

<b>PROVIDER NAME:</b> CCT College Dublin (CCT)		
<b>POLICY AREA:</b> Standard 9: Learning Resource and Student Support		
<b>Policy and Procedure Title:</b> Attendance, Punctuality and Leave Policy (Sick leave and unscheduled leave requests)	<b>Policy Number:</b> CCTP905	<b>Version:</b> 2.2
<p><b>Policy Statement</b></p> <p>The reputation of CCT and of its graduates depends on upholding the highest standards of teaching, learning and scholarly activity. Learners are expected to attend all classes for which they are enrolled. Regular class attendance and engagement is essential to successful academic achievement. Each learner is responsible for all work from the first day of class and must make satisfactory arrangements with the lecturer regarding any absences.</p> <p>The College requires a minimum annual class attendance rate of 85%, to help facilitate successful academic achievement and progression. Absences can only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, for example illness and/or personal issues. Supporting evidence and/or documentation must be provided in each case. CCT lecturers are obliged to accurately record class attendance for all learners. Class attendances are recorded on a daily basis by CCT staff. If a learner is late (L) or leaves early (LE), this is recorded using each of the symbols: L, and LE. This facilitates CCT fulfilling its obligation to report individual student attendance to the Department of Justice (Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, INIS) for international learners in receipt of a Visa.</p> <p>Where authorised absence is approved, this is normally up to a maximum duration of 2 calendar weeks. For absence of longer periods the College will discuss deferral options as applicable and appropriate.</p> <p>In addition to the College policy on attendance, international learners in receipt of a Visa are reminded of the need to comply with attendance requirements as specified by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service. Failure to do so may result in future Visa requests being denied. Similarly, learners undertaking a programme of study funded through a government initiative or department are required to satisfy the attendance requirements attached to the funding provided.</p> <p>CCT records the attendance of all learners and may use this information to inform decisions relating progression. Attendance data in hard copy will be retained and destroyed / archived in accordance with the College records retention policy.</p> <p>CCT reserves the right to share learner attendance data with third parties where this is directly relevant to the learner's enrolment or funding status i.e. for the purpose of visa or receipt of fees, bursaries, and employer sponsorship which include an attendance requirement for eligibility. In all such cases, learners will be notified of this requirement and, at the point of registration, will be informed of the legal basis for this data sharing.</p>		
<p><b>Definitions and Principles</b></p> <p>CCT defines class attendance as being present in the classroom for the duration of scheduled lectures or other learning sessions of the programme the learner is registered on. Attendance in class enables a learner to engage and actively participate in class. Punctuality can be defined as the 'characteristic of being able to complete a required task or fulfil an obligation before or at a previously designated time'. The general policy approach of CCT lecturers and teachers is to allow a period of 10 minutes for learners to be late to class. However, considering how disruptive a late arrival of a learner to class can be late arrivals and early departure instances are recorded, and counted, with three instances of either equalling one absence.</p>		

With particular reference to classroom based taught programmes of education and training, class attendance is critical to facilitate learning and progression, and to help affirm an educational relationship between teacher and learner. Daily monitoring of attendance, with procedures to detect and prevent poor levels of attendance, contribute to higher levels of academic performance among CCT learners. CCT is predominantly a higher education institution. Most learners are enrolled on staged programmes of more than one-year duration, where progression from one stage to another is required. Each module comprises Continuous Assessment components, and several modules are 100% continuously assessed. Others may involve real-time continuous assessment such as class tests, etc. Continuous class attendance is crucial and often directly related to learner's assessment performance.

The links between low attendance and progression vary on a case-by-case basis, but in general poor attendance levels correlate with poor progression rates. Nonetheless it should be noted that in some cases poor attendance may result in non-progression even if academic marks would otherwise allow for progression (see Procedures section below).

CCT defines **Holidays and Breaks**, as those pre-scheduled permitted periods of leave between academic semesters and outside of end of semester examination dates, which take place each academic year. Due to the nature and structure of CCT's higher education programmes, the holidays and breaks tend to be the same periods each year. as follows:

It should be noted that there are no scheduled classes for public holidays in the Republic of Ireland, each calendar year.

**Personal Mitigating Circumstances** are defined as those unexpected / unplanned situations which arise that impact on an individual's ability to fulfil certain obligations or impacts on their performance.

**Staff Involved**

Dean for Administration and Finance, Head of Student Services, School Manager, QA Officer, Faculty staff, Dean of Academic Affairs

Procedure Outline / Method(s) used to carry out this procedure	Responsibility of	Evidence generated by this procedure to ensure its effectiveness
<p><b>1. Information to Learners with regard to Attendance, Sick Leave and Holidays</b></p> <p>1.1 All learners receive the College Academic Calendar on all key dates for their programme including all Assessment and holiday dates, on their first day of class, through the Programme Handbook. Programme Induction takes place over the first 2 weeks of each academic year, and learners receive presentations from faculty and admin staff CCT's policies and procedures on Attendance and Punctuality, Sick Leave and Holiday Breaks, along with other practical policies. Learners have access to the CCT QA system on the College website and through Moodle (with all policies and procedures, under 12 European Standards and Guideline sections), and to the General Student Handbook on Moodle.</p> <p>1.2 All learners must sign the CCT Registration Agreement with Learners which sets out the Policies, and Definitions of Sick Leave and Holidays and Breaks, and the importance of consistent attendance in class.</p>	<p>Faculty Coordinator</p>	<p>Programme handbook Programme calendar  Learner agreements</p>

<p>1.3 Learners are made aware clearly that no unscheduled breaks are permitted from term time at CCT, except in circumstances of illness, or close family bereavement, or any other exceptional or mitigating circumstance(s), which could cause a student to take an unscheduled break from term time, but any reasons which form the basis of an application would need to be verified by supporting documentation</p>		
<p><b>2. Procedure for measuring class attendance</b></p>		
<p>2.1 The principal method employed by CCT to measure learner's daily attendance levels is through the use of Learner Attendance Registers. Each lecturer receives a Learner Attendance Register for each scheduled module class (one for each session).</p>	Lecturer	Completed <i>Learner Attendance Registers</i> ,
<p>2.2 Learners sign beside their name on the Learner Attendance Register. The class Lecturer also counts the number of learners against the register when signatures are complete. Spot check attendance monitoring may also take place where a member of CCT staff will join the class to undertake additional learner count or sign in. Any discrepancies are dealt with immediately by the Lecturer and/or staff member checking attendance. If a discrepancy can't be resolved, it is dealt with by discarding the discrepant register and beginning with a new one.</p>	Learner	
<p>2.3 The falsification of learner attendance i.e. signing in a fellow learner that is absent is considered a major disciplinary offence and will be treated as such. This creation of false records has potentially serious health and safety implications in the event of an evacuation being required.</p>		
<p>2.4 Learners who are absent are left with a blank signature space,</p>		
<p>2.5 All completed learner attendance records are returned to the Main Office where the data is then input into the electronic attendance record. Attendance records are retained for the duration of the learner's studies plus one year.</p>	Faculty Coordinator	Updated electronic records
<p><b>3. Procedures for Personal Mitigating Circumstances requiring Unscheduled Holidays and Breaks</b></p>		
<p>3.1 Learners who wish to apply for an unscheduled break from the programme outside of the scheduled holidays must fill in the Personal Mitigating Circumstances Form and submit to the CCT Faculty Coordinator with supporting documentation attached (for example bereavement notice, or any supporting documentation addressing the reason for Unscheduled Break). The position of CCT is that no unscheduled breaks are permitted except in documented cases of illness or close family bereavement. CCT is not ruling out any other exceptional or mitigating circumstances, which could cause a student to take an unscheduled break from term time, but any reasons which form the basis of an application, would need to be verified by supporting documentation.</p>	Learner	PMC application
<p>3.2 An application for an unscheduled break due to personal mitigating circumstances should normally be made to the</p>	Faculty coordinator	

<p>Faculty Coordinator prior to the break from the programme, and normally be approved by the College prior to a break.</p> <p>3.3 The Faculty Coordinator will review the evidence and may consult with the Programme Leader, School Manager and / or Dean for Administration and Finance to determine whether or not the absence should be counted against the attendance rate for the learner. The decision of the College will be emailed back to the applicant within 2 working days.</p> <p>3.4 Applications for unscheduled breaks from the term time within the programme, can only be considered for extreme personal mitigating circumstances such as illness or close family bereavement (applications which include completed PMC forms, and supporting documentation verifying the reasons given).</p> <p>3.5 Where the absence impacts on the assessment schedule the Faculty Coordinator will consult with the QA Officer to determine the extent of the impact and the implications of this for the learner and notify the learner of the required steps and implications as per the PMC policy.</p> <p>3.6 The outcome of applications for consideration of personal mitigating circumstances leading to absence due to sick leave or other unscheduled breaks is normally communicated to the learner within 2 working days. This decision is final.</p> <p>3.7 The Faculty Coordinator will outline the main reason(s) of the decision to the learner.</p>	<p>Faculty Coordinator, Dean of Admin and Finance, School Manager</p>	<p>Notification records</p>
<p><b>4. Sanctions for lack of punctuality</b></p> <p>4.1 Learners who are late or who leave early are accordingly marked with an 'L' or an 'LE' beside their name on the Register.</p> <p>Any of these symbols multiplied by 3 instances is equalled to one absent and is counted against the required minimum attendance.</p>	<p>Lecturer</p>	<p>Completed registers</p>
<p><b>5. Procedure for poor attendance notification to learners</b></p> <p>This section outlines the process for notifying learners of poor attendance levels. This system is based on a monthly review performed by the Faculty Coordinator and the Dean for Administration, where a simple percentage calculation is made for each learner based on recorded daily attendance rates. Notifications normally take place via email. Posted notifications are utilised if necessary. The Dean for Administration and Finance oversees the application of penalties.</p> <p><u>5.1 Minor Attendance Infringement - Grade A Notification</u></p> <p>Any learner with an attendance rate between 60% and 79% inclusive normally receives a Grade A notification from CCT, at the end of the month, with a strong recommendation that the learner needs to improve class attendance accordingly.</p>	<p>Faculty Coordinator Dean for Administration and Finance</p>	<p>Records of monthly email correspondence between CCT and learners notifying them of poor attendance</p>

#### 5.2 Intermediate Attendance Infringement - Grade B Notification

Any learner with an attendance rate between 50% and 59% inclusive, normally receives a Grade B notification from CCT, at the end of the month, with a strong recommendation that the learner needs to improve class attendance dramatically, and with a warning of how low levels of attendance can negatively affect progression.

#### 5.3 Major Attendance Infringement - Grade C Notification

Any learner with an attendance rate between 40% and 49% inclusive normally receives a Grade C notification from CCT, at the end of the month, with a strong recommendation that the learner needs to improve class attendance immediately, or face potential restriction of access to programme assessment, and progression to the following semester.

#### 5.4 Severe Attendance Infringement - Grade D Notification

Any learner with an attendance rate below 40% normally receives a Grade D notification from CCT, at the end of the month, with a Severe Warning that the learner needs to immediately improve attendance over the next month, or receive a CCT Suspension letter, whereby the learner is suspended from their studies for the present academic year.

### 6. Application of Penalties

6.1 The penalty applicable to confirmed cases of attendance infringement is determined by whether the incident constitutes a first or subsequent case of major or severe attendance infringements. The following graduation of penalties aims to ensure that a consistent approach is adopted across all academic programmes:

#### 6.1.1 **Warnings for Grade A/B attendance infringements (Minor and Intermediate)**

The learner is normally notified and warned each month attendance is below 85% but above 50%, and about the correlation between low levels of attendance and low levels of progression. A consistent record of attendance notifications is placed on the learner's file (hard and soft copy), which are removed on programme completion.

#### 6.1.2 **Penalty for Grade C attendance infringement (Major)**

CCT normally warns learners in writing of a Grade C infringement, that CCT may serve a penalty to restrict access to assessment at the end of the semester, if two consecutive Grade C notifications are communicated. A record of the infringement is placed on the learner's file and shall be removed on programme completion should this be the only case of major attendance infringement.

#### 6.1.3 **Penalty for Grade D attendance infringement, first incident (Severe)**

The learner is normally issued with a severe warning letter of the consequences of low attendance, in relation to progression through the programme. The learner is notified that CCT may serve a penalty to restrict access to assessment at the end of the semester. The learner is also notified that if attendance remains at under 40% following the next monthly attendance review, the learner may be served with a Letter of Suspension, suspending the learner from the programme for the current academic year. A

Records of all email and letter correspondence between CCT and learners with warning and penalties notifications on attendance infringements

record of the infringement is placed on the learner's file and shall be removed on programme completion should this be the only case of major attendance infringement.

**6.1.4 Penalty for Grade D attendance infringement, second incident (Severe)**

The learner is normally issued with a severe warning letter and may be restricted from access to assessment for the current semester, following a review by School Manager (or appointed nominee) and Dean of Academic Affairs (or appointed nominee). The learner is also notified that if attendance remains at under 40% following the next monthly attendance review, the learner may be served with a Letter of Suspension, suspending the learner from the programme for the current academic year. A permanent record of the infringement is placed on the learner's file.

**6.1.5 Penalty for Grade D attendance infringement, third incident (Severe)**

The learner is normally withdrawn from the College and programme and shall not be permitted to re-enrol until the following academic year (pending outcome of a re-entry admissions meeting between the learner, the school Manager, and Head of Admissions, and Dean of School, (or relevant nominees). A permanent record of the infringement is placed on the learner's file.

**6.1.6 Effect of suspensions and dismissals on fees paid**

In the case of suspension from the current academic year, any fees paid for the semester in which the infringement and suspension took place are forfeited. Fees paid for any semester which has not yet taken place, where suspension applies to are not refunded. Fees for such semesters are not refunded, but are applicable to the next academic year, when the period of suspension has ended. In the event of a dismissal any fees paid are not refundable.

6.2 Other indirect penalties of low attendance and progression relate to scenarios where learners are dependent on documentation produced by CCT to confirm attendance rates for agencies external to CCT, such as Dept. of Social Protection in Ireland (usually related to Irish and EU nationals), and the Dept. of Justice Immigration Authorities in Ireland (usually related to Non-EU nationals on study visa status).

6.3 Attempting to circumvent or corrupt the policies in this document is handled as a case of misconduct (for instance if a learner signs an attendance register on behalf of another learner, or otherwise falsifies attendance information). Such cases fall under the Disciplinary Procedures and Policy section of the General Student Handbook. Penalties include possible disciplinary probation, suspension or dismissal.

**7. Appeals**

An appeal is not an opportunity for a subsequent hearing or a new investigation. It is a formal request that another body re-examines the procedure or decision of decision-making committee. Disagreement with the decision in itself does not constitute grounds for appeal.

A learner who wishes to lodge an appeal may do so on a limited number of grounds. They must clearly identify the

Dean of Academic  
Affairs

Appeals Application  
with supporting  
documentation

elements for which the appeal is being made. The application must also specify the grounds on which the appeal is sought and must contain all information that they require to have taken into account in the appeal.

An appeal may be submitted on the following grounds:

1. Procedural irregularity
2. Inconsistent implementation of procedures
3. Exceptional personal circumstances not previously reported for good reason; the appeal should explain the reason(s) for previous non-disclosure

7.1 The learner should submit a written appeal application which must comprise of a written statement explaining the grounds for the appeal and providing evidence or directing the Dean to evidence to support the grounds. Disagreement with the decision of the Complaint Committee does not constitute grounds for appeal. The application must include old and new supporting documentation, addressed to the Dean of Academic Affairs. The Dean of Academic Affairs will normally acknowledge the application within 5 working days.

7.2 In the first instance the Dean of Academic Affairs will investigate the grounds and determine whether or not an appeal shall be heard.

7.3 If an appeal is granted, the Dean will convene an appeal panel, not to be confused with the Appeals Board which deals with academic matters, to review the information and evidence provided. The panel reserves the right to undertake further investigation into the procedures and decision-making that contributed to the decision being appealed.

The learner may be invited to attend a meeting as part of the appeal process, depending on the basis of the appeal request, where the Dean deems this to be necessary.

The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the learner at the earliest opportunity.

A copy of the application form and any supplementary documentation will be furnished to the Appeal Panel.

7.4 Unless otherwise notified by the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Appeal Panel will comprise of:

- The Dean of Academic Affairs as Chair
- A member of CCT Management not previously involved in the matter
- A member of CCT staff with no previous involvement in the matter.

7.5 the learner should expect the written confirmation of the outcome of the appeal and any subsequent action which the College intends to take, within 14 working days of confirmation of the appeal being granted. The written response will clearly outline the outcome of the appeal process and the reasons for the decision.

Appeal Panel

Appeals Panel  
Report and Minutes  
outlining  
conclusions

Any other written  
correspondence to

7.6 In the event that a decision has been taken not to uphold the appeal, the reasons for that decision will be outlined in the response. The Dean of Academic Affairs sends the College's formal appeal outcome to the learner. A copy of the response will also be issued by the Dean of Academic Affairs to <b>anyone named in the response</b> .		do with the case
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<b>Monitoring</b>
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<b>Monitor (Job Title)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Monitoring Method(s)</b>
Dean of Administration and Finance School Manager	Ongoing reviews each semester  Annual review for full academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of monthly summary reports of attendance rates per programme</li> <li>- Review of records of warnings, infringements and penalties</li> <li>- Review of minutes of Programme and Exam Board meetings, along with any other pertinent committee meetings</li> <li>- Review of records of any relevant Academic Standards Board (ASB), and Appeals Board meeting minutes</li> <li>- Review of written records of formal and informal learner feedback</li> </ul>



## POLICY CONTROL SHEET

<b>Policy Title</b>	Attendance, Punctuality and Leave Policy
<b>Responsible Officer(s)</b>	Dean of Admin & Finance, School Manager
<b>Issuance Date</b>	August 2018
<b>Effective Date</b>	August 2018
<b>Last Review Date</b>	July 2019
<b>Supersedes</b>	version 2.1
<b>Next Review Date</b>	August 2024
<b>Designated Reviewer(s)</b>	Dean of Academic Affairs
<b>Scope</b>	Internal staff (full and part time); Learners; Academic Standards Board; Appeals Board

### Revision History

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved By
New Policy	August 2015	New QA system	Senior Management Team	Head of Academics, College Registrar
Version 2.0	July 2017	Updating of roles and addition of clarifications	Dean of Academic Affairs	QA Committee
Version 2.1	April 2018	Integration of sick leave and authorised absence approval process previously included under separate policy. Revision of the appeals process to reflect the College approach to appeals management.	QA Committee	Academic Council
Version 2.2	September 2019	Edits to reflect changes in organisational structure and roles.	SMT	Academic Council

### References upon which the Policy section is based

<b>CCT Policy area</b>	Learning Resources and Student Support
<b>Statutory &amp; System Wide Basis</b>	The Irish Qualifications and Quality Act (Education and Training), 2012; European Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area, Relevant QQI Standards and Guidelines
<b>Related CCT Policies / Forms</b>	CCTF111 – Personal Mitigating Circumstances form; CCTP909 – Personal Mitigating Circumstances Policy