

Policy Title:	Attendance Procedure					
Description:	The purpose of the attendance procedure is to ensure that					
	through optimum attendance students gain the most					
	benefit from their college experience.					
Author (Position):	Vice President (Academic Affairs) and Registrar					
Version:	4 (Amended to reflect change in roles and responsibilities)					
Approved By:	Academic Council					
Policy Approval Date:	28 March 2022					
Date of Next Policy Review:	September 2023 (or as necessary)					

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

An Associated Cologo of
Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

Attendance Procedure

1 Context

Full and punctual attendance at lectures is required for Marino Institute of Education (MIE) courses.

2 Purpose

The purpose of the attendance procedure is to ensure that through optimum attendance students gain the most benefit from their college experience. Through the application of this procedure, early intervention can identify students whose pattern of attendance could be deemed unsatisfactory and support measures can be put in place, if necessary, to ensure that students have a positive college experience and meet the requirements for professional registration.

3 Benefits

By communicating clearly expectations of full attendance, unforced absences will be minimised. Attendance is associated with module grades and this procedure should help students perform better on the course. The procedure provides a way for the Institute to identify students who may be experiencing difficulties with their course in cases where poor attendance is a symptom of such problems.

4 Scope

- 4.1 The attendance procedure applies to all students, undertaking professional and undergraduate courses of study in MIE.
- 4.2 The attendance procedure does not apply to students undertaking Master in Education Studies courses.
- 4.3 The attendance procedure applies to students' attendance at face-to-face and synchronous online classes.

5 Principles

5.1 Students' attendance on courses is recorded for pastoral, professional, ethical, practical and contractual reasons.



- 5.2 Although attendance is important for academic and professional reasons, full participation in courses is necessary for students to gain maximum benefit from their entire college experience.
- 5.3 Absenteeism can adversely affect the student and their classmates. Sometimes persistent absence from classes indicates that a student is experiencing a personal or course-related difficulty for which appropriate support may be available.
- 5.4 In some exceptional cases, absence from a lecture may be unavoidable.
- 5.5 Payment of grants is contingent on verification of students' attendance on the course by the Institute at regular intervals throughout the academic year.
- 5.6 Given the potential consequences for unsatisfactory attendance, students are informed about this policy during induction.

6 Definitions

An absence refers to missing all or most of a 50-minute lecture, as determined by the module lecturer. Where a lecture consisting of two 50-minute sessions is missed, this is considered to be two absences.

A lecture refers to any class offered in MIE regardless of the size. The term is used to include workshops, seminars, tutorials and online classes.

7 Criteria for Unsatisfactory Attendance

7.1 Unsatisfactory attendance in a module

Attendance becomes unsatisfactory in a **module** where students have any of the following:

- 7.1.1 Two or more absences in a module in a semester without notification of mitigating circumstances
- 7.1.2 Three or more absences in a module in a semester **regardless** of notification of mitigating circumstances.
- 7.2 Because the courses offered in MIE are professional in nature, absences not only have an impact on students themselves but on learners with whom they will interact in the future. Minimum numbers of hours are required for competence in modules, and a lack of engagement in the course may have deleterious impacts on learners with whom MIE graduates will work on placement or in their subsequent careers.



7.3 Table 1 below outlines the criteria under which attendance becomes unsatisfactory in a semester and in a year. The number of absences per course is directly related to the number of face-to-face contact hours a student undertakes on their particular course of study¹.

Table 1: Number of course hours, over which, attendance is deemed unsatisfactory

	Course of study: Criteria	TIFP	B.Ed.	B.Oid	B.Sc. Ed Studies	B.Sc. ECE	PDEFE – Fulltime (Part-time: pro-rata)	PME		
	Unsatisfactory attendance in a semester:									
The maximum number of absences across all modules in a semester without notification of valid mitigating circumstances		30	30	30	20	15	15	30		
	Unsatisfactory attendance for the year:									
The maximum number of absences across all modules in each of the Michaelmas and Hillary semesters without notification of valid mitigating circumstances		30	30	30	20	15	15	30		
modules in	um number of absences across all an academic year without n of valid mitigating circumstances	75	75	75	50	40	30	75		
modules in	um number of absences across all an academic year regardless of of mitigating circumstances	100	100	100	65	55	50	100		

Abbreviations; B.Ed.; Bachelor in Education, B.Oid.; Baitsiléir san Oideachas Trí Mheán na Gaeilge, B.Sc. ECE; Bachelor in Science (Early Childhood Education), B.Sc. Ed. Studies; Bachelor in Science (Education Studies), PDEFE; Professional Diploma in Education (Further Education), PME; Professional Master in Education, TIFP; Trinity International Foundation Programme.

Students' attendance may be deemed unsatisfactory in a semester or for the year if students miss more than a third of their course of study. This may lead to students being

¹ In all courses full attendance is expected and required. Thresholds for identifying unsatisfactory attendance have been identified so that where absences do occur; the processes for responding to them are consistent and transparent for students. The thresholds set are broadly based on the Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin *General Regulations and Information* in the Calendar Part II, (see section titled "Non-satisfactory attendance and coursework" which states "Where specific requirements are not stated, students may be deemed non-satisfactory if they miss more than a third of their course of study, p. 32, ¶25.")



refused permission to take their end-of-semester examinations and their being required to repeat the year in full.

7.4 Mitigating circumstances

The following are examples of what constitutes mitigating circumstances:

- 7.4.1 Illness: For absences of more than two consecutive days due to illness², medical certificates must uploaded to MAESTRO Office within one week of returning to college. The hard copy original must be retained in case of follow up queries.
- 7.4.2 **Unavoidable appointments:** Every effort must be made to arrange appointments at times that enable students to attend lecturers. When this is not possible, students must upload a copy of the appointment notification to MAESTRO and retain the original appointment notification issued to them by the relevant professional, (e.g. dentist, counsellor, driving tester). This must be provided to Education Office, if requested.
- 7.4.3 Family or personal difficulty: In the case of serious illness of a relative or parental separation or divorce, for example, students must liaise with and keep their tutor informed, either directly or via the Registrar, in relation to such circumstances³.
- 7.4.4 **Representing the college:** Absences that arise because a student is representing the college at a sporting, cultural, student recruitment, award or other approved event. The appropriate staff member notifies the Education Office of students who are representing the college.

8 Procedure

Unsatisfactory attendance in a module 8.1

If a student has unsatisfactory attendance in one or more modules, but fewer than the maximum number of absences permitted in a semester (as outlined in Table 1), the student is required to meet with their tutor/course leader (PDEFE only) to explain why their attendance was unsatisfactory in the module(s). The Education Office writes to the student and the tutor to notify them of the need for the meeting. This process may be done through

² See Illness Policy

³ See Bereavement Support Procedure on the Death of a Student



MAESTRO. The tutor/course leader⁴ keeps a record of the meeting, which is submitted to the <u>Registrar's Office</u> on request.

8.2 Unsatisfactory attendance in a semester(s)/year

Semester 1

During Revision Week of semester 1, students whose attendance has been unsatisfactory during that semester, as outlined in Table 1, will be informed by letter, sent out by the Education Office, that their attendance has been unsatisfactory. The student is required to meet with the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs/nominee and the Head of the Department of Policy and Practice/nominee to discuss their attendance. The student may be accompanied by their tutor⁴ (or in the case of the PDEFE, the course leader) to explain the reasons for being absent from lectures (which may include providing evidence of mitigating circumstances) and to learn about the implication of non-satisfactory attendance in the first semester and for the year as a whole if attendance does not improve. Based on this meeting the student may be prevented from attempting end of semester assessments in one or more modules (or if an assessment has already been completed, a mark may not be assigned to it). However, a student will generally not be prevented from participating in a semester 1 placement. The Registrar's Office saves a record of this meeting, for filing on the student's record.

Semester 2

In the week before placement preparation or in the pre-exams revision week (whichever occurs first), of semester 2, students whose attendance for semester 2 is unsatisfactory meet with the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs/nominee and the Head of the Department of Policy and Practice/nominee to discuss their attendance. The student may be accompanied by their tutor⁴ (or in the case of the PDEFE, the course leader) to explain the reasons for being absent from lectures (which may include providing evidence of mitigating circumstances). Based on this meeting and on the outcome of an unsatisfactory attendance meeting from semester 1, where relevant, the student may be prevented from attempting end of semester assessments in one or more modules (or if an assessment has already been completed, a mark may not be assigned to it) and/or may be prevented from participating in placement.

⁴ See Tutor System Policy and Tutor System Procedure



In addition to the circumstances outlined above, the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs and other relevant staff members, where appropriate, may meet with any student about the student's attendance on any module or course where a high level of absence gives reason for concern. Following such a meeting, should the concern not be allayed, the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance⁵ as outlined below, may be applied.

9 Consequence of Unsatisfactory Attendance

9.1 School Placement PME, B.Ed. & B.Oid.

Before a B.Ed., B.Oid., or PME student commences a school placement period, they should have acquired teaching skills and curricular knowledge appropriate to the time they have been attending the institute. In addition, the Head of the Department of Policy and Practice and the School Placement Coordinator must be satisfied that the student is aware of issues regarding safety and management of children before the student commences school placement.

For school placement purposes, unsatisfactory attendance⁵ is defined, as one of the following:

- i. 30 absences across all modules in semester 1 plus an average of three absences per week to date in semester 2; or
- ii. An average of four absences per week in the year to date without notification of mitigating circumstances; or
- iii. An average of five absences per week in the year to date with mitigating circumstances.

If a student's attendance is unsatisfactory as outlined above or if it is unsatisfactory in specific modules, the student (and their Tutor⁶) will be invited to meet with the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs/nominee, the Head of the Department of Policy and Practice/nominee and the School Placement Coordinator to discuss the student's participation in school placement in light of the unsatisfactory attendance. Where the student's tutor⁶ is not available to attend or there is a conflict of interest, the student can invite a faculty member or a member of the <u>Students' Union</u> to accompany them.

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⁵ See <u>School Placement Attendance Policy</u>

⁶ See <u>Tutor System Policy</u> and <u>Tutor System Procedure</u>



Following that meeting, the student may be required to postpone the school placement until May/June or may be required to demonstrate their preparedness for the placement by taking viva voce exams in the relevant subjects. Alternatively, the student may be refused permission to participate in school placement that year and required to repeat the year. In this case, students would be required to pay full fees and any grants or bursaries, paid to the student, would be suspended for the repeated year.

Should the unsatisfactory attendance relate to one or two modules only, the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs/nominee and the Head the Department of Policy and Practice/nominee may require the student to take a viva voce exam in those subjects to determine the student's preparedness for school placement. Should the student not pass the viva voice, the student may be refused permission to participate in school placement that year and be required to repeat the year. In this case, students would be required to pay full fees and any grants or bursaries, paid to the student, would be suspended for the repeated year. Alternatively, the student may be required to postpone the school placement until May/June.

The decision to require a student to defer work/field placement/internship is a serious one, which may disrupt a student's progression through the course⁷. Consequently, meetings to discern the nature of the penalty to be imposed will take place as late as possible in the semester as identified above, so as to allow the student to improve their attendance record and to avoid, if possible, the most severe sanction⁸.

9.2 Work/Field Placement: B.Sc. Education Studies or Early Childhood Education

Students on the B.Sc. courses (Ed. Studies or ECE) may be refused permission to take their work/field placement/internship if their attendance is unsatisfactory overall or in one or more individual modules. In such circumstances where a student's attendance is unsatisfactory, the student and their Tutor⁹ will meet in advance with the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs/nominee, with the B.Sc. Course Leader/nominee and with the relevant Coordinator of Placement/nominee. Where the Tutor is not available to attend or there is a conflict of interest, the student can invite a faculty member or a member of the Students' Union to accompany them. As a result of this meeting the

⁷ See <u>Academic Assessment and Academic Progression</u>

⁸ See Disciplinary Procedures in Respect of Students

⁹ See Tutor System Policy and Tutor System Procedure



student may be required to postpone the work/field placement until the end of the current academic year (i.e. May/June). Alternatively, the student may be refused permission to participate in work/field placement that year and required to repeat the year. In this situation, the student would be required to pay full fees and any grants or bursaries normally paid to the student, would be suspended for the repeated academic year.

The decision to require a student to defer work/field placement/internship is a serious one, which may disrupt a student's progression through the course¹⁰. Consequently, meetings to discern the nature of the penalty to be imposed will take place as late as possible in the semester as stated above, so as to allow the student to improve their attendance record and to avoid, if possible, the most severe sanction⁸.

9.3 **Education Placement: PDEFE**

In advance of commencing a period of placement, a PDEFE student should have:

- a) Acquired the teaching skills and curricular knowledge appropriate to the stage of the programme completed to date, and
- b) Demonstrated sufficient awareness of the issues relating to the safety and management of students¹¹.

For placement purposes, unsatisfactory attendance is defined as one of the following for the fulltime course (and reduced by 50% for the part-time course).

- i. 15 absences across all modules in semester 1 plus an average of three absences per week in semester 2; or
- ii. An average of three absences per week in the year to date without notification of mitigating circumstances; or
- iii. An average of five absences in the year to date with mitigating circumstances

If a student's attendance is unsatisfactory as outlined above or in specific modules, the student accompanied by their Tutor¹² will be invited to meet with the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs/nominee, the Course Leader/nominee and the Placement Coordinator to discuss the student's participation in a forthcoming education placement.

¹⁰ See Academic Assessment and Academic Progression

¹¹ See <u>Safety Statement Policy</u>

¹² See <u>Tutor System Policy</u> and <u>Tutor System Procedure</u>



Following that meeting, the student may be refused permission to participate in education placement at that time and may be offered the opportunity to take the placement in May/June of that year. Alternatively, the student may be required to repeat the year. In this case the student would be required to pay full fees and any grants or bursaries normally paid to the student would be suspended for the academic year repeated.

The decision to require a student to defer work/field placement/internship is serious one, which may disrupt a student's progression through the course¹³. Consequently, meetings to discern the nature of the penalty to be imposed will take place as late as possible in the semester, but prior to the commencement of the placement, so as to allow the student to improve their attendance record and to avoid, if possible, the most severe sanction¹⁴.

9.4 Assessments

Where a B.Ed., B.Oid., B.Sc., PME, TIFP or PDEFE student's attendance is unsatisfactory, either in specific modules or on the totality of the programme, the student and their tutor or Course Leader (PDEFE only) will be invited to meet with the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs/nominee and the appropriate Dean to discuss the student's participation in examinations in some or all modules. Where the tutor is not available to attend or there is a conflict of interest, the student can invite a faculty member or a member of the <u>Students' Union</u> to accompany them. Following that meeting, the student may be:

- a) Required to postpone taking exams until the autumn (supplemental) examination period as a second attempt, when the full mark may be awarded or a mark that is at a passing level may be capped at 40%, as decided by the Registrar & Vice President of Academic Affairs¹³.
- b) Refused permission to participate in some or all examinations that year and required to repeat the year either on- or off-books.

Alternatively, where a module is assessed by means of an assignment that has already been completed, the assignment mark will be discarded by the Court of Examiners and the student will be required to resubmit the assignment for the supplemental exam period of

¹³ See Academic Assessment and Academic Progression

¹⁴ See Disciplinary Procedures in Respect of Students



that year, or to complete the assignment required by the module the following academic year.

10 Attendance on Placement

10.1 School Placement (P.M.E. B.Oid and B.Ed.)

Please refer to the <u>School Placement Attendance Policy</u>, which details the attendance requirements for students to ensure that they meet the professional and academic requirements of their course.

10.2 Education Placement - PDEFE

MIE values the placements offered to its students by all education settings. When a student commits to attending a setting/education centre for a particular placement, poor attendance on the part of the student demonstrates a lack of professional respect for the learners in that centre, and inconveniences setting managers. Therefore, when a student commences any placement period including observation, assessed and non-assessed placements, full and complete attendance is required. Placement is an examination, and no exception to full-attendance is possible without written permission of the course leader in advance of the commencement of placement.

In the event that a student has a contagious illness or is too ill to attend placement, notification must be provided to the centre (e.g. school), the course leader and the Education Office in the Institute, the evening before or in exceptional circumstances before 8.00am on the morning of the absence. Such an absence is only acceptable if it has been approved by a medical doctor or if the student attends the doctor later that day.

Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in a zero or 'non-attendance' for the entire placement.

Where a student's absence is for medical reasons, a medical certificate must be provided to the Institute within one week of the absences. Students are required to make up all absences at the appropriate time.

11 Responsibilities

11.1 Responsibilities of all students in relation to attendance

Students are required to:



- i. Make every effort to attend all lectures
- ii. Sign the roll each time it is not permitted to ask another to sign on a student's behalf.
- iii. Record attendance at online classes in the manner required by the module lecturer.

Where a student is not in a position to attend a lecture, they are required to inform the subject lecturer *and* their personal tutor/course leader¹⁵ by email of the absence and the reason for the absence in advance of the lecture. If this is not possible, then the relevant personnel should be informed of this absence within one week of its occurrence.

When the absence is for medical reasons and is of more than two consecutive days' duration, the student is required to upload to MAESTRO a medical certificate accounting for the total number of absent days within one week of returning to college and to retain the cert until after the supplemental examination results are published and produce it if requested to do so.

When the absence is caused by an unavoidable appointment, the student is required to upload to <u>MAESTRO</u> the appointment notification issued by the relevant professional or organisation and to retain it until after the supplemental examination results are published and produce it if requested to do so.

11.2 Responsibilities of Lecturers in Relation to Attendance.

All lecturers are required to:

- i. Keep an accurate roll at lectures. This needs to be done early in the lecture so that in the event of an emergency evacuation or fire drill, health and safety personnel may check the presence of students against the list of those present and absent in a particular class¹⁶
- ii. Update the centralised attendance database regularly
- iii. Lecturers who have concerns regarding a student's attendance should contact the student in the first instance, the student's personal tutor¹⁸ in the second instance and the <u>Registrar's Office</u> in the third instance.
- iv. Submit to Education Office list of students who were approved to "Represent the College" for noting on MAESTRO

¹⁵ See <u>Tutor System Policy</u> and <u>Tutor System Procedure</u>

¹⁶ See <u>Fire Evacuation Procedure</u> and <u>Safety Statement Policy</u>



11.3 Responsibility of Tutors/Course Leaders in Relation to Attendance

Tutors and/or course leaders¹⁷ are required to:

- Retain communications from tutees regarding mitigating circumstances for absences and, with the students' permission, communicate these mitigating circumstances to the <u>Registrar's Office</u> if requested. (See 7.4.3)
- ii. Retain communications from the Education Office regarding the receipt of medical certificates.
- iii. Make every effort to contact the student to informally discuss the unsatisfactory attendance record as soon as it comes to their attention.
- iv. Communicate any mitigating circumstances provided by students if required by the Registrar and Vice President of Academic Affairs/nominee. (See 7.4.3)
- v. Meet with students whose attendance in some modules is unsatisfactory but where the student's attendance for the semester as a whole is not unsatisfactory. The requirement to hold such meetings will be notified to students and tutors/PDEFE course leader by the Education Office.
- vi. It is the role of the Course Leader and the Registrar's Office to review the attendance reports received from the Education Office each semester and decide, based on the information provided, the students that require an attendance meeting.

11.4 Responsibility of the Education Office/Registrar's Office in Relation to Attendance

- It is the role of the Education Office to collate records of students' attendance as inputted by lecturers, at the end of each semester and prior to each school placement ensuring that
 - a. all medical certificates and unavoidable appointment documents, have been reviewed and approved on MAESTRO
 - b. attendance on MAESTRO has been updated to reflect student absences due to "Representing the College".

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¹⁷ See Tutor System Policy and Tutor System Procedure



- ii. It is the role of the Education Office, at the end of semester 1, to write to students whose attendance is unsatisfactory in a module, and to their tutors, notifying them of the need to meet.
- iii. It is the role of the Education Office to ensure that the attendance decision templates are updated each academic year.
- iv. At the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2, it is the role of the Education Office to forward to the Registrar's office the final report (using attendance template) of students whose overall attendance is unsatisfactory (as per 7.2, table 1)
- v. It is the role of the Registrar's office to advise the Education Office of the students who are to invited to attend an attendance meeting.
- vi. It is the role of the Education Office in consultation with the Registrar's office to organise and schedule the attendance meetings.
- vii. It is the role of the Registrar's Office, after review by Course Leader, to invite students whose overall attendance is unsatisfactory in Semester 1 and/or Semester 2, by letter to an attendance meeting.
- viii. It is the role of the Education Office to advise tutors of their tutee's cumulative attendance record
- ix. It is the role of the Registrar's Office to act as secretary at attendance meetings and to inform the student and tutor and relevant departments of the outcomes of these meetings.
- x. It is the role of the Education Office to set up viva voces if necessary

12 Attendance at Exams

If a student is unavoidably absent from an exam, the student should inform their personal Tutor¹⁸ of the circumstances surrounding the absence at the earliest opportunity. The student should write to the Registrar's Office (registrars@mie.ie) explaining the absence and the tutor will typically be consulted in deciding the consequence of the absence. Typically, where the absence relates to an annual exam, a student will be permitted to do the exam in the autumn, either as a first or second attempt, depending on the reason for the absence. If the examination missed is a supplemental examination, the student will typically be given a fail grade which can be appealed to the Court of First Appeal where a student can request permission to be granted the opportunity to take a special examination in the module(s)

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¹⁸ See Tutor System Policy and Tutor System Procedure



missed. Where documentation is available (e.g. medical certificate), this should be uploaded to <u>MAESTRO</u> and submitted to the <u>Registrar's Office</u>.

13 Appeal Process

As stated above, a student who has

- Received a correspondence from the <u>Education Office</u> regarding unsatisfactory attendance; and
- ii. Met with the Registrar and Vice President of Academic Affairs or their nominee and the Head of the Department of Policy and Practice or their nominee and the relevant Placement Coordinator (where relevant) and provided documentation regarding mitigating circumstances; and
- iii. Subsequently is not permitted to take their pre-Easter school placement or end-of-semester examinations (in the case of the B.Ed. B.Oid and PME) or education placement (in the case of PDEFE) or not permitted to participate in placement, sit end-of-semester examinations or have end-of-semester assignments graded (in the case of B.Ed., B.Oid, PME, B.Sc., TIFP and PDEFE students) may appeal¹⁹ the decision if the student's case:
 - a. Is not adequately covered by the ordinary regulations of the Institute as outlined above,
 - b. Is based on the claim that the regulations above were not properly applied in the applicant's case, or
 - c. Represents an Ad Misericordiam Appeal

An appeal is made by the student, in writing, through their tutor/course leader²⁰. The appeal is considered by the Vice President for Education & Strategic Development or their nominee, a Dean/Head of Department and the leader of one of the institute courses. The outcomes of the appeal is binding and no further appeal is possible.

14 Related Documents

- 14.1 Academic Assessment and Academic Progression
- 14.2 School Placement Attendance Policy
- 14.3 Disciplinary Procedures in Respect of Students

¹⁹ See <u>Appeals Policy (Academic Progression)</u>, <u>Court of First Appeal Process</u>, <u>Court of Second Appeal Process</u>, <u>Postgraduate Appeals Process and Guidelines on Evidence in Support of an Ad Misericordiam Appeal</u>

²⁰ See Tutor System Policy and <u>Tutor System Procedure</u>



- 14.4 Safety Statement Policy
- 14.5 Appeals Policy (Academic Progression)
- 14.6 Court of First Appeal Process
- 14.7 Court of Second Appeal Process
- 14.8 Guidelines on Evidence in Support of an Ad Misericordiam Appeal
- 14.9 Postgraduate Appeals Process
- 14.10 Tutor System Policy
- 14.11 Tutor System Procedure
- 14.12 Illness Policy
- 14.13 Bereavement Support Procedure on the Death of a Student
- 14.14 Fire Evacuation Procedure