendance procedures in a fair and consistent manner
- 2.4 supporting learners who are experiencing difficulties or unforeseen circumstances
- 2.5 providing attendance records as may be required by SUSI (grant awarding body), the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and relevant government departments
- 2.6 applying appropriate sanctions for unsatisfactory attendance
- 2.7 notifying the learner in writing of the sanctions applied. Decisions made with respect to learners under the age of 18, will also be communicated to parents/guardians.

3. DEFINITION OF ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

Dundrum College of Further Education courses are full-time and are delivered in person. Course content may be provided via online learning platforms to supplement learning.

Attendance and engagement is defined as:

- Attending classes and other learning activities, for example, trainings, talks, field trips etc punctually
- Actively engaging with learning, for example, contributing to class discussions and group work
- Submitting assessments and course work as per deadlines
- Attending exams and/or skills demonstrations punctually as per schedule
- Responding in a timely manner to communication from the College.

Holidays should not be booked during term time and learners should endeavour to make personal appointments outside of timetabled classes. Learners should give prior notification of foreseen absences to their Programme Lead.

Dundrum College of Further Education understands that learners may face certain challenges which impact on their attendance/engagement. Periods of short term certified sick leave will not impact on a learner's attendance record. However, learners who submit consecutive medical certificates over a longer period of time may be deemed to have unsatisfactory attendance and/or engagement and may be subject to sanctions. The College will work with learners, endeavouring to ensure that they achieve their full potential.

4. PROCEDURES

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

Learners are expected and encouraged to attend every subject on their timetable, regularly and punctually, unless a subject exemption has been agreed and awarded by the College based on a previous qualification. When learners arrive late to class or are absent, they miss important information about College events and activities. They also miss vital explanations, demonstrations and collaborative activities that enhance understanding and as a result, their learning suffers. Learner lateness and absenteeism is also disruptive to teachers and to other learners.

Students are required to contact their Programme Lead using their **@dcfe.ie** email address to advise of any absence of 3 or more consecutive days.

Students who have been absent for 15 or more consecutive college days, without notifying the College, will be contacted by their Programme Lead to establish if they have left the course and to provide advice and support students.

Record Keeping

Attendance for each class is recorded electronically. A record will be kept of communication with learners in relation to their attendance/engagement.

Implications of Unsatisfactory Attendance/Engagement for Learners

Unsatisfactory attendance may impact on the:

- Successful completion of assessments and the achievement of certification
- Progression to higher education or employment
- Establishment of positive relationships with classmates and teachers
- Receipt of VTOS, BTEA and SUSI PLC grant payments

Sanctions for Unsatisfactory Attendance/Engagement for Learners (*amend as required*)

Sanctions for unsatisfactory attendance may include:

- Exclusion from participation in field trips and other learning activities
- Exclusion from participation in European Erasmus+ mobility opportunities

It is the responsibility of learners to actively engage with the College. Learners who do not engage with the College in relation to their non-attendance/non-engagement will be considered to have voluntarily left their course and will no longer be considered a registered learner of the College.

Learners with unsatisfactory attendance/engagement will be advised of the sanction/s in writing.

5. APPEALS

Dundrum College of Further Education, as a constituent College of DDLETB, recognises the right of learners to appeal sanctions in relation to attendance, and commits to address every appeal in a timely, fair and consistent manner.

Procedures to Appeal

5.1 Appeals must be lodged in writing to the Principal within 5 working days on receipt of the sanctions letter.

5.2 The Principal will establish an Appeals Panel to meet with the learner within 5 working days of the appeal being received. The Panel may be comprised of suitable members of staff such as Principal/Deputy Principal/FE Coordinator/Course Coordinator. At least one member of the panel will be independent of the sanction process.

5.3 The learner may be accompanied by another individual. Learners under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a Parent or Guardian. Details of the accompanying person must be provided to the Principal in advance of the meeting.

5.4 The Principal will inform the Learner/Parent/Guardian of the decision of the Appeals Panel within three working days. Parents/Guardians will be notified in respect of decisions made to learners under 18 years of age.