

## **Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy & Procedure**

### **Introduction**

If a student is in the IRELAND on a student visa, where possible his/her attendance must be 100%. To maintain attendance throughout the duration of their course, holders of a student visa are advised that The English Academy (hereby referred to as The School) is obliged to comply with GNIB rules.

These rules are laid down by the Irish government and require that all full time courses attended by visa students comprise of minimum of 15 hours of day time supervised study per week. If a student's cumulative attendance (For the purposes of this policy Cumulative Attendance is calculated over one academic term) falls short of 85% AND/OR in case of any student missing 10 Expected Classes, the School is required by law to report that student to GNIB. If a student is reported to GNIB for lack of attendance or continuous no-shows they will likely curtail his/her visa, which may result in his/her expulsion from IRELAND.

### **The Importance of Attendance**

Attendance is very important because of two main reasons: Students have made a commitment to work towards achieving academic success by enrolling on their programme of studies. In order to achieve success in their studies it is important that they participate in, and engage fully with, all their scheduled activities such as classes, workshops and seminars etc. The School therefore regard attendance as an essential part of students' studies. Also, under the Irish System of immigration, the School is required by law to have robust systems in place in order to keep track of our students.

Under this new system, it is the duty of the School as a sponsor to ensure that our

students are in compliance with all the requirements of their leave to remain in the IRELAND at all times. In order to achieve this, we have an effective system of attendance in place that helps us monitor our students so that we know that they are not in breach of their legal duties.

### **Procedure for Recording Attendance**

Attendance Assistant prepares a weekly attendance sheet before each class and hands it over to the teacher who takes attendance on a daily basis.

All arrivals after the first 10 minutes are marked as 'absent'.

The teacher puts in appropriate codes against the name of every student on the list. At the end of the class, the tutor initials against all entries signs the sheet to verify it's accuracy.

The attendance administrator who will incorporate any authorised absences will input the attendance record for each class into the attendance module of our electronic Management Information System at the end of the week. This will be checked daily by the Registrar and audited by the Principal.

### **Procedure for Authorised Absence**

If students are unable to attend a class, they need to do the following:

- In case of planned leave, fill in a Leave Application Form and submit it well in time. Leave forms are available at the college reception and the student hand book.
  
- In case of unplanned absence, inform the Attendance Assistant on first the day of absence by email to **admissions@theenglishacademy.ie**, to explain the reasons. On return to College following any period of unplanned absence, complete a Leave Form explaining the reasons for absence (e.g. due to illness, for a doctor's or dentist's appointment etc.).
  
- For all unplanned absences due to illness, students **must** provide a sick note on their return.
  
- Attendance manager will be responsible for Recording of absences which will be retained on the student's file.

### Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy

Attendance Manager is responsible for ensuring continuous and effective implementation of this attendance policy. The College Management Committee monitors the operation of this policy on a weekly basis by receiving regular reports on student attendance. The

attendance is discussed in the weekly meeting of Management Committee – all instances of authorised and unauthorised absence are reviewed. The policy itself is reviewed in order to make sure that it is in full compliance at all times with the relevant laws and regulations. The following is the procedure for monitoring the attendance policy:

Once all attendance has been entered into the system on the same day, the Attendance officer generates a Daily Attendance Report. This report will also include the list of absentees on the day and those whose cumulative attendance has fallen below the required levels.

Attendance Manager reviews the daily report and necessary action is taken. Email and SMS alerts are sent to the students who have missed 3 consecutive days; First Warning Letter follows on the next day of absence. This letter requires the students to explain the reasons for this fall in their attendance. Also, they are required to improve on this level.

Second Warning Letters are issued to the students who have 5 or more consecutive days.

Students with cumulative attendance falling below 80% or 8 consecutive days a third warning letter is sent.

The termination letter is sent after 11 consecutive missed days and are reported to GNIB.

The Principal reviews the attendance every week with the Cumulative Weekly Attendance Report, the files, circumstances and responses of those students who have been issued warning letters or have been reported to the GNIB during the previous week, and suggests any further action.

GNIB will be informed using the appropriate and prescribed systems about the following occurrences, whichever occurs first.

a. A student has missed 11 classes or more – these include but are not limited to attending a class, a meeting with teacher or college official, submitting an assessed or non-assessed coursework, attending a test/examination etc.

b. Cumulative attendance of a student has fallen below 80%.

If a student who has already been reported to GNIB reports back to the

college with a valid reason for his absence and the college is satisfied with the response from the student to warnings and his/her efforts to improve the attendance, GNIB will be informed of the same.

c. Students those who have been issued a final warning and been reported to the GNIB if still failed to satisfy the college about their attendance levels remaining below 80% will be expelled from the college within 2 weeks of issuance of termination letter will be issued and will be reported to GNIB.

d. A Register of those students reported to GNIB is maintained. A log of all the communications with students is maintained for future references and follow ups

e. An interview conducted with a student about attendance/ absence or warning sent to the student will be recorded on the student file. The reasons for any authorized absences being granted will also be recorded.

f. The College will take all possible actions in its power to track the whereabouts of any students who have continuously been non attending or have been expelled. It will provide all relevant information to GNIB that will help them to identify and locate such students.