Cardiff Academy

POLICY /// ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT JOURNEY

# Attendance, Engagement and Punctuality Policy

Cardiff Academy's attendance expectations, how attendance and engagement are recorded and monitored, how absence is authorised, the support and escalation stages when attendance falls, arrangements for late arrivals and early departures, and the additional safeguards for students under 18 and Student visa holders.

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| REFERENCE | **CA-ADM-04** | VERSION | **1.0 (Approved)** |
| POLICY OWNER | **Director of Studies** | APPROVED BY | **Academic Board (reported to the Board)** |
| ISSUE DATE | **October 2026** | APPROVAL DATE | **October 2026** |
| REVIEW CYCLE | **Annual** | NEXT REVIEW DUE | **October 2027** |
| APPLIES TO | **All students, parents of students under 18, sponsors, teaching and administrative staff** | PUBLISHED | **Website; Student Handbook; induction** |

**RELATED POLICIES** CA-ADM-03 UKVI Sponsor Compliance; CA-WEL-07 Missing Student; CA-WEL-01 Safeguarding and Child Protection; CA-WEL-03 Student Welfare and Wellbeing; CA-ACA-06 Extenuating Circumstances; CA-WEL-04 Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary

**LEGAL ENTITY** Cardiff Education Group Ltd, trading as Cardiff Academy (Company No. 14569122). Registered office: 168 City Road, Cardiff CF24 3JE. Teaching premises: 8 Drake Walk, Cardiff CF10 4LG

## 1 Why attendance matters

Good attendance is the strongest predictor of success on a pathway programme and of meeting university offer conditions. Attendance is also how we know students are safe, and – for Student visa holders – a legal requirement of their permission to study.

## 2 Expectations

- Students must attend **every** timetabled class, tutorial, assessment and compulsory activity, and arrive on time.
- The minimum acceptable attendance is **90%** for each module and overall. Some partner universities require a minimum attendance for progression; these requirements are published in programme handbooks.
- Students must be in class at the start time. Students who arrive more than **15 minutes** late are marked "late"; more than **30 minutes** late are marked absent for that session (but should still attend).

## 3 Recording attendance

- Teachers take the register electronically within the first **10 minutes** of every session, using codes for present, late, authorised absence and unauthorised absence.
- Registers are locked by the end of each day. Changes after that require the Director of Studies' approval and are logged.
- Online engagement (for example virtual learning environment activity and submission of work) is also monitored.
- The academic administration team runs a daily absence report by **10:30**.

## 4 Reporting absence

Students who cannot attend must inform the Academy **before the session starts** by **the Cardiff Academy app, by phone (029 2003 7434) or by email (enquiries@cardiffacademy.co.uk)** and give the reason. Evidence is required for:

- absence of more than **two** consecutive days due to illness (a self-certification form for up to five days; a medical note thereafter)
- absences for appointments, bereavement or other reasons, where reasonably available

## 5 Authorised absence

The Director of Studies may authorise absence for: illness; medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside class time; visa or embassy appointments; bereavement or serious family emergency; religious observance; and university interviews or open days (in advance, with evidence). Holidays during term time are **not** authorised.

For Student visa holders, any absence longer than **five** consecutive days, or any request for an extended absence or interruption, must be approved in advance by the Director of Studies and the Admissions and Compliance Manager, who will consider the effect on the student's visa.

## 6 Monitoring and escalation

| Stage | Trigger | Action | By |
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| **Day 1 contact** | Any unexplained absence | Phone call, message and email to the student the same morning. For under-18s, parent or guardian contacted the same day (see section 8) | Academic administration |
| **Stage 1 – Concern** | Attendance below 95% in any rolling four-week period, or two unexplained absences, or repeated lateness | Tutor conversation; reasons explored; support offered; recorded | Personal tutor |
| **Stage 2 – Formal warning** | Attendance below 90%, or three or more unauthorised absences | Meeting with Director of Studies; written warning; Attendance Improvement Plan with review date; welfare referral if needed; parents (under 18) and sponsor informed | Director of Studies |
| **Stage 3 – Final warning** | Attendance below 85%, or no improvement after Stage 2 | Meeting with the Principal; final written warning; implications for progression and visa explained | Principal |
| **Stage 4 – Withdrawal** | Continued unacceptable attendance after final warning, or prolonged unexplained absence | Withdrawal from the programme under CA-WEL-04 procedures, with right of appeal; UKVI informed where required | Principal |

Students may be accompanied by a friend or student representative at Stage 2–4 meetings. Withdrawal for attendance follows fair procedures and gives the student the chance to explain.

## 7 Support

Poor attendance can signal homesickness, illness, financial difficulty, a mental health issue, bullying, a safeguarding concern, or unsuitable placement. At every stage the tutor and Student Welfare Officer will consider whether support is needed (CA-WEL-03), and staff will refer any welfare concern to the DSL.

## 8 Students under 18

- Students under 18 must be **accounted for at all times** during the timetabled day.
- If a student under 18 is absent without explanation, the parent or guardian (and UK guardian or responsible adult) is contacted by **10:30**. If the student cannot be located, the **Missing Student Policy (CA-WEL-07)** is followed immediately.
- Students under 18 must sign in at Reception if they arrive late, and may leave during the day only with written permission from a parent or guardian and the agreement of staff; they sign out and in.
- Patterns of absence are reported to the DSL as a potential safeguarding concern.

## 9 Late arrival at the start of the programme

- Students should arrive in time for induction. A student who will arrive late must tell the Academy in advance.

- Student visa holders must enrol by the latest enrolment date on their CAS (CA-ADM-03).
- Late arrivals receive a catch-up induction and an academic plan to cover missed work. The Director of Studies decides whether a student who arrives more than **two** weeks late can still join the intake or should defer.

## 10 Early departure

- Students should not leave before the end of the programme or before final assessments.
- Students who need to leave early must apply in writing, giving reasons and evidence. The Director of Studies will explain the academic consequences (for example, whether the award can be made) and the Admissions and Compliance Manager the visa consequences.
- For students under 18, written parental consent and confirmed travel arrangements are required.

## 11 Attendance and assessment

Unauthorised absence from an assessment results in a mark of zero, unless the student submits an extenuating circumstances claim (CA-ACA-06).

## 12 Information to parents, sponsors and universities

- Parents of under-18s receive termly reports, and are informed immediately of attendance concerns.
- Sponsors receive attendance reports as agreed at enrolment.
- Attendance may be shared with partner universities where required for progression, as explained in the privacy notice.

## 13 Monitoring

The Director of Studies reports attendance by programme, cohort and nationality to the Academic Board each term, and to the Compliance Group monthly. Persistent patterns are analysed and acted on.

## 14 Review

This policy is reviewed annually.

## Compliance mapping

This policy has been written to meet, and to evidence, the following external requirements. Inspectors and university partners can use this table to locate the relevant provisions.

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| **ISI Educational Oversight (PFE) standards** | Standard 33 (accurate admission and attendance registers); Standard 34 (reports to UKVI); Section 4 criteria on monitoring attendance and course completion with timely contact |

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| **British Council Accreditation UK criteria** | M18 (clear and effective attendance and punctuality policy known to staff and students and applied consistently); M19 (conditions under which a student may be asked to leave); S5 (attendance at all classes checked and recorded, prompt follow-up for under 18s) |
| **UKVI Student sponsor guidance** | Student sponsor guidance – monitoring attendance and engagement; expected contact points; reporting unauthorised absence and withdrawal |
| **University partner due diligence** | Partner progression agreements may require minimum attendance; attendance data provided to partners |
| **Legislation and statutory guidance** | Keeping Learners Safe (Wales, 2022) – children missing education; UK GDPR |

## Document control

| Version | Date | Author / reviewer | Summary of changes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0.9 | Pre-2026 | Various | CA BC Attendance Policy (2025); CA BC Late Arrivals and Early Departures Policy (2025); Attendance Policy (2016, 2019) |
| 1.0 | October 2026 | Director of Studies | New policy written for university partnerships, ISI Educational Oversight and British Council Accreditation UK. Supersedes all previous versions. |

| APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD | SIGNATURE | DATE |
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| Chair of the Board of Governors | | |