

ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE (APPRENTICESHIP PROVISION)

Academic Registry (Quality & Standards)

POLICY SCHEDULE	
Policy title	Attendance Policy & Procedure (Apprenticeship Provision)
Policy owner	Paul Armstrong
Policy lead contact	Amanda Holmes
Approving body	Apprenticeship Steering Group (previously SSQAC)
Date of initial approval	June 2019 (SSQAC)
Date of implementation	September 2023
Version no.	1.4
Related Guidelines, Procedures, Codes of Practice etc.	Tripartite Review (TPR) Policy Student Code of Conduct Academic Regulations Student Charter Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
Review interval	Annual

NB. This policy is available on the University of Cumbria website, and it should be noted that any printed copies are uncontrolled and cannot be guaranteed to constitute the current version of the policy.

1. Scope

This Policy and Procedure covers Higher/Degree Level Apprentices.

To support the ultimate attainment of our apprentices and to ensure the University is compliant with external funding bodies and regulatory requirements, apprentice attendance and punctuality with the scheduled learning sessions (taught element of the programme) will be closely monitored so that any concerns are addressed with supportive intervention.

2. Key Principles

There are three key principles underpinning this policy and procedure:

- The University, working in partnership with the employer, has high expectations and standards of all our apprentices: the ability to maintain high levels of punctuality and attendance is one of many key skills required in employment.
- Engagement in the required off-the-job training leads to academic achievement and subsequently develops opportunities for successful employment, promotion, and further study.
- Evidence of attendance is required for ESFA audit purposes (The university needs to assure itself that any apprentice learner is actively engaged in off-the-job learning within each calendar month, to meet ESFA Funding Rules.)

Expectations Underpinning Positive Attendance and Punctuality:

- All scheduled sessions start and end on time.
- Learning is not disrupted by absent staff/apprentices or apprentices arriving late to scheduled sessions (or leaving early).
- Apprentice attendance and punctuality is managed and monitored consistently across the university.
- Punctuality and attendance is a means by which the quality of provision can be measured
- Apprenticeship programmes are planned in partnership with the employer, thus all absences from a scheduled session will be marked as 'absent'.

3. Expectations of Academic Institutes

The programme team is responsible for:

- Explaining the attendance policy and procedure to apprentices during induction, with timely reminders during the year.
- Using the agreed, centrally stored, attendance monitoring spreadsheets produced by the Academic Registry (Programme Administration): Ensuring that these records are kept up-to-date, accurate and are filed appropriately within a week (see Section 12)
- Following up on individual absences with the learner within 48 hours.
- Using tripartite reviews, and Student Progress Review where appropriate, to discuss any issues of punctuality or attendance with the learner and the employer, and where necessary update the learner RAG rating in APTEM
- Reporting absence(s) to employers as appropriate, within the timescales as set out in any contractual agreements.

Principal Lecturers and Heads of Teaching, Learning & Student Experience are responsible for:

- ensuring compliance with the Attendance Policy and Process, through monitoring engagement with the attendance monitoring processes supported by the Academic

Registry.

4. Expectations of Employers

Employers are responsible for:

- Supporting learners, to enable their full engagement with the planned learning sessions as set out in this Policy.
- Engaging in the tripartite review and any other process (e.g. Student Progress Review) alongside the University and the learner.

5. Expectations of Apprentices

Apprentices are expected to:

- Attend, in full, all scheduled learning, teaching and assessment sessions which form their Apprenticeship training at the university. (In the pursuit of high expectations and professional standards, we expect all apprentices to attend all planned sessions and be punctual for those sessions, as set out in the commitment statement/training plan.)
- Be punctual for all scheduled sessions. (Late arrival will be recorded as part of attendance monitoring.)
- Attend for the whole planned session and not leave early.

Where an absence is unavoidable, it is the responsibility of the apprentice to inform their relevant tutor that they will not be attending the session, the reason and when they expect to return. Such absences will be noted on the registers as an absence.

6. Support for Apprentices with Poor or Sporadic Attendance and/or Punctuality

As an Institution with a strong ethos in supporting students from all walks of life, we recognise the value of early warning signs and alerts to when apprentices may become disengaged from their apprenticeship.

If an apprentice's attendance falls below expected standards a tripartite review or Student Progress Review (SPR) will take place to discuss the underpinning reasons for the absence and identify any actions needed (and timescales) to support the learner to return to full engagement. This review will include the employer as our partner in the apprenticeship.

If, within the agreed timescale, there is no improvement in attendance or punctuality this will be escalated through Student Code of Conduct Processes. Options at this point could include referral to Student Support Services, intercalation (to allow time for the issues to be remedied) or, in extreme circumstances, withdrawal from the apprenticeship.

Additionally, the University's 4-week rule will be applied following a four working week period of continuous lack of engagement with designated learning activities of programmes and modules. Learners who do not respond to communications from the University regarding this, or are unable to give reasonable explanation for their absence and assurance of future appropriate engagement may be deemed to have withdrawn from their programme of study. (See Academic Regulation D5.4)

7. Safeguarding

All staff must be vigilant to safeguarding issues and concerns, particularly when managing apprentice performance linked to attendance. Where there are safeguarding or welfare concerns, an alert to the university's safeguarding team must be made immediately, in line with the safeguarding policy and procedures.

8. Student Charter

All apprentices receive the Student Charter during their induction. The Charter outlines the expectations, standards and academic conduct required whilst studying at the university. The agreement describes the positive student experience that can be achieved when apprentices and staff work together.

9. Tripartite Reviews (TPR)

Punctuality and attendance should form part of the discussion between the University, the learner and the employer, within every TPR meeting.

10. Monitoring and Reviewing this Policy

The Policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Apprenticeship Steering Group.

The effectiveness of the Policy will be measured through:

- Analysis of stakeholder feedback
- Module and course evaluations/reviews
- Analysis of attendance and retention data
- Analysis of retention trends

11. Related Policy and Procedures

- Student Charter
- Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
- TPR Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Policy
- Academic Regulations

12. Process

Using the trackers provided by the Academic Registry (Programme Administration) registers are generated, by programme, for each module, including all registered apprentices. There are columns to calculate attendance and punctuality rates.

Registers are stored on SharePoint within the Registers Folder within the Academic Registry shared area and released to Programme team.

Programme teams must complete registers within a week of the planned learning session and save in the central file. This must include presence/absence and punctuality. Where there is an absence, the Programme team must add notes to the learner's APTEM record, supported by any evidence of communication (e.g. emails) to confirm that absences have been chased with the apprentice and that the employer has been notified.

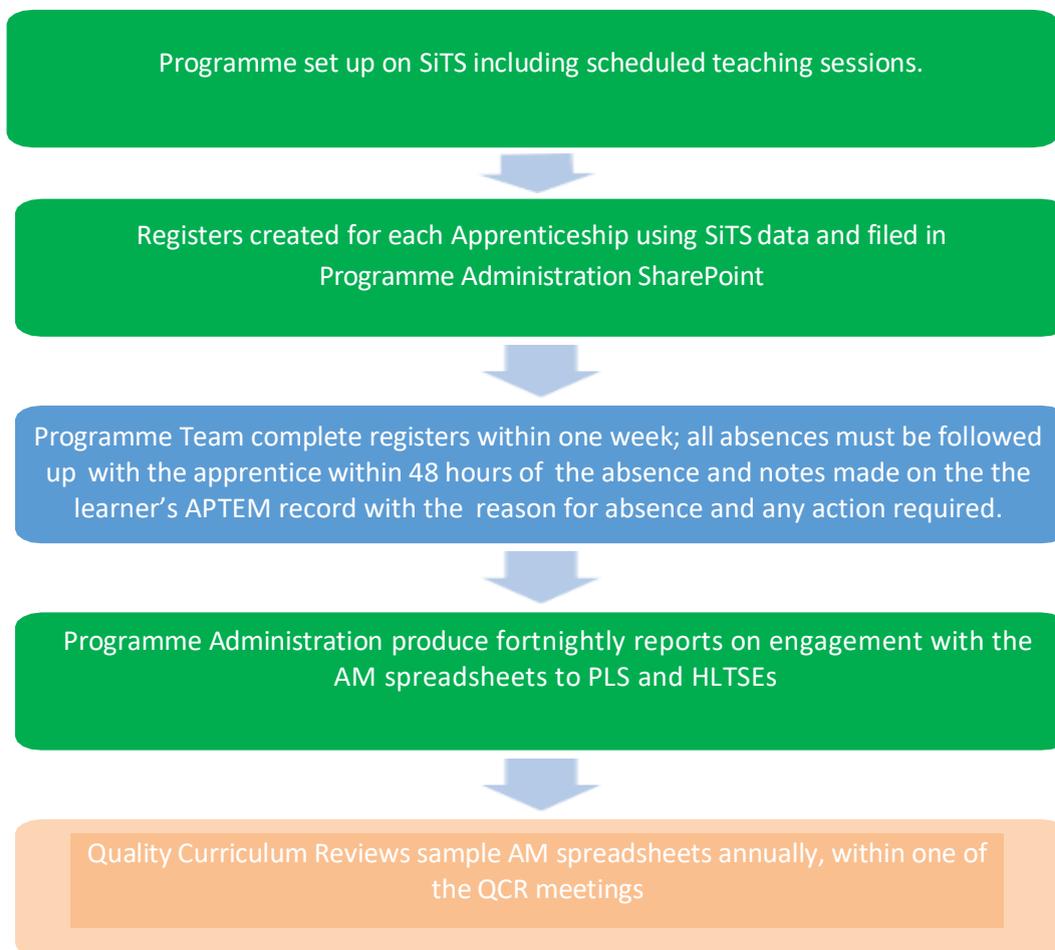
The Programme Administration Team in Academic Registry will provide a populated version for all apprenticeships from 1st August 2023. Engagement with the tracker will be reviewed fortnightly, and should any course team not take up or maintain use of the new tracker the concern will be escalated to the Principal Lecturer and Head of Learning, Teaching and Student Experience.

Sampling of engagement with attendance monitoring processes will be undertaken through periodic QCRs.

Version Control record:

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	By
1.1	Jun 19	Approved by SSQAC for implementation	ID
1.2	Oct 22	Updated format, no material changes to Policy or Process (policy author left the institution)	PA
1.3	Mar 23	Updated to reflect formation of Academic Registry, team structures in the Academic Registry and Academic Institutes.	PA
1.4	Aug 23	Housekeeping and updated to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect central AM process managed by Programme Administration (Academic Registry) – taken to ASG August 23, • add employer responsibilities • clarity of scope of the policy (applying to scheduled learning sessions) • add early departure from sessions as being within scope 	JR

Flow Chart of Attendance Process



Key

Programme Administration
(Academic Registry)

Academic Programme Team
(Academic Institute)

Apprenticeships Team