

Absence & Discipline Policy

OVERVIEW: ABSENCE

ATTENDANCE

Although we encourage students to attend 100% of their lessons, we do realise that this is not always possible. We require students to attend 80% of lessons in order to get their end of course certificate.

Excused absences

The following reasons for absence are considered “excusable” and should be taken into consideration when calculating someone’s attendance rate:

- Illness (preferably verified by independent source such as homestay host or doctor’s note)
- Compassionate grounds (serious illness of family member)
- Death in the family (student’s course would normally be put on hold while the student returns home for the funeral)
- Embassy / Home Office appointments
- University visits / interviews
- Job interview
- Important religious days of observance (Yom Kippur, Eid etc)

For any of these absences, a note should be made on Fidelo for details of excused absences.

Marking Attendance

Teachers should mark attendance on Fidelo. Training will be provided by an Academic Manager.

Monitoring Attendance

Teachers and Academic Manager are asked to report all students absences of longer than 3 days to Student Services so that the absence procedure can be put into motion (see below).

PUNCTUALITY

Students should arrive on time. Any student arriving more than 15 minutes late to class must wait outside until the next break. There are signs on doors in the Gloucester Road building to show this.

Students should also return on time from breaks. Any student arriving more than 5 minutes late from the break should be asked to wait for the next break before returning, in order to not interrupt the class. However, this is to be done at the teacher’s discretion, and if they feel that returning would not cause disruption to the class they can allow the student to enter after the 5-minute mark – albeit with a warning and a suitable stern look.

ABSENCE: PROCEDURES (ADULTS)

1. After 3 continuous days’ absence, the school will contact the student by phone or email. This is noted on the Notes section of the student’s record on Fidelo.
2. If the student replies to explain their absence, the school may put the course on hold or allow the course to continue, as appropriate.
3. If the student does not reply within 48 hours, we contact them again.

4. Ascertaining if student is safe:
 - a. If after 48 hours there has been no response, we contact their accommodation provider to check on them (if in Frances King accommodation) or email them to say that we are concerned for their wellbeing so are going to contact their emergency contact(s). We also check with any classmates or known friends in the school or their ETO, to see if they know anything about them.
 - b. If no reply within 24 hours of this email, or if we are unable to contact them through the accommodation provider, we contact their emergency contact.
 - c. If no response from any party, we contact hospitals (see Hospitals document in the Student Services/London/Building/Emergencies folder for guidance) and the Police (101).
 - d. If still no response or knowledge of the student's whereabouts, we contact the student's embassy in London.
5. We continue to issue warning emails (if not concerned for the student's safety). After 3 warning emails we reserve the right to cancel the student's course, with no refund for course fees, book fees, meal fees, registration fee. Accommodation fees can only be refunded for the time remaining after the notice period has expired.

OVERVIEW: DISCIPLINE

Students who break school rules, are disruptive in class, abusive to staff or other students (as defined in the Abusive Behaviour Policy), are consistently late or absent are subject to our Disciplinary Process:

Stage 1: Informal

Up to two verbal informal warnings can be given by a teacher. Teachers should make sure that other teachers this student studies with and the Director of Studies are aware of these warnings, in order to ascertain if there is a wider pattern. This communication between staff can be done by email or in conversation in the Staff Room.

Stage 2: First Formal Warning (Verbal)

For offences that warrant immediate intervention, or after up to 2 informal warnings, then a member of the Welfare Team or Director of Studies should issue an official Verbal Warning. This should be noted on the student's record on Fidelo.

By using a verbal warning, it gives the student the opportunity to explain their behaviour and for the staff member to emphasise and explain why we are taking it seriously.

Stage 3: Second Formal Warning (Written)

If poor behaviour continues after a verbal warning, then a second, written warning is issued by a member of the Welfare Team or Director of Studies. It should be made clear in the letter/email that this is a final warning, and the next step will be expulsion.

Stage 4: Termination

If a student's behaviour does not improve after two official warnings for minor offences they will be expelled. In the event of gross misconduct, violence or behaviour that is dangerous to themselves or others, they can be expelled with no warnings.

The decision to expel a student can be taken by the Principal or Directors only.

When a student is expelled they will not be entitled to any refund of course fees, exam fees, book fees, meals, activities or registration fees. Unused accommodation fees can be refunded after deducting the notice period for the accommodation chosen.

Appeals

All appeals against this decision must be made in writing to the Principal or Directors within 3 weeks of the decision. Students unhappy with the outcome of an appeal may follow the procedures for lodging an official complaint, as described in the Complaints Policy, and refer the complaint to English UK.

Legal intervention

The school reserves the right to involve the police if someone's behaviour is violent or aggressive, or if we believe there is a crime that should be officially reported.

OVER 18S

For privacy purposes we do not contact any third parties regarding a student's behaviour or absence, unless we believe their safety or another person's safety is at risk.

UNDER-18S

LATENESS OR ABSENCE

Students aged 16-17 studying in adult classes are asked to report daily to a named member of Student Services staff in reception. This member of staff then ticks their name off on a printed list.

1. Any minors who are 15 minutes late or more will be contacted.
2. If they cannot be found straightaway, we contact their London guardian.
3. If we still cannot make contact, we then contact their emergency contact.

See Safeguarding Policy for full details of this process.

PERSISTENT LATENESS OR ABSENCE

Any under-18s who are persistently late or absent from class will be spoken to by a member of the Welfare Team. Their London guardian and / or family will also be notified.

After two warnings we will ask for a formal meeting with the student, the guardian and a member of the Welfare Team.

Minors who persistently break attendance / punctuality rules, despite warnings and meetings may be expelled from the school, if we feel that we are not able to adequately look after their safety, due to their behaviour. In such cases we will work with the student's family to ensure the student is able to return to their home country or to a family member's care in the UK.

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