



POLICIES AT DORSET COLLEGE COVERING THE FOLLOWING AREAS

- 1. Punctuality and Attendance**
- 2. Absenteeism and Expulsion**
- 3. Sick Leave**
- 4. Holidays and Breaks**
- 5. End-of-Programme exam entry and recording of grades/scores received**
- 6. Complaints and Grievances**

Punctuality and Attendance / Absenteeism and Expulsion / Sick Leave / Holidays and Breaks

A. What is Attendance?

- Attendance in class is recorded if, and only if students:
 - Arrive on time for class
 - Stay for the full duration of the class
 - Actively participate in class

B. College Rules:

- You will be told the start and finish times of your classes. If there is any change you will be informed.
- The classes will not be changed to suit work schedules. Learners who miss class due to work will be marked absent.
- Students should attend all classes to get maximum benefit from their studies.
- Classes will begin at the listed starting time.
- Learners may be allowed to enter the classroom up to 15 minutes after the starting time with their teacher's approval. If you are often late your teacher can decide to let you join the class or ask you to wait until the break.
- If a teacher is late in arriving to class, the students must wait 30 minutes after the starting time. If the teacher has not arrived by that time, the students may leave unless asked to wait for the teacher.
- Students are responsible for all material covered in their absences, and they are responsible for the academic consequences of their absences. Your teacher does not have to save class material for you.
- Your teacher does not have to take homework/assignments from you after the date fixed in class, if you are absent.
- If you are sick call the school and inform your Programme Leader / Director of Studies.
- A student will be granted up to five days attendance if a doctor's certificate is submitted. If the illness is prolonged or further certificates are submitted attendance will not be granted. The student will be marked absent.
- If you will be absent because of a dentist or hospital appointment, please tell your teacher beforehand.
- Work missed may be made up if the reasons for absences are acceptable to the teacher and Programme Leader / Director of Studies.
- Students who are absent because of participation in approved academic activities will be permitted to make up the work missed during their absences.

C. Students Visa Holders:

- Students who have Student Visas are required by G.N.I.B. to attend a minimum of 80% of classes per academic year.



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- Any absences must be reported and explained to the teacher and Programme Leader, if possible beforehand.
- The GNIB will be told about any student who leaves before the end of their course.
- In accordance with GNIB rules from the 1st October 2015, Holiday periods must be agreed with the school in advance for the purposes of registering with GNIB.
- In accordance with GNIB rules from the 1st October 2015, if students wish to take a holiday they must have completed one third of the total weeks elapsed (front loading of holidays will not be permitted).
- In accordance with GNIB rules from the 1st October 2015, it is not possible for students to change class times from that originally presented to the GNIB at the point of registration.

Students Visa Holders on EFL Programmes:

- In accordance with GNIB rules from the 1st October 2015, a student must go to a minimum of 85% of classes per academic year, this is a GNIB requirement. Attendance will be taken by the teacher. Students are given attendance for the class time before the break and after the break. For example if a learner leaves the class at morning break only 50% attendance is granted for that class. If a learner arrives 15 minutes late or leaves 15 minutes early they will not be given attendance for that part of the class. Any absences must be reported and explained to the teacher and Director of Studies, if possible beforehand.
- Students with less than 85% attendance run the risk of not getting a second visa.
- To get a certificate from the school at the end of the course 65% minimum attendance is required.
- Students must complete the full 25-week course. If they leave early attendance will be only for the time at school. This can be a problem for renewal of student visa or return to Ireland at a later date.
- Any student who misses more than 50% of classes over a two-week period will get a warning from the College.
- If they continue to be absent they will get an official warning after two more weeks.
- If there is no improvement after another two weeks the student will be expelled from the college and the GNIB will be informed.
- In exceptional cases, students on full time English Language programmes may:
 - Apply to take up to three weeks holiday at no extra chargeThese holidays must be agreed in advance with the Director of Studies. Learners who do not return at the agreed time will be marked absent.
This does not apply to students who are scholarship recipients who must have permission from their consulate to take any unscheduled breaks in their course.
In the event of a serious illness or an urgent family matter longer breaks may be arranged. This will be decided on a case by case basis and a student will be asked to present documentation to support their request.



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End-of-Programme exam entry and recording of grades/scores received

The end of course exam is paid for in advance by the student at registration. Students are registered with the exam provider before the end of the course. All external examinations offered are externally validated which is in line with proper QA good practice in relation to assessing students. The exam is an important aspect of the learners development and confirmation of your progression as a learner. It also acts as a subjective assessment of the level achieved. Visa students are required to take the end of course examination to meet their visa requirements.

The person responsible for registering students for EFL examinations is the Director of Studies or the Assistant Director of Studies. As part of the application process a signed application form is taken as proof of acceptance of this important part of your studies. It will also be itemised in your invoice.

The records of your examination results in accordance with your signed application are open to be accessed by third parties in relation to your visa.



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COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES

Purpose

To provide a mechanism for resolving problems when a learner considers that a decision by the College, or one of its staff, or a situation experienced by the learner is not in accordance with the expectations set down in the Learner Charter or the College's rules and policies.

Where a learner has a complaint concerning a decision or a situation, the learner has the right to raise the complaint and to have it considered with courtesy, in a timely fashion, and without fear of prejudicial treatment. In general the learner should attempt to resolve the problem by discussion and/or correspondence with the staff directly involved in, or close to, the situation that is the source of the complaint, as this is likely to lead to a resolution in the most straightforward way. Where consideration at a local level does not lead to a resolution, the learner may proceed to a second stage that constitutes a formal appeal or formal complaint.

Scope

These procedures cover all Learners attending courses within the College.

Complaints Concerning Academic Decisions

Learners registered on accredited courses offered by Dorset College where the College has responsibility for curriculum development and the assessment of learners should familiarise themselves with the Appeals Procedure outlined in their Learner Handbook.

1. Grounds for Lodging a Complaint
2. In general, complaints may be made where the learner or applicant is dissatisfied with one of the following areas:
3. admission procedures;
4. academic matters such as content or delivery of course, teaching quality, supervision, conduct of staff member;
5. administrative decision, service or advice; conduct of general staff member;
6. Unlawful harassment, discrimination or bullying;

Procedures for Dealing with Formal Complaints

With regard to dealing with formal complaints as set out above the following procedures apply:

1. The learner sets out in writing, including information about the attempts to resolve the matter, and attaches copies of relevant documentation.
2. The completed complaint should be emailed/submitted to the Course Co-ordinator / Director of Studies.
3. If you can't or don't want to raise the matter with the Course Co-ordinator Director of Studies, you should refer it to the Director of Studies.
4. The person dealing with the complaint will, within 1 week, contact the complainant and indicate what action they plan to take, and the date by which they expect any investigation to be complete. If a meeting with the complainant is set up, the complainant may be accompanied. If the investigation cannot be completed by the expected date, the person dealing with the complaint will advise the complainant of the delay.
5. The person dealing with the complaint will respond to the complainant when any investigation is complete, with details of the findings, and if the complaint is upheld, will indicate what the outcome will be.
6. The response to the complaint will be filed in the Director of Studies Office where a central record of learner complaints is maintained.



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Review Procedure

The formal procedure outlined above should ensure that a complaint is investigated thoroughly. However, occasionally a learner may not be satisfied and in that case, he or she can request a formal review by the Director of Studies.

The procedure is:

1. The learner should write to the Director of Studies to request a review, setting out clearly the basis of dissatisfaction with the findings of the formal investigation. The request for review must be submitted within two weeks of the response to the formal complaint.
2. The Director of Studies will acknowledge the request within five working days of receipt and will refer the case to the College Directors.
3. If the Directors consider that the case for review is not well founded then they will dismiss the case and will inform the learner accordingly, normally within two weeks.
4. If the Directors consider that the case for review is well founded then they will initiate an appropriate investigation and will let the learner know, normally within one week, when he or she can expect a response. If a meeting with the complainant is set up, the complainant may be accompanied.
5. The Directors will respond to the learner with details of the findings indicating, if the complaint is upheld, what the outcome will be.
6. The response to the complaint will be filed in the Registrars Office where a central record of learner complaints is maintained.