



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Absence & Withdrawal Policy

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Reviewed by: David Bendell
Signed: *D Bendell*

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ABSENCE AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy is meant to ensure that our learners can gain the best return on their investment of time and resources in their studies. By highlighting the importance of attendance and engagement for attainment and success, Oxford Energy Academies encourage all our learners to achieve their full potential. The attendance monitoring system allows the Oxford Energy Academies to identify those learners who are not attending regularly, and these learners will be contacted and offered support according to their needs.

When withdrawals are considered, they are looked at on a case-by-case basis so any issue relating to a learner with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 can be addressed in the appropriate manner.

PURPOSE

This policy will apply to all learners enrolled and studying at Oxford Energy Academies.

The Purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all learners are aware of the importance of attendance and engagement and how this can affect academic outcomes
- Clarify the important attendance and engagement criterion relating to study, in order that learners may use these to identify and take advantage of key learning opportunities and resources in order to achieve the best possible results
- Ensure that learners are aware that Professional Body requirements sometimes have different attendance levels and competencies which must be considered in addition to this policy. This includes practical assessments, placements etc
- Identify the measures of engagement used by the Oxford Energy Academies to assess how regularly a learner uses these resources to help clarify their level of interaction with their studies
- Ensure that the Oxford Energy Academies has accurate information by carrying out attendance data checks in order to review learner attendance records on academic request
- To identify learners who are unable to take advantage of available support due to active circumvention of this policy
- Ensure that the Oxford Energy Academies meets its compliance responsibilities
- Encourage learners to actively manage their attendance record by reporting absences.

DEFINITION

Attendance is defined as the physical presence of the apprentice in the learning environment for the entire scheduled session. Engagement is defined as academically acceptable levels of time and energy devoted to study and the use of available resources by the apprentice to enhance learning at Oxford Energy Academies.



Director: Dave Bendell

Avenue One, Station Lane, Witney, Oxon. OX28 4YB

Email: info@oxford-energy-academy.co.uk

Telephone: 01993 771155

Lateness is defined as arriving after the scheduled start time of the session. Substantial and persistent lateness is defined on a programme-by-programme basis and may be considered an absence.

PRINCIPLES

Oxford Energy Academies fully supports their learners to achieve the most from their studies. Evidence shows that good results are closely linked to good attendance.

- Learners are expected to attend all timetabled events for the modules they are enrolled on and to aim for 100% attendance.
- Where an absence is unavoidable attendance rates should not fall below 75% of compulsory timetabled events or the minimum percentage attendance required for their programme if this is higher
- Learners are expected to attend punctually and for the full duration of events that make up the programme of study
- Oxford Energy Academies should be informed of any absence and the reasons for this
- Learners should ensure that they cover any missed work
- Learners are expected to regularly access and respond, when necessary, to emails from Oxford Energy Academies
- Learners are expected to make full use of the available resources to support their learning
- Assessments should be attempted at the first opportunity. This information can contribute towards engagement when reviewed by academic staff

LEARNER RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the learner's responsibility to:

- Meet all the requirements set out in this policy
- Check their timetable to ensure they attend in the correct room. Timetabling issues should be reported to the Apprenticeship Manager
- Take advantage of additional activities offered to enhance their personal and professional development
- Ensure that they are aware of any specific requirements of their Programme, including attendance related requirements (e.g., attend all practical sessions), particularly those on programmes accredited by Professional Awarding Bodies
- Make no attempt to circumvent the Policy and ensure they are in attendance at every session where their presence is recorded

APPLICATION

This policy will be applied across the academic year. Learners are expected to have full attendance (100%) and to engage with their studies in a meaningful way.

Measurements of attendance will be taken on a continual basis and learners may be withdrawn at any point during the academic year if their attendance and engagement causes concern.

Oxford Energy Academies will contact anyone whose attendance falls below 75% or whose attendance and/or engagement drops off suddenly; we will take into consideration other means of identifying that learners are engaged with their studies and are actively and regularly using resources. This will be to identify if the learner requires additional support so that learners can be referred to specialist services.

Where attendance is identified as falling below acceptable levels; those learners who have not demonstrated the ongoing engagement requirements may face withdrawal from their programme or module(s) as agreed by the relevant academic member of staff. All cases are considered on their individual merit. However, all learners should be aware that active circumvention of this policy will not be tolerated.

Oxford Energy Academies will also consider interactions with teachers and an apprentice's assessment record when determining whether to allow an apprentice to continue their studies.

Learners are expected to arrive at the correct start time for the session. Persistent and substantial lateness may lead to withdrawal.

For some events learners will be allocated to specific groups. It is important that they attend at the time and place shown on their timetable. In exceptional circumstances the teacher may allow a group change.

An application must be made via the teacher and a learner cannot change group prior to agreement by the relevant academic staff member. If the request is granted there will be a change to the apprentice's timetable; in the meantime, they must continue to attend the group they have been initially allocated to, otherwise their attendance will not register, and they will be marked as absent for these events.

Where events from different modules are timetabled at the same time, learners should contact the tutor immediately; it is important that these issues are resolved as soon as possible as it will have a negative effect on their attendance record.

PROCEDURE

Learner's responsibilities are to:

- Maintain and update their attendance record
- Ensure they always have their ID card or photo identification with them. If a card is lost or stops working the teacher can issue replacements. There may be a charge to receive a replacement card
- Always attempt to arrive punctually.
- Notify Oxford Energy Academies if they are going to be absent due to illness or another unavoidable emergency issue
- Notify the tutor concerned (in advance if possible) if an occasion arises where they need to leave a compulsory event early for an unavoidable reason. Oxford Energy Academies

understands that on occasions this may happen, and it will be at the discretion the tutor leading that session.

- Oxford Energy Academies requires learners to attend for the full duration of each event. Leaving the class can be disruptive to the tutor and other learners. Learners who regularly leave early will miss key learning opportunities which may impact on their ability to succeed. This would make the record inaccurate as the actual attendance would not reflect the reported attendance rate. This may result in learners not being offered additional support which may affect their overall results.

Occasionally, Oxford Energy Academies will carry out checks on the accuracy of attendance records by, or at the request of, the relevant academic member of staff

Occasionally Oxford Energy Academies may need to make changes to scheduled events; learners should regularly check their timetable to ensure they attend the correct room at the right time, particularly at the beginning of term.

Where a programme has Professional Awarding Body requirements, learners must attend any events which form part of these requirements e.g., field trips, work placements and compulsory personal tutoring sessions.

Failure to adhere to these requirements could mean that the learner will not meet the standards set by the professional awarding body and may result in them facing withdrawal from their module/programme or be required to transfer to an alternative programme.

Acts of circumvention will not be tolerated by Oxford Energy Academies and action will be taken against learners who knowingly undertake these acts. Oxford Energy Academies considers that the Attendance Policy will have been circumvented if:

- Attendance is registered but the learner does not remain for the whole duration of the event
- A paper register is used and a learner sign for another learner

The Attendance Policy enables Oxford Energy Academies to directly support learners at the appropriate time.

Attendance checks will be carried out by, or at the request of, the relevant academic member of staff to ensure the accuracy of the attendance data.

The first occasion for which there is evidence that circumvention of the Attendance Policy has occurred will result in learners being marked absent for the event concerned and issued with a written warning. Learners may also be required to meet with a relevant academic member of staff to ensure that they remain on track and are referred for support if required.

For subsequent acts of circumvention, learners may face withdrawal from the module or programme of study and will have the right of appeal. The Attendance Record will be amended to record an absence.

Staff Responsibilities are to:

- Monitor data relating to engagement activities and monitor it on an ongoing basis
- Monitor data validation and ensure it is carried out by event spot-checks or at the request of, the relevant academic staff member
- Ensure information on absences is collated
- Ensure Oxford Energy Academies make reasonable adjustments and/or allowances in the case of disability related non-attendance in line with the Equality Act (2010).
- Ensure each case is treated on its individual merits and will seek to make fair and proportionate decisions that are in the learner's best interests
- Ensure under the terms of the Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy, new mothers who have given birth and are unable to attend for two weeks, in line with Health & Safety regulations, will have their attendance record amended accordingly. This time will not impact negatively on attendance data.

Learners whose records show persistent and substantial lateness to class will be contacted by phone, email or text by the Apprenticeship Manager to ascertain any reasons for this lateness.

- Learners may be referred to specialist services to ascertain if any support can be provided to address lateness.
- If it is deemed that learners are not engaging with their programme of study, they may face withdrawal from their module/programme, at the discretion of the Oxford Energy Academies.
- Oxford Energy Academies may be asked to provide information about punctuality in references to potential employers.
- Learners will be contacted by email, phone or text if their attendance record shows that they have been absent for all scheduled events in any given week (even if attendance is over 75%) so that we can ensure that they are given any support they may need to stay on track.

WITHDRAWAL PROCESS

Learners who have recorded 0% attendance during the first three weeks will be withdrawn from their module(s)/programme if they are unable to demonstrate attendance or engagement or have exceptional circumstances this can be reviewed by the Apprenticeship Manager.

Where cumulative attendance drops below 75% across all compulsory events of a module/programme the Apprenticeship Manager will contact learners to ascertain the reasons for non-attendance and make referrals to support services where appropriate.

Possible outcomes could include:

- Where poor attendance affects only one module, this may result in a learner being withdrawn from this module
- Where poor attendance occurs across multiple modules, this may result in withdrawal from the Programme

- Where apprentices have not provided information about their absences on an ongoing basis, this would provide an additional opportunity for them to obtain and submit evidence to demonstrate attendance and provide explanations for non-attendance. Reasonable explanations may be accepted by relevant academic staff members.

Factors influencing decisions on withdrawal:

- Where attendance is below 75%, the Apprenticeship Manager will consider other measures of engagement to confirm whether apprentices/learners are sufficiently engaged to be allowed to continue with their module/programme
- A balanced view will be taken of the complete level of activity and any evidence provided by the apprentice/learner to the Apprenticeship Manager. This information will be provided to Oxford Energy Academies who will determine, on an academic basis, if an apprentice/learner has demonstrated sufficient attendance and/or engagement and decide whether withdrawal is appropriate. This decision will be communicated to the Apprenticeship Manager to manage the process.

Oxford Energy Academies is committed to supporting apprentices/learners to improve engagement and attendance where possible but withdrawal from a module/programme is a potential consequence if an apprentice/learner is not attending or engaging fully with their studies.

Apprentices/learners who are withdrawn will be eligible for fees up to the point of their withdrawal.

Apprentices/learners are referred to the Fees Policy to determine how much this will amount to.

Apprentices/learners who are identified as having welfare related issues which affect their attendance may be referred for consideration.