

Royal Northern College of Music

Student Attendance

Policy & Procedure

Department: Academic

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and Director of Academic Governance

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COLLEGE of MUSIC

Introduction

1. This Policy is in the spirit of the College's commitment to provide a supportive learning environment which seeks to enable all students to achieve their full potential. The College recognises the investment that students make when they choose to study music and has a duty of care to monitor attendance, act on non-attendance and support students to complete their programme of study. The monitoring of attendance is also important in supporting the health and wellbeing of students as non-attendance can be an indicator of a student experiencing difficulties.
2. The purpose of this Policy is to provide clarity for students and staff on the expectations relating to student attendance.
3. The Policy applies to all enrolled students at the College.
4. The College also has a statutory duty to comply with the stipulations of the Home Office under its Sponsorship licence which requires the accurate tracking of attendance of students subject to visa restrictions.
5. Whilst this Policy applies to all timetabled learning and teaching sessions, the principles laid out within it also apply to orchestral events and activities as part of a professional code of conduct.

Policy statement

6. Attendance is a vital component in student retention, progression, achievement and employability. Regular attendance is closely linked to achievement - students with a record of persistent non-attendance are more likely to fail to achieve the required learning outcomes during assessment and receive lower grades or fail modules than those who attend regularly. Attendance monitoring allows timely intervention and to facilitate a dialogue between staff and students to ascertain the reasons underpinning poor attendance so that support can be offered if necessary.
7. The College will take reasonable measures to ensure that the student is able to attend scheduled classes (classes encompass all timetabled learning opportunities, for example: individual one-to-one lessons, lectures, seminars, tutorials, rehearsals, practical classes that contribute to a module for which credit is awarded) that form part of the programme of study.
8. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and to take responsibility for their own learning.
9. Students must arrive on time for classes and remain for the duration of the session. Late arrival at, or early departure from sessions is disruptive, discourteous, unprofessional and unfair to other class members and tutors.
10. The College is based on a community of learning and as such students are expected to contribute to their fellow students' learning experience within a holistic learning environment. This is particularly the case when engaging in assessed group work or performance activities where non-attendance at any stage in the learning process can impact adversely on others' experience.

Planned and unexpected absence

11. The College understands that students may face difficulty in attending all sessions, and as such recognises that there will be cases of both planned and unexpected absence. A student may **only** be excused from attending timetabled classes in the case of:

a) Illness / other extenuating circumstances.

Short-term illness, accident or injury, medical appointments where rearrangement is not possible, the death or serious illness of a close family member or dependent or adverse personal or family circumstances may result in absence. The student should, wherever possible, log details of any absence on Asimut before the class occurs. It is a requirement that any prolonged¹ period of absence due to illness be confirmed with a medical note.

b) Approved Absence.

A student may apply for authorised absence for exceptional performance or other opportunities/events. All such absences in term-time, including examination periods, must be authorised by way of an Approved Absence. Agreement to the absence must not be assumed. Students must complete an Absence Request Form for every period they are absent from College during term time. This includes external professional work and competitions or family commitments. Absence Request Forms can be found on Moodle and are also available in hard copy format from Registry and the orchestral office. Absence requests for missed classes will be approved by the Head of School. Absence requests for missed performance assessment will be approved by the Head of School and Director of Performance. A student must attend all written examinations; absence requests for missed written examinations will not be authorised. Absences over 5 working days will also be sent to the relevant Course Leader for approval.

Monitoring attendance

12. The College will maintain records of attendance for all scheduled classes. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they sign the register (where applicable) for every scheduled class they attend. Attendance will be monitored by the relevant Programme and Assessment Coordinator/s.

13. Attendance of classes not recorded on Asimut will be monitored by the relevant Tutor or School Administrator.

14. Attendance for all corporate performance (orchestras, ensembles, choirs and chamber music) is compulsory reflecting the importance placed on reliability by the profession. Unauthorised absence will be treated very seriously and penalties may be imposed for any unsatisfactory attendance. Students may be excluded from the College external list and subsequent references may include reference to poor attendance.

¹ Prolonged Absence is defined as more than five week days, e.g. if a student missed classes on a Wednesday because they were sick, a medical note must be provided for any classes missed on the subsequent Wednesday or after.

Unsatisfactory attendance

15. Due to its integral importance to student learning, the College will pursue all cases of recorded persistent non-attendance. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the relevant Programme and Assessment Coordinator of any reasons behind non-attendance.
16. Unsatisfactory attendance is deemed to be when a student misses 15% of classes recorded on Asimut, and does not have valid reasons for non-attendance within the monthly reporting period. Other attendance/engagement points/records may also be checked such as principal study lessons, room bookings and ID card use.
17. Prolonged or persistent sickness recording and/or non-attendance will be followed up by the Student Wellbeing Advisors, who will signpost any relevant support.
18. Where it is identified that attendance is unsatisfactory for classes recorded on Asimut, the Programme and Assessment Coordinator will contact the student by email (sent to their College email address) to request they make contact to explain the absence. If required, advice regarding support services will be provided.
19. Where further instances of unsatisfactory attendance are identified and this reaches 30% of non-attendance in classes recorded on Asimut, or if attendance does not improve, the student will be required to meet the Head of Undergraduate Programmes or Head of the Graduate School and/or Head of Registry (or Deputy) to discuss how their attendance can be improved and to identify any further support that may be required.
20. Non-attendance of classes not recorded on Asimut will be followed up by the relevant Tutor or School Administrator as appropriate.
21. Continued non-attendance may be reported to the Student Loan Company (or equivalent) as appropriate, which may affect a student's funding position.
22. Persistent or recurrent non-attendance may; at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, be taken into consideration when considering whether a student should proceed on the programme.
23. In accordance with current UK immigration law, **a report will be made to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) authority if an international student holding a Student visa is absent from the College for more than 10 expected contact points without authorisation.** These contact points also include any school based activities in which your presence is required, but where the record may not be monitored on Asimut.
24. Should statutory bodies or other external organisations, such as UKVI, amend their monitoring requirements, the College reserves the right to amend the RNCM attendance monitoring policy. Any amendments to the policy will be clearly articulated and published to staff and students.