



Ullswater Community College

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Last revised: September 2017

Signed: Alan Davis (Chair of Governors):

Aims of the Attendance Policy

- UCC will offer an environment in which students feel valued and welcome and know that their presence is important.
- UCC will promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- UCC will act early to address patterns of absence and so ensure that every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.

UCC will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance.

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Rights and responsibilities

Parents and carers

- Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend UCC regularly, punctually, properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- If a child is prevented from attending for any reason, or is going to be late, parents are requested to notify UCC before 10.00 a.m. each day – by telephone or message – and to follow-up the absence in writing on the child's return.

Students

- Students will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level.
- All students are expected to attend UCC regularly and punctually, and to adhere to our policies on behaviour and dress.
- All student attendance will be monitored using individual attendance records.

Governors

- The Headteacher will report to the Governing Body highlighting progress in this important area.
- Governors will nominate a member to work alongside the Headteacher on attendance issues.

School staff

- Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example.
- Attendance is the responsibility of all UCC staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff) who will respond to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care.
- A student's absence from UCC must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received.

- All unaccounted-for absences will be promptly investigated, and parents and students will be kept informed about any attendance concerns.
- Students and/or parents who experience difficulties with regular attendance will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from the Form Tutor.
- Senior members of staff and/or external support services, such as the Carlisle and Eden Inclusion Officer, LA Children's Services, can also offer support should the need arise.

Registration

- Registers will be taken punctually each day at 8.55 a.m. and throughout the school day by class teachers-
- If a student arrives after these registers close s/he should report to Student Services and sign-in on the late list.

Holidays in term time

Headteachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional" circumstances. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1 September 2013, the following examples of absence request will not meet the criteria for approval unless clear and specific "exceptional" circumstances can be demonstrated:

- family holidays arranged for convenience (whether because of holiday trade, farming, parental work commitments, etc.)
- family holidays arranged because of cost (cheaper holidays in England and abroad during term time)
- visiting relatives
- family day trips (to exhibitions, theatre, agricultural shows, etc.)
- visiting family/friends who have different holidays.

Some examples of "exceptional" circumstances that would be considered include:

- the serious illness of a close family member
- funerals
- forces personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- representation in national or county sports teams
- other significant family events or circumstances
- where the absence related to the future career of the student.

If parents still wish to apply for term-time leave, then they are requested to complete and return the absence request form (see Appendix 1).

Further guidance can be found in the School Absence Enforcement Policy issued by Cumbria County Council

Approved educational activity

Students will not be deemed absent when out of college to take part in:

- Sporting activity
- Educational visits
- Work experience
- Courses/classes in other establishments

Strategies for promoting attendance

Following up lateness and absence

- It is the parent/carer's responsibility to contact college by 10.00 a.m. on the first day of all absences, and where possible to give a return date. Where this is not possible the parent/carer should keep in daily contact with UCC.
- If a student is absent regularly, apparently unnecessarily, UCC will contact parents/carers to notify them of the UCC concern and to emphasise the parent/carer's legal responsibility to ensure regular attendance.
- Students who are persistently absent from school will be invited into school for an Attendance panel to discuss any difficulties that they may be experiencing and to support the students and families to bring about an improvement in attendance.
- If a student is persistently absent and UCC's efforts to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the matter will be referred to the Carlisle and Eden Inclusion Officer in LA Children's Services.
- Students who are absent through sickness, or any other unavoidable cause, for an extended period will be supported in continuing their education at home where this is possible, and will be supported in re-integrating into UCC on their return.

Promoting attendance

- UCC will employ a range of strategies, sanctions and rewards to encourage good attendance and punctuality.
- Student attendance is monitored by Tutors, Head of year, the Attendance Team and the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) who reports directly to the Headteacher.
- Attendance data will be collected and analysed regularly, and combined with an annual review of the school attendance policy will inform future practice and college targets which will be set out in an action plan to be shared with parents and carers.
- Good attendance/improved attendance will be rewarded and publicised.
- Regular liaison between partner primary schools and UCC will identify students who may require extra support during the transition into Year 7.

Action planning to improve attendance

- College and individual student attendance should be kept under regular review and a senior member of staff and a governor should have an overall responsibility for college attendance.
- Accurate marking of registers with the appropriate code letters for absences will enable detailed analysis of the nature of absence as well as the quantity.
- This information should be compared to the previous performance of UCC and of individual students.

The Attendance Team

Aims of the Attendance Team

- to provide an administrative support service to Form Tutors and Heads of Year
- to promote positive and pro-active strategies to raise attendance across the College
- to work in an encouraging, supportive way with UCC students.

There are three major strands to the work the Attendance Team undertakes that complement the work of staff in pastoral roles:

- Administrative support

- Positive whole-college intervention strategies
- Pro-active strategies supporting individuals with unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality.

Administrative Support

While the Form Tutor and individual teachers have responsibility for the keeping of an accurate daily register the Attendance Team can offer support in dealing with attendance concerns and making enquiries regarding absences.

Daily checking tasks

- Late list and medical list
- Register SIMS check
- Check on Years 7 – 13 caseload
- Following up Tutor concerns regarding an absence
- Lesson check
- Site check
- Parent contact
- Home visit
- Sweep of town

Letters

Many different types of letter can be generated to fit the circumstances in regard to unsatisfactory attendance or unexplained absence. These are available at Tutor or Head of Year request.

Communication

- The Attendance Team will notify Tutors/Heads of Year with the result of their enquiries into absences.
- The Attendance Team would value a two-way communication process so they are aware of returns from absence etc.
- Student Support Team keeps files on each year group and can share information with Tutors/Heads of Year.

Positive whole-college intervention strategies

The Attendance Team is involved in many intervention strategies including:

- **The “Wise Up” Campaign** – Is a strategy used at UCC for raising awareness of what good attendance is and the negative impact that a falling level of absence can have on attainment. Form Tutors are given fortnightly posters which include student’s most recent attendance data. This allows Tutors to monitor and track good and excellent attendance. It also provides an early indicator to Tutors where attendance issues may need to be addressed.
- **SAM days (School Attendance Matters)** – Under the guidance of the Pastoral Manager, Heads of Year target students whose attendance puts them at risk of the government measure called ‘persistent absentee’. Parents of students with attendance below 90% which is categorised as a ‘persistent absence’ are written to and the student is then interviewed by either the LEA Inclusion Officer, Head of Year or an Attendance Officer. The student attendance is analysed with the student and they are told about the importance of good attendance. These students will then be monitored over the next 6 weeks. Those that improve are rewarded. The students that still struggle to improve attendance are then invited to an attendance panel.
- **Attendance Panels** – These panels are run by the Pastoral Manager and the LEA Inclusion Officer. Heads of Year nominate students whose attendance is below 90% and where other

interventions have failed to secure improvements. At these meetings targets are set and agreed. These are followed up by review meetings in 6 weeks' time. When the panel is successful the student receives a certificate of commendation. In cases of no improvement the school works with the LEA to explore other avenues to help with the improvement of attendance.

- Town sweeps
- Fortnightly meetings with Heads of Year to review attendance

Pro-active strategies: Improving individual attendance

Strategies concerning individual students will proceed up this ladder of responses if attendance deteriorates further and there is a lack of improvement.

Level of response	Strategy
1	Discussion and review between student and Form Tutor or student and Attendance Team. Tutor call home
2	Letter sent home Parental phone call from Head of Year
3	Parent meets Form Tutor or Attendance Team/Head of Year Home visit by Attendance Team Truancy or punctuality detentions to replace learning time lost
4	Placed on report Placed on truancy watch Further detentions for replacement of learning time lost Attendance Panels
5	Review attendance Panel after 6 weeks. If no improvement student will remain on the Panel for a further 6 weeks
6	Refer to LEA If the child's absence falls below 85% and there is no sustained improvement despite school intervention the school should consider a referral to Children's Services following the Attendance Protocol
7	Parents who fail to ensure their students attend school could be placed on an Education supervision Order and or face a fine of £2500

Childrens' Services Inclusion Officer

The Children's Services, Carlisle and Eden Inclusion Officer provides a valuable link between College and home and can meet parents to discuss problems, or help/ advise on College-related matters.



ULLSWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Holiday/absence request form

Dear Parent/Carer

Changes to the statutory legislation affecting school attendance – the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 – came into force on 1 September 2013. The amendments to the pupil registration regulations make it clear that Headteachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are “exceptional” circumstances. They also remove references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days. Under the new legislation, the following examples of absence request will not meet the criteria for approval unless clear and specific “exceptional” circumstances can be demonstrated:

Family holidays arranged for convenience (whether because of holiday trade, farming, parental work commitments, etc.)

- Family holidays arranged because of cost (cheaper holidays in England and abroad during term time)
- visiting relatives
- Family day trips (to exhibitions, theatre, agricultural shows, etc.)
- Visiting family/friends who have different holidays.

Some examples of “exceptional” circumstances that would be considered include:

- The serious illness of a close family member
- Funerals
- Forces personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Representation in national or county sports teams
- Other significant family events or circumstances.

If you still wish to apply for term-time leave, then please complete and return the form for consideration.

Mr N. J. Ellery
Headteacher

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Please return this completed form to Student Services

Student name*: Tutor Group:

I (Parent/Guardian) (Address).....

Request permission to take my child* out of college in term time; the reason for this absence is:

Date requested – from: to: (inclusive)

Signature of Parent/Guardian: Date:

*Please complete one form for each child for whom you are requesting absence.

For College to Complete

Student Services	Previous holidays	Head of Year (comments)	Text/letter sent/date	Spreadsheet/SIMs	HJH

Authorised/Unauthorised by: (Attendance Manager) Date: