



London Design & Engineering UTC

Attendance Policy

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Version Control Table

Version	Date	Amended by	Rationale
1.0	22/03/2018		Version approved by the Board of Directors
1.1	05.11.2020	Kenan Drugzani	Policy reviewed and procedures changed to reflect current practice within UTC including use of Head Years to monitor and improve attendance.
2.0	12/11/2020		Version approved by Committee

Guidance on version Control:

The above is an example of how to complete the Version control table.

Versions are 0.1, 0.2 etc until such point as the document is approved. Then it becomes version 1.0.

Subsequent edited versions become 1.1, 1.2, or if it's a major update, 2.0. Do not worry about the numbers going up and up its about getting the policy right – it's all fine.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy Coverage

THE POLICY APPLIES OR COVERS THE FOLLOWING GROUPS			
Type of Learner	Tick (✓)	Type of Stakeholder	Tick (✓)
Key Stage 3 (KS3) Carousel	✓	Teaching Staff	✓
Key Stage 4 (KS4) GCSE	✓	Education Support Staff	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) Level 2	✓	Administrative Support Staff	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) Level 3	✓	Directors	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) A Levels	✓	Employers	✓
Apprentices	✓	Visitors / Contractors	✓

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1. Introduction

Excellent attendance is one of the most important factors that will enable London Design and Engineering (LDE) UTC to provide the best support for learners in achieving their personal goals and targets.

This Policy has been agreed by the Directors, Staff and Learners of London Design and Engineering UTC.

It represents the LDE UTC's commitment to striving for 100% attendance, which is achievable, and achieved by many learners. It sets out the principles, procedures and practice the LDE UTC will undertake. Strategies, sanctions and possible legal consequences of poor Attendance and Punctuality are also detailed, as well as rewards for, and benefits of good attendance. This policy will be reviewed, amended as necessary and published annually in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

This attendance policy is to be implemented in conjunction with the "Attendance Policy Covid-19 Addendum".

2. Policy Aims

- To ensure that all learners attend as near full-time as possible, in order to maximise their educational achievement and social development.
- To discharge the LDE UTC's duty to safeguard the welfare of its' learners
- To ensure that all those responsible for children's education, including parents, carers, staff and governors understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- To minimise absence from College, thereby reducing levels of persistent absence.
- To improve the life chances of Newham's children and young people and prepare them to be fully contributing citizens when they reach adulthood.
- To safeguard the welfare, social, educational and emotional development of children
- To reduce persistent absence
- To reduce or eliminate term time holidays/leave of absence
- To promote commitment to education and high achievement
- To maximise the potential of every individual learner

3. Principles

- Receiving a full-time, suitable education is a child's legal entitlement.
- It is the parents'/carers' legal responsibility to ensure this happens.
- Attending the UTC regularly aids intellectual, social and emotional development

- Excellent attendance practice safeguards the welfare of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents or carers.
- All children whose attendance is poor will be considered vulnerable.

These principles are enshrined in British law, within the Education Act 1996, the Children Act 1989, and other associated pieces of legislation.

4. Promoting Excellent Attendance

The Directors, Principal and staff will use all means available to them to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality. These will include assemblies, rewards and incentives for good or significantly improving attendance.

The LDE UTC will also, when necessary, employ sanctions to improve attendance. The Principal only has discretion to authorise leave of absence in term-time in the **MOST EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances. In such cases the Principal must specify the date when the learner must return to the UTC.

Unauthorised leave of absence in term time is likely to result in the issue of a Penalty Notice. A Penalty Notice requires each parent to pay £60 per child, if they pay within 21 days. If they do not pay within 21 days, but pay within 28 days, the fine rises to £120 per parent per child. If they do not pay at all they risk prosecution under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

In cases of Persistent Absence (less than 90%) the UTC may recommend to the Local Authority prosecution through the Magistrates Court.

In very serious cases of poor attendance for no acceptable reason, the LDE UTC may involve other agencies such as the College Nurse or Social Care, to safeguard the welfare, development and educational potential of the child.

5. UTC's Procedures

1. Registration and punctuality procedures

- Registers are taken twice a day, once at the start of the College day at 8.50a.m., and once during the afternoon session. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes.
- Learners arriving before the end of the Registration period will be coded L (Late before registers close) which is a present mark. The number of minutes late will be recorded in the register.
- Learners arriving after the registers have closed will be coded U (Late after registers close) which counts as an unauthorised absence.
- The morning registration period will start at 8.50a.m. and end at 9a.m.
- The afternoon registration period will start at 1.30p.m. and end at 1.45p.m.

1.1. Authorising Absences

Only the Principal or designated member(s) of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then

the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, until a satisfactory reason is provided. If the reason given is not satisfactory in the UTC's view, and/or evidence of the reason cannot be provided, the absence will be coded as "O" (unauthorised absence). Absence notes received from parents/carers will be kept for the remainder of the academic year, or longer if there are concerns that require further investigation or legal action. If a learner is persistently late the Heads of Years, along with the College Attendance Officer will arrange to meet with the family as soon as the pattern is identified.

2. First Day Absence Contact

Parents are expected to notify the LDE UTC the first day their child is unable to attend for any unavoidable reason, such as illness by emailing the absence@ldeutc.co.uk by 8:50am. If the UTC does not receive notification it will text/telephone on the first day of absence, to try to ascertain the reason. First day contact will be carried out as early as possible in the college day, in order to notify parents whose children may have set off for College, but not arrived, as quickly as possible. This is important for obvious safeguarding reasons. The text is sent from the reception office and the phone call is made by the relevant Head of Year.

3. Second Day Absence Contact

If the child is still absent on the second day without contact from the family, a telephone call will be made to the home by the Head of Year and/or the Attendance Officer in reception. The family may be asked to come to the LDE UTC for a meeting.

4. Continuing Absence Procedures

In the event of an absence of three or more days without contact from the family, a home visit will be made. Any child who is absent without explanation for 12 consecutive or cumulative sessions (6 College days) (90% attendance), or who has a pattern of erratic attendance or persistent lateness after registers close may be referred to the Attendance Management Service of the London Borough of Newham, in order that further investigations can be made. Such cases may result in a visit the home by an Attendance Management Officer. Targets will be set for improvement; sources of support will be signposted if needed. If there is no improvement, court action or a Penalty Notice will ensue. Unless there are any genuine underlying issues or needs.

5. Frequent/Persistent Absence Procedures

Regular trawls of the registers will be made by the LDE UTC to identify learners with a pattern of absences that may lead to Persistent Absence (PA), that is to say absence of 10% or more in a half term. The main attendance lead, the Assistant Principal in charge of Attitudes and Behaviour will be responsible for identification of any emerging concerns by creating and sharing relevant reports of PA with the Attendance Officer and relevant HoYs which in turn will ensure that action plans are in place for each learner of concern.

Initially the LDE UTC will try to resolve the problem with parents/carers, but if the pattern continues the UTC will refer to outside agencies for example a Health Adviser

if the problem appears to be a medical one. In cases where there appear to be issues requiring outside intervention to support the family and the learner, referral may be made through the Triage system for external agency support. All persistent absent (PA) learners and their parents will be subject to an Action Plan or Parenting Contract. Such a plan or contract may include allocation of additional in-college or external support.

6. Consequences of Poor Attendance /Punctuality

For learners whose attendance and/or punctuality fails to improve, after a range of interventions and support measures have been tried by the UTC, the ultimate consequences may be one of the following:

- 1) The LDE UTC may ask the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice on its behalf. A Penalty Notice carries a fine of £60, per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid within 20 days it rises to £120 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days. If not paid at all, court action is likely to be initiated.
- 2) The LDE UTC may ask the Local Authority to initiate court action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, or even up to 3 months imprisonment.
- 3) In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and educational development of the child.

7. Children who Cease to Attend without Prior Notification (CME) procedures

Procedures for trying to trace children who cease to attend without prior notification are covered in detail in the CME Policy and Procedures. However, if, after ten days continuous absence LDE UTC has been unable to ascertain the whereabouts of a learner, they will refer the child's details to the Local Authority for it to perform further checks that are not available to College.

If after 20 days continuous unauthorised absence, their whereabouts cannot be traced, they can be legally removed from the College roll. However, this decision will be taken with the local authority, depending on the vulnerability of the learner/family.

8. Non-starters

Learners who are allocated places but fail to start are also treated as Children Missing Education (CME). If the LDE UTC has been unable to make contact with the family during a ten-day period after their expected arrival, they will refer the learners to the local authority CME Officer for further checks.

Vulnerable Children

Children who are Looked After (LAC), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP), Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with highest priority and will be known to the Attendance Officer and Attendance Lead. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home, or a home visit. Learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN) will be treated with similar priority in order that their time in the UTC can be maximised, and their learning supported to the greatest extent possible.

Interventions

The LDE UTC will systematically follow up absence according to this policy, which is reviewed annually, and systematic procedures. The illustration below shows how the follow-up of absence is prioritised:

The diagram below indicates how cases will be prioritised:



Multi agency working

When addressing attendance concerns, LDE UTC follows the three-stage model of intervention promoted by the Local Authority of Newham (LBN). This model allows the College to work together with other agencies to plan the most appropriate way forward to meet the needs of each learner.

Stage 1

Criteria: Attendance Level is between 90% and 100%.

Service Provider: LDE UTC

Learners whose attendance is between 95% and 100% will be monitored by their Head of Year, the attendance officer and the attendance lead to ensure their attendance stays above 95%. This response is detailed in the UTC procedures.

Stage 2

Criteria: Attendance Level is between 80% and 90%.

Service Provider: LDE UTC, with the support of the Attendance management team from Newham

Learners whose attendance is between 80% and 90% will require additional support to return them to over 90%.

The College will send letters home highlighting concerns with attendance and punctuality, and provide parents with evidence in the form of each learner's registration certificate. Parents will be invited into college if the attendance concerns continue, or home visits may

be conducted. An agreed protocol will always be followed when LDE UTC Staff is required to conduct a home visit. The attendance team will offer extra pastoral support, as well as, one-to-one meetings with learners to set attendance targets. If there are safeguarding issues an Early Help or MASH referral may be completed.

The LDE UTC will also utilise its allocated Attendance Welfare Officer (AWO) to hold meetings, conduct home visits, have attendance panels, or create contracts with parents.

- Requests to attend panel meetings are sent by the AWO and held at LDE UTC. During these panels, parents will be asked to create a contract to help ensure their child's attendance improves. A period of 15 College days will be given to demonstrate this improvement.

A Penalty Notice (PN) may be issued if no improvement in the learner's attendance occurs.

Stage 3

Criteria: Attendance level is below 80%.

Service Provider: LDE UTC, with the support of the Attendance management team from Newham

If there has been no improvement in attendance during stages 1 and 2, the College will refer the learner to the Newham attendance team to begin legal proceedings. Attendance team Newham will establish whether or not an offence has been committed and appropriate action taken.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/CARERS

Working in Partnership

The Directors and staff of London Design and Engineering UTC want to work in partnership with parents to ensure that children are as successful as they can possibly be. This means being in College as near to 100 per cent of the time as possible.

It is the parents' responsibility in law to ensure their child attends regularly and on time.

Understanding types of absence coding

Every half-day absence from the UTC has to be classified by the LDE UTC as AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the reason for any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Medical evidence may also be required in the form of a copy of a prescription, GP note, etc. Types of absence that are likely to be authorised are: illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in College time, and emergencies. The LDE UTC will ask for medical evidence after three days of illness.

Examples of types of absence that are not considered reasonable and which will not be authorised under any circumstances are:

- going shopping, birthdays, looking after other younger children in the family, staying at home because other members in the family are unwell, day trips and holidays in term time that have not been agreed, arriving at College too late to get a present mark, truancy.

Supporting Reluctant attenders

Parents/carers should do everything possible to encourage their child to attend. However, if the reason for their reluctance appears to be UTC-based, such as difficulty with work, or bullying, please discuss this with the LDE UTC at the earliest opportunity and the UTC will do everything possible to sort the problem out. Colluding with your child's reluctance to attend is likely to make the matter worse.

College phobia is a psychological condition that is medically diagnosed, and in these cases other arrangements may be made for the child's education. However, refusal to attend College may result in parents being prosecuted.

7. USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS ABOUT COLLEGE ATTENDANCE

Introduction

This is a successful UTC, and you and your child play a part in making it so. We aim to encourage all members of the LDE UTC's community to reach out for excellence. For learners to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly, and your child should be at the UTC in good time for the start of the College day, every day the UTC is open, unless they are genuinely ill or there is some other unavoidable reason.

Some children are reluctant to go to College and say they do not feel well. It is for you as the adult, to judge whether they are genuinely unwell, or just unwilling. It will be better for them in the long run to go to College, rather than avoid it, as days off mean they will fall further behind and make them even more reluctant. Your job as a parent is to encourage them to attend.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at College is **YOUR** legal responsibility and permitting absence without good reason is an offence in law and will result in legal action being taken, or a Penalty Notice being issued (see below).

Learning

Any absence affects the child's learning, and the more they miss the harder it will be for them to catch up. Research has shown that for every percentage point of absence, attainment is significantly lower.

Safeguarding

There is extensive research linking poor College attendance and exclusion with crime and anti-social behaviour, and risk of exploitation by unsuitable adults. For this reason, failure to attend regularly will be regarded as a safeguarding issue.

Understanding absence percentages

You may wonder why a UTC would be concerned if your child's attendance is 95%. This may make it easier to understand:

- 95% equates to half a day off every two weeks
- 90% equates to a day off every two weeks
- 85% equates to one and a half days off every two weeks
- 80% equates to one whole day off every week
- A secondary age child whose attendance is 80% will have missed ONE WHOLE YEAR of education by the time they leave College

Even the brightest and most enthusiastic learner will find it hard to keep up with their work with these levels of absence. That is why we encourage the highest attendance possible.

Understanding types of absence coding

Every half-day absence from the LDE UTC has to be classified by the UTC as AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Medical evidence may also be required in the form of a copy of a prescription, label from prescribed medication or GP note. Types of absence that are likely to be authorised are illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in College time, emergencies.

Examples of types of absence that are **not** considered reasonable and which will be **UNAUTHORISED** under any circumstances are:

- Going shopping with parents, Birthdays
- Minding other younger children in the family
- Staying at home because other members in the family are unwell
- Day trips and holidays in term time that have not been agreed
- Arriving at College too late to get a present mark
- Truancy

Reluctant attenders

You should do everything possible to encourage your child to attend. However, if the reason for their reluctance appears to be College-based, such as difficulty with work, or bullying, please discuss this with the LDE UTC at the earliest opportunity and the UTC will do everything possible to sort the problem out. Colluding with your child's reluctance to attend is likely to make the matter worse.

Persistent Absence

A learner is classed as a persistent absentee (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the College year, **for whatever reason, whether it be authorised or unauthorised, or a mixture of both.** Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' full support and encouragement to tackle it. PA learners are tracked and monitored carefully through the UTC's pastoral system, and we combine this with tracking academic progress to assess the effect on the learner's attainment. All our PA learners and their parents are subject to an Action Plan, which may include allocation of some kind of support.

Parenting Contracts

You may be asked to participate in a Parenting Contract to support your child's attendance.

These are initiated where the LDE UTC feels you may need help in influencing your child to attend properly. They have no force in law and are entered into voluntarily. A meeting will be held to which you and your child will be invited. The problems will be discussed and agreement reached as to what the College will do, what the child will do and what you as parents/carers will do to try to improve the situation. You may be offered some form of support such as counselling or parenting classes to assist you in setting boundaries and enforcing expectations of your child.

Reporting your child's absence

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact the LDE UTC as early as possible on the first day of absence, either by telephone or in person, and
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence. This can be done via email to absence@ldeutc.co.uk
- If sickness absence is for three days or more the UTC will require medical evidence in the form of a doctor's note, copy prescription or label from prescribed medicine.

Applications for leave of absence in term time

The Policy is **not** to authorise leave of absence from the LDE UTC during term time. Any applications for leave in term time must be made in writing to the Principal. There is no **automatic right** to term time leave of absence, and your request is likely to be declined except in the most exceptional circumstances. Each application will be considered on its own merit, and the attendance record(s) of the child/ren concerned will be taken into account when making a decision.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can now be issued for a range of attendance-related offences, including unauthorised term-time holidays, poor attendance and poor punctuality, or being out in a public place without justification during the first five days of an exclusion. Further details are available on www.newham.gov.uk/schools/Attendance.

Your contact details

Please make sure that the contact details you have given to London Design and Engineering are correct and kept up to date, so that in the event of an accident, emergency or any other need to contact you we have the correct details.

8. Useful College Contacts

Absence Line	absence@ldeutc.co.uk
Vice Principal- Personal Development	Gloria Gold gloria.gold@ldeutc.co.uk
Assistant Principal – Attendance, attitude and behaviour	Kenan Drugzani kenan.drugzani@ldeutc.co.uk
Attendance Officer	Ziba Agdelen ziba.agdelen@ldeutc.co.uk
Head of Year 9	Steve Baker steve.baker@ldeutc.co.uk
Head of Year 10	Tony Green Tony.green@ldeutc.co.uk
Head of Year 11	Zakaria Sheylila Zakaria.Sheylila@ldeutc.co.uk
Head of Year 12	Monica Nuzhat monica.nuzhat@ldeutc.co.uk
Head of Year 13	Jonny Morgan Jonny.Morgan@ldeutc.co.uk

9. Legal References

Legal References

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that *the ‘parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school, or otherwise.’*

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and learners under the age of 18.

The Children Act 1989 provides for a number of actions that can be taken to protect children’s safety and welfare, on the premise that the welfare of the child is paramount.