

Greenhills Community College

Attendance & Engagement Policy for Further Education Learners



Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board
Greenhills Community College
Attendance and Engagement Policy

1. ETHOS

Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB) is committed to providing a supportive environment to enable all learners to achieve their full potential. DDLETB recognises learners are responsible for their own attendance, punctuality and engagement and encourages them to develop self-discipline and take personal responsibility in order to achieve success on their chosen course.

Experience shows learners who actively participate in their learning by attending all classes are more likely to:

- Develop the knowledge, skills and competencies required to successfully complete the course
- Effectively manage on-going assessment requirements
- Foster a strong sense of class participation and active engagement in college activities.

Greenhills Community College, as a constituent College of DDLETB, is required to maintain attendance records and these will be forwarded to funding and other relevant government agencies as requested.

For the purpose of this policy, punctuality is implicit in the term attendance.

2. GUIDELINES

Greenhills Community College, as a constituent College of DDLETB, is committed to:

- 2.1 informing learners of attendance requirements and consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- 2.2 operating an attendance management system
- 2.3 implementing attendance procedures in a fair and consistent manner
- 2.4 supporting learners who are experiencing difficulties or unforeseen circumstances
- 2.5 providing attendance records as may be required by SUSI (grant awarding body), the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and relevant government departments
- 2.6 applying appropriate sanctions for unsatisfactory attendance
- 2.7 notifying the learner in writing of the sanctions applied. Decisions made with respect to learners under the age of 18, will also be communicated to parents/guardians.

3. DEFINITION OF ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

Greenhills Community College courses are full-time and are delivered in person. Course content may be provided via online learning platforms to supplement learning.

Attendance and engagement is defined as:

- Attending classes and other learning activities, for example, trainings, talks, field trips etc punctually
- Actively engaging with learning, for example, contributing to class discussions and group work
- Submitting assessments and course work as per deadlines
- Attending exams and/or skills demonstrations punctually as per schedule
- Responding in a timely manner to communication from the College.

Holidays should not be booked during term time and learners should endeavour to make personal appointments outside of timetabled classes. Learners should give prior notification of foreseen absences to their teachers and tutor.

Greenhills Community College understands that learners may face certain challenges which impact on their attendance/engagement. Periods of short term certified sick leave will not impact on a learner's attendance record. However, learners who submit consecutive medical certificates over a longer period of time may be deemed to have unsatisfactory attendance and/or engagement and may be subject to sanctions.

The College will work with learners, endeavouring to ensure that they achieve their full potential.

4. PROCEDURES

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

Learners are expected and encouraged to attend every subject on their timetable, regularly and punctually, unless a subject exemption has been agreed and awarded by the College based on a previous qualification. When learners arrive late to class or are absent, they miss important information about College events and activities. They also miss vital explanations, demonstrations and collaborative activities that enhance understanding and as a result, their learning suffers. Learner lateness and absenteeism is also disruptive to teachers and to other learners.

1. All learners are required to attend regularly and punctually and to be in their scheduled rooms at the appointed times. All classes are compulsory unless an exemption has been granted. Learners seeking exemption from a module on the basis that they have already achieved it should bring a copy of their original award/results in that module to reception. The College will verify the exemption upon which the learner will be exempt from that class. Learners seeking exemptions who intend to continue to Third Level, should consult with the Guidance Counsellor before giving up that module as some Third Level courses require a full award to be completed in one sitting.

2. It is a learner's responsibility to be on time for all classes, regardless of where they travel from. Late attendance and absence are normally acceptable only in the case of personal illness (certified) or family bereavement. All other explanations/excuses are accepted at the discretion of the Teacher. Medical/dental or other appointments should take place outside of the course timetable as classes will not be repeated.

3. If absent, a learner should contact their teachers by email or Teams to let them know that they will be not attending their class that day. Learners who have Doctor's or Hospital certificates should leave them at reception on their return from absence and notify their tutor and/or teacher.

4. Following an unexplained absence of ten college days and an unsuccessful attempt from the Attendance Officer to make contact, you will be assumed to have left the course and your name will be removed from the register. You will no longer be able to attend classes or submit work as you will be deemed to no longer be a learner of Greenhills Community College.

Record Keeping

Attendance for each class is recorded electronically. A record will be kept of communication with learners in relation to their attendance/engagement.

Implications of Unsatisfactory Attendance/Engagement for Learners

Unsatisfactory attendance may impact on the:

- Successful completion of assessments and the achievement of certification
- Progression to higher education or employment
- Establishment of positive relationships with classmates and teachers
- Receipt of VTOS, BTEA and SUSI PLC grant payments
- Provision of a reference and/or its content

Sanctions for Unsatisfactory Attendance/Engagement for Learners

Sanctions for unsatisfactory attendance may include:

- Exclusion from participation in field trips and other learning activities
- Exclusion from participation in European Erasmus+ mobility opportunities

It is the responsibility of learners to actively engage with the College. Learners who do not engage with the College in relation to their non-attendance/non-engagement will be considered to have voluntarily left their course and will no longer be considered a registered learner of the College.

Learners with unsatisfactory attendance/engagement will be advised of the sanction/s in writing.

5. APPEALS

Greenhills Community College, as a constituent College of DDLETB, recognises the right of learners to appeal sanctions in relation to attendance, and commits to address every appeal in a timely, fair and consistent manner.

Procedures to Appeal

5.1 Appeals must be lodged in writing to the Principal within 5 working days on receipt of the sanctions letter.

5.2 The Principal will establish an Appeals Panel to meet with the learner within 5 working days of the appeal being received. The Panel may be comprised of suitable members of staff such as Principal/Deputy Principal/FE Coordinator/Course Coordinator. At least one member of the panel will be independent of the sanction process.

5.3 The learner may be accompanied by another individual. Learners under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a Parent or Guardian. Details of the accompanying person must be provided to the Principal in advance of the meeting.

5.4 The Principal will inform the Learner/Parent/Guardian of the decision of the Appeals Panel within three working days. Parents/Guardians will be notified in respect of decisions made to learners under 18 years of age.