

# Attendance Policy



## 1.0 Introduction

In this policy the abbreviation of EDA will be used to cover all full-time courses, and anyone involved with them at Emil Dale Academy.

### 1.1 Purpose

Regular attendance at EDA is essential for all students as there is a direct link between the grades that our students achieve and their level of attendance. If students are not at EDA, then they cannot learn effectively. Additionally, one student's absence can disrupt teaching and learning routines, and therefore could have an impact on other students' learning. This policy has been developed as part of EDA'S commitment to support and encourage every student to reach their full potential in their studies.

We also know that regular attendance at EDA is also important for students' wellbeing and social and emotional development; providing routine, purpose and social contact. Additionally, attending EDA regularly safeguards our student's aged under-18 whilst they are not in the care of their parents or carers.

We expect that every student will attend school on time, every day. While we recognise that rare absence due to illness may be unavoidable, we expect all students to meet their responsibility of ensuring regular attendance.

This policy therefore sets out:

- a. EDA's expectations of attendance and punctuality for all full-time students;
- b. The responsibilities of parents, carers and staff in relation to attendance and punctuality;
- c. How EDA will make decisions about whether to authorise absence; and
- d. EDA's systems and support to monitor, manage and promote excellent attendance and punctuality.

### 1.2 Location of Policy

This policy is available to access on EDA's website.

### 1.3 To whom and where this policy applies

This policy applies to all students enrolled on an EDA full-time course.

## **2.0 Policy - Promoting excellent attendance**

Students must take responsibility for achieving their full potential throughout their courses at EDA. They are active participants in their own learning experiences.

Students will be registered at the start of the course and must be committed to undertaking the training and studies required to complete the course.

EDA is committed to monitoring attendance and punctuality as it is not only professional best practice and a key life skill, but it also allows EDA to measure and track a student's commitment to their training/studies and is an indicator of if a student is struggling and requires further support.

Regular attendance and achievement are closely linked - students who regularly attend classes are likely to accelerate their skills and develop their fundamental abilities more than a student who has poor attendance. This will also lead to a more rewarding experience for the students who are achieving and progressing.

In accordance with its commitment to helping students fulfil their individual potential, EDA expects all students to attend all scheduled learning sessions (all studio classes, lectures/seminars, workshops, rehearsals and performances).

Similarly, all students should be punctual to all classes. These expectations can be reviewed in EDA's Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures as well as the student handbook. The consequences of frequent absences and lateness are also explained in these documents.

The only exception to the above will be circumstances of ill health or other legitimate reasons that prevent students from attending or participating fully in classes. Students are responsible for informing the EDA team in these instances and, where possible, catching up with work missed. In the event of extended periods of absences, EDA will communicate regularly with the student and/or their nominated person. In some cases, continuation on the course may need to be reconsidered if the absence prevents completion of degree-specific or BTEC-specific units.

### **2.1 Attendance**

Student attendance to all scheduled classes is important because:

- a) It demonstrates their commitment to their training and studies.
- b) It is good industry etiquette and practice.
- c) Good attendance correlates to improvement and a successful student experience.
- d) Absences are disruptive to a student's learning, but also that of their peers and in some cases their teachers too.
- e) It shows respect for teaching freelancers and staff.

Please note, if a student is unable to attend classes for any reason, it is the student's responsibility to contact Emil Dale Academy and, where possible, catch up on any work missed. No student on any course should expect a member of staff to follow up with them if they have not communicated in the first instance.

### **2.2 Planned authorised absences**

Some absences are unavoidable due to illness or personal circumstances.

EDA requests that students email [absences@emildale.co.uk](mailto:absences@emildale.co.uk) as soon as they are aware of an absence requirement. This will be escalated to a senior member of staff who will authorise or reject the request.

Please note, if the request for an absence is received after 5pm and the absence is for the next day, this should immediately be assumed that it is not authorised. EDA must receive all requests in a timely manner for review and approval/ rejection.

Examples of what an authorised absence may be include:

Reason	Evidence/circumstance
Illness	Explained further in Section 2.3
Medical or dental appointment	Explained further in Section 2.4
Exceptional family/compassionate circumstance	Authorised in exceptional circumstances (e.g. bereavement, attendance at a funeral of close relative or close family friends, marriage of a parent).
Interview or audition for higher education	Authorised absences for higher education auditions/interviews will only be granted for 2 <sup>nd</sup> year Sixth Form students.
Religious observance	The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student belongs.  Absence requests for religious observances must be sent in two-weeks in advance of the absence.

EDA can and will, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence, and vice versa, if new information becomes available. For example, where EDA has been informed that a student is unwell, but on return to EDA there is evidence that they have been on holiday.

If the request is rejected, the student will be required to attend EDA on that day. If the student chooses to ignore the rejection of their request and does not attend EDA classes, their absence will be recorded as an Unauthorised Absence.

Please note\* EDA will not grant permission under any circumstances for students to miss college either for a full or partial day for reasons such as:

- a. Booked holidays
- b. Tickets to see a show
- c. Part-time jobs
- d. Shopping trips
- e. Driving lessons
- f. Attendance to a family/ friend event

These should all be arranged outside of timetabled lesson time.

EDA will grant permission for religious holidays in the event that they are requested in advance, and demonstration of commitment to the religion is proven.

## 2.3 Illness

If a student is ill and cannot attend EDA on any particular day, they must email [absences@emildale.co.uk](mailto:absences@emildale.co.uk) at least one-hour in advance of the time that they are due to attend college. If a student is unable to email, they must phone 01462 677808 and leave a voicemail message. You will not always receive a response to a voicemail.

Students who are on the Sixth Form course are also able to ask their parent/legal guardian/emergency contact to contact EDA on their behalf.

Failure to do so will be recorded as an Unauthorised Absence.

## 2.4 Appointments/ Required absence part-way through the day

Absences for appointments will only be granted if the following grounds are applicable:

- a. The student has endeavoured to make the appointment outside of EDA hours in the first instance;
- b. The student provides evidence of the appointment (e.g. a hospital letter, screenshot of appointment confirmation) prior to their absence;
- c. Time out of EDA is kept to a minimum

Students must email [absences@emildale.co.uk](mailto:absences@emildale.co.uk) as soon as they know they require an appointment or an absence part-way through their day. This may not always be granted.

If a student is taken ill or injured during the day, they should report to reception either in the main building or at Lime and explain what is wrong.

Under no circumstance can a student leave EDA without informing the office and signing out. Failure to do this will lead to invocation of Disciplinary Procedures.

## 2.5 Unauthorised absences

Students who fail to attend classes will be recorded as unauthorised absences.

These are tracked and can be referred to in references and future employment opportunities.

These also lead to potential disciplinary action.

Unauthorised absences will also impact student participation in performances, and may result in not being given, or having opportunities for principal roles, taken away from them.

Should a student contact an EDA social media platform or use a Teams post as a means to communicate an absence, this will go down as unauthorised and is an unacceptable way to communicate.

## 2.6 Red Weeks

Students must not ask for nor have any absences during "Red Weeks".

“Red Weeks” are weeks at the college where attendance is 100% mandatory, unless in the event of extreme mitigating circumstances. These are usually assessment weeks (where fundamental assessments in your training take place), technical weeks, show weeks or other such events.

There may also be other days where an absence request will be rejected if an assessment, fundamental class leading to an assessment, or important rehearsal is scheduled for that day which falls outside of an assessment week.

## 2.7 Lateness

Students must sign in by the required time (15 minutes before the start of their first scheduled session). Failure to sign in on time will also lead to potential disciplinary action.

It is an important discipline in the industry to be punctual and EDA wants to instil this sense of punctuality through training too.

In addition, full attendance and punctuality is an important life skill.

## 2.8 Attendance to assessments/ hand in of work

It is mandatory that students attend all assessments and hand in all of their assignments on time.

Degree students must hand in work on Breo that are specifically for university units. Failure to hand in on time cannot be rectified.

### 2.8.1 Mitigating Circumstances

If there is a reason that assessments cannot be attended, the student must apply for mitigating circumstances. For BTEC/Gap Year students or for non-Degree specific units, a request for mitigating circumstances must be sent in by email to the student’s Course Leader as soon as possible. This must detail the reason why the student is unable to attend the assessment/complete hand in. This request may be denied, in which case the student must attend/hand in the work. In the event it is granted, a timeline for completion will be given.

For Degree students, mitigating circumstances for degree-specific units must be applied to through the university procedures as set out here: <https://www.beds.ac.uk/student-support/cant-hand-in-a-piece-of-work-or-sit-an-exam/ug-and-pgt/>

**Mitigating circumstances can ONLY be applied for by the student themselves.**

***Ongoing lack of commitment or breaches of this policy will invoke the Disciplinary Procedures (to be read in-line with the Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy).***

Version Number	Date of Issue	Review Date	Author	Changes Made/ detail
01	8 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	June 2021	Sarah Moore	First issue
02	10 <sup>th</sup> August 2022	July 2023	Eden Tinsey	Annual policy review
03	24 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	July 2024	Eden Tinsey	Annual policy review and update