



**MORLEY COLLEGE**

# **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**8 February 2010**

## Attendance and Punctuality – Policy and Procedure

### Policy

#### 1. The Importance of Attendance

The College is aware that attendance and achievement are strongly linked. It therefore expects students to exercise reasonable diligence in attending class. Good, predictable levels of attendance help the tutor in the planning and delivery of effective teaching and learning. All tutors should place a strong emphasis at induction on the importance of good attendance and punctuality and the possibility that students will be withdrawn from examinations or other assessments if they fail to maintain attendance at the required level.

Any attendance requirement for a course is confirmed on the Course Outline. Tutors should familiarise students with any such requirement at the beginning of the course. The attendance and punctuality pattern of individual students on accredited courses should be monitored by personal tutors as part of the tutorial system. Tutors should inform students that poor attendance is likely to lead to their being withdrawn from the course or from examinations if they fail to maintain attendance at the required level. If a student is going to miss a lesson he or she should forewarn the tutor. If a student's attendance in the first term of an accredited course is erratic, consideration should be given to whether the learning objectives are appropriate for the student.

Meeting a course's attendance requirement is a condition of any assistance a student receives from the Hardship Fund or from Additional Learning Support (ALS). Failure to keep good attendance may lead to the withdrawal of either. Students may also be requested to repay Hardship Funds received.

#### 2. Equality and Diversity

The Disability Discrimination Act requires colleges to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities. If a student believes it may not be possible to abide by the attendance policy because of his or her disability or chronic ill health, the student should contact the ALS section *prior* to the beginning of studies, or as soon as possible thereafter, to discuss the matter of a possible adjustment. Whether an adjustment is granted will be determined on an individual, case-by-case basis depending on:

- a) The extent to which the medical or psychological documentation supports the need for an adjustment of the attendance policy.
- b) The reasonableness of an adjustment in each requested class as determined by discussions between the course tutor and the relevant academic managers. ALS may advise as necessary.

And with the following provisos:

- a) The College's understanding of "reasonable adjustment" is an adjustment of the sort that does not require the College to vary significantly a fundamental requirement of the course. In seeking to determine whether the attendance requirement for a course is fundamental the College will have regard to the following:

- i) To what extent do classroom interactions between students and the tutor and students and students constitute an essential part of how learning is achieved on the course?
- ii) To what extent do practical classroom activities constitute an essential part of how learning is achieved on the course?
- b) An adjustment of the attendance policy does not mean that unlimited absences will be permitted.
- c) An adjustment of the attendance policy does not constitute, or guarantee, the granting of an adjustment with respect to any of the other academic requirements of the course.

For an accredited course for which the awarding body has its own attendance policy or guidelines, any variance of the College's attendance policy may be subject to the agreement of the awarding body.

The College recognises that on a limited number of occasions students may be absent from the College for the observance of major religious festivals. Subject to provisos a)-c) above, an absence in order to attend a religious festival will be discounted where agreement to the absence has been gained in advance from the course tutor.

## **Procedure**

### **3. Monitoring of Attendance**

In order to maintain good levels of attendance, the College will monitor attendance levels through class visits. Monitors will check attendance against the class register and note punctuality.

### **4. Action in Cases of Poor Attendance**

Students who have been absent for four consecutive classes should be contacted by departmental administrators to ascertain whether they intend to return and if they do not, should be withdrawn. (Such students are listed in the report at Columbus/User Area/Attendance Reports). If there is any indication that poor attendance is related to a disability or chronic ill health the tutor should contact the ALS section to discuss whether reasonable adjustments should be made (see Equality & Diversity above). Tutors unsure of what is a reasonable adjustment with regard to attendance and punctuality, will be advised by ALS.

Awarding Bodies operate attendance policies, usually requiring students to attend at least 80% of classes. Failure to attend at the required rate, without prior agreement with the course tutor, could result in a student being withdrawn from a module or the entire course, or being withdrawn from the course examination.

### **5. Attendance Rates**

CAMs and Section Heads should monitor class attendance rates on a monthly basis and investigate where attendance drops below 80%, so that they are in a position to report twice termly to the College Leadership Team on attendance in their sections. They should also monitor class start times.

## **6. Punctuality**

It is important that students attend their classes punctually both for their own learning and so as the learning of others is not disrupted. Tutors should explain this at the beginning of a course. Students arriving late should be marked late ("L") in the register. Students who are late for practical sessions may be excluded from the session if there are health and safety issues involved. If a student expects to arrive late for a class he or she should forewarn the tutor.

Agreed Curriculum and Quality 10<sup>th</sup> February 2010/CB/PL