

Attendance Policy

- 1 All award-bearing programmes provided by the Centre comprise a programme of study which has been rigorously scrutinised and then approved by a panel of specialists including members from outside the University. The assessment for these programmes is closely linked to the topics covered in the approved programme of study.
- 2 In order to prepare for the assessment it is important that students¹ should attend the university-based sessions provided for each programme as they have been designed both to cover the content of the programme of study and to provide a learning support structure for the other work entailed in the programme (for example: reading, essays, exercises and projects, professional teaching experiences).
- 3 Each programme requires a level of student attendance in both university and school/college-based elements in order to make the relevant award. The latter is required by Welsh Government in order to complete a programme of Initial Teacher Education and Training. Attendance requirements are prescribed in programme documentation. Poor attendance that falls below the required threshold can, of itself, result in failure of the programme.
- 4 A record of prescribed class attendance will be maintained by means of a class register (hard copy or electronic) or of students signing an attendance sheet. This data will be collated by administrative staff and monitored by the programme leaders (via designated attendance monitors) and where necessary the Dean of Faculty/Head of Centre. Every day that is allocated to professional teaching experience (PTE) constitutes a prescribed session; attendance while on PTE placement is recorded, daily, by the trainee and verified by mentors and tutors.
- 5 On occasion students may unavoidably miss a prescribed session. When this occurs, the reason should be provided either in advance, or no later than one week after the absence, to the appropriate designated person. Medical and/or other documentary evidence should be provided and an 'authorised absence' will be noted. In the case of absence through illness for a period of less than seven calendar days, a self-certification medical certificate, available on Moodle and the SWWCTE website, should be submitted to the appropriate designated person. For absences, due to illness, of more than seven calendar days, a doctor's certificate will be needed.
- 6 Authorised absence will be noted when evidence is presented, or provided in advance, to indicate the absence was caused by:

¹ Although within Centre documentation the term 'student' is used interchangeably with the term 'trainee', broadly speaking, the former is applied to university-based sessions and the latter to school/college-based experiences.

- illness;
- urgent compassionate reasons;
- attending interviews for teaching post(s);
- representing the university in sporting or academic events (up to the maximum stated by the University annually).

Leave of absence for other reasons will only be granted in exceptional cases determined by the programme leaders and/or SWWCTE senior managers. Applications should be made in writing, in advance of the absence, to the respective programme leader in the first instance.

- 7 The Centre will review a student's placement in school/college if their attendance is considered to be 'unsatisfactory' and/or a 'cause for concern'. This is defined when two of the following apply:
 - (a) the shortfall in the student's basic training in lectures is likely to have a detrimental effect on the education of pupils;
 - (b) the attendance level (including authorised absences) falls below 90% (either in a module or overall);
 - (c) there has been a period of two weeks of consecutive absence (this includes absence for authorised reasons).
- 8 Student attendance is reviewed on at least a termly basis by a committee approved by the Dean of Faculty/Head of Centre. Where attendance is considered to be 'unsatisfactory', students will be informed that they are a 'cause for concern' by letter and/or email. Actions required by the student will be detailed in this correspondence and may include:
 - (a) a requirement to meet the personal tutor/ or programme/curriculum leader to discuss attendance issues, the support available to the student and the possibility of suspension of studies/ withdrawal from the programme;
 - (b) a requirement to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of content for module(s) for which attendance is a concern prior to being placed in school/college*.

*In the event of deciding that a trainee should be prevented from undertaking professional teaching experience, providing there are no additional professional concerns, trainees may have an opportunity to repeat the lecture programme in the following academic year before being allowed to undertake the professional teaching experience. This may involve a suspension of studies.
- 9 Where there are persistent concerns about a student's attendance and/or an evident failure on the part of the student to fulfil the requirements of his/her programme of study, s/he will be notified in writing that unless his/her attendance improves immediately, further action will be taken in line with University quality assurance procedures relating to the exclusion of

students for academic reasons. Note that this may include the Dean withdrawing the student from the programme.

Note: it is the University's responsibility to report unsatisfactory attendance to authorities providing financial support, and where appropriate, to employers and other sponsors.

- 10 Students whose attendance level falls below the required level (this includes absence for authorised reasons) may be discussed by Examiners at progression/award boards in relation to decisions relating to student progression/completion. It may be necessary for the student to undertake the work missed at a time determined by the Examiners. This could include days outside the published term dates and may delay the final award.
- 11 The Centre reserves the right to refer to a student's attendance record within references provided for the attention of potential employers.

Procedure

Students/trainees

Should a student be absent for any reason from sessions in university or during professional teaching experience s/he should inform the following designated person(s) giving a reason for the absence:

For Carmarthen-based trainees: the Partnership Office on 01267 676724/676945
a.edwards@tsd.ac.uk

For Swansea-based trainees: the PGCE office on 01792 482111 S_PGCE@uwtsd.ac.uk, along with their subject tutor.

During professional teaching experience, trainees should **also** follow the guidance in the Professional Teaching Experience Guidance Handbook in terms of informing the placement school/college about their absence and maintaining a record of attendance.

Programme attendance monitors

There will be one academic staff member nominated to monitor attendance for each ITET programme. This person will work closely with administrative staff and programme leaders to ensure the attendance policy is adhered to.

Specifically, the **attendance monitor** will:

- (a) check that registers are routinely kept and checked by teaching staff, issuing reminders periodically;
- (b) check that administrative staff are able to maintain accurate attendance records from the information they receive and inform programme leaders of any concerns regarding accuracy and completeness of attendance data;
- (c) authorise absences on a weekly basis, based on the evidence provided, in order that administrative staff can update attendance records on a weekly basis;

(d) present an update on attendance information (provided by administrative staff) at each programme meeting and identify those students who are 'cause for concern' on a termly basis;

(e) monitor the follow-up action taken for cause for concern (attendance) students to ensure the attendance policy is adhered to.

Administrative staff will:

(a) set up registers as required by the programme team;

(b) maintain up-to-date and accurate attendance records and inform the attendance monitor of any concerns with the process;

(c) store evidence, including self-certification forms, provided by students for the attendance monitor to review regularly;

(d) file evidence, including self-certification forms, in student files once reviewed by the attendance monitor;

(e) provide attendance data on request to the teaching team for student monitoring purposes;

(f) work with the attendance monitor to administer the follow-up action taken for cause for concern (attendance) students and undertake associated filing.