

Student Attendance and Absence Guidance

Session 2016/2017

Student Attendance & Absence Guidance 2016-2017

The College sets out the following procedure and guidance below to inform all further education students of the requirement to receive any student funding payment they are entitled to.

ATTENDANCE

For payment of student funds you must achieve the attendance level set out in the Guide to Student Funding 2016-17 document to be paid from Student Funds.

ABSENCES

Please see below the most common reasons for absences and the relevant instructions to cover those absences.

Self Certificates

Each student is issued with a set number of self-certificates to use in block one and block two, once these are used no other self-certificates will be granted. The number of self-certificates is set out in the Student Funding Procedure. You will receive training on how to self-certificate an absence as part of your Induction and Enrolment Process.

All self-certificates must be recorded on-line **within** seven days of your absence as the College systems will not allow late submission. Failure to submit self-certificates on time **may** result in non-payment of your funding. You can submit a self-certificate via your myinfo page and this can be done from any device with internet access either **at college or at home**.

If you have a problem self-certificating please contact Teaching Department (LDW if you have one) in the first instance to try and establish why you are unable to self-certificate within the seven day period of your absence. If you are unable to resolve the issue please email funding@forthvalley.ac.uk with the problem and we can point you in the right direction of which department you need to report this to.

If you require any further information on how to submit a self-certificate please refer to the 'Self-Certificate Guidance' which can be accessed either via Moodle or your myinfo.

If your absence is under seven calendar days absence

If your absence is one hour or more per day you must complete the College's on-line self-certification process if you wish to cover the absence. All self-certificates must be recorded on-line within seven days of your absence as the College systems will not allow late submission. Failure to submit self-certificates on time may result in non-payment of your funding. You can submit a self-certificate via your myinfo page and this can be done from any device with internet access either at college or at home.

Please Note: We will not log any medical certificates or doctor's letters that cover a period of less than seven days, these should be self-certificated.

If your absence is greater than seven calendar days

If you are absent due to ill health, you are required to comply with the following regulations, to receive a medically covered absence by Student Funding.

- If you are absent for more than seven consecutive calendar days, you may be given a medical certificate from your doctor if you have consulted him/her during your absence. You must meet any costs associated with getting a private medical certificate and this can only be given at your doctor's discretion.
- Doctor's medical certificates must be submitted to reception at any campus or by post if necessary to Student Funding at the Falkirk campus as soon as the doctor has issued this to you. During holiday periods the College is normally open and certificates can be handed into your nearest campus, or posted to us.
- Please note that doctors are not required to issue medical certificates for periods of less than seven days and you should not ask your doctor to provide this.
- If you have been absent on extended medical leave for a continuous period, you should contact the College to discuss when you will be returning to College and to determine whether you will be able to continue with your course/programme of study. You will only receive a maximum of one student support payment during periods of extended medical absence and your payments will be suspended if you have not returned to full attendance before the next installment is due.

If your absence is due to taking a holiday during College term time

If you have a holiday booked during term-time, you must notify Student Funding prior to going on holiday. We require you to submit documentary evidence such as a travel or accommodation booking to confirm the dates of your holiday, along with a request that we log this for you. **Please Note: A holiday will only be logged** providing you submit documentation **prior to your absence**. You can submit this to us via the college reception desk or via email. Due to Scottish Funding Council Guidance, Student Funding cannot make payments to students for holidays, so will withhold payment for any week which contains a holiday absence.

Authorised Absence Requests - MAXIMUM OF 7 DAYS PER BLOCK

Student Funding **may** authorise the following types of absences as shown below.

Absence	Notification	Supporting documentation
Funeral of close relative or friend	If possible in advance of your absence or within two College days of your return.	In writing by letter or email
Bereavement	At the time of the absence - If you are absent due to bereavement please contact the Student Funding Team and we will advise you what we will be able to authorise.	In writing by letter or email
*Court appearance	In advance of your absence.	Court citation, letter from solicitor/ lawyer or court official
*Jury duty Initial day	In advance of your absence.	Court citation
*Subsequent days	During your absence or within two College days of your return	Court documentation confirming the dates that you will be required
Religious holidays	In advance.	Letter
Illness of child - General illness	Authorised absence given when there is no one else available to care for them.	Please provide, where possible, a letter from the child's school, childcare provider or GP stating that the child was ill.
Appointment regarding child - Non Medical related (e.g. meeting at child's school, social work meeting)	In advance of your absence.	Documentation from establishment to confirm appointment (i.e. Headed letter)
University or college interview	In advance of your absence	Interview letter or email
Job Interview	In advance	Interview letter or email
*Paternity Leave	Once document has been received	Child's Birth Certificate - we will authorise up to two weeks absence from the child's date of birth

**These types of absences will not be included in your maximum 7 day allowance.*

Medical Absence - MAXIMUM OF 14 DAYS PER BLOCK

Student Funding **may** log the following types of medical absences as shown below

Absence	Notification	Supporting documentation
Hospital appointments/clinics/ Orthodontist Appointments	In advance	Hospital letter or appointment card
Emergency dental or doctor appointments	Within two College days of your return.	Please provide confirmation that this was an emergency - appointment card confirming emergency appointment.
Medical Illness (more than 7 days)	Immediately once received	Medical Certificate/Doctor's Letter
Illness of children - Serious Illness/Injury	Immediately once received	Please provide, where possible, a letter from the child's GP/Hospital that the child was ill/ injured.
Hospital Appointment	In advance	Hospital letter or appointment card
Bereavement - If longer than 7 days	Immediately once received	Medical Certificate/Doctor's Letter
**Maternity Leave	Once document has been received	Child's Birth Certificate - we will authorise two weeks from the child's date of birth. If you require further time off we will require medical evidence to be submitted. Please note a maximum of 4 weeks funding will be payable for this time.

*** The first two weeks of Maternity Leave will not be included in your maximum 14 day allowance, however any further absence will be.*

All documentation and notification should be sent to Student Funding.

If you are absent for any reason not shown above please contact Student Funding by letter or email or speak to a Learner Advisor at your campus. We can then advise you how to cover your absence.

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Please Note:

The deadline for submitting absence documentation to ensure payment of funding instalments can be found on the 'Further Education Bursary and Travel Payments 2016/17' document which is available to view on your moodle page.

Failure to submit documentation by the deadline date may result in non-payment of your funding. There is no guarantee that any late documentation which is submitted will be logged and any non-payment may remain as a non-payment.

On-going Medical Condition

If you have an on-going medical condition you must notify Student Funding of this at the start of your course or when you have been diagnosed of the condition. Additional day's authorised absence may be granted dependent of the condition.

If you have an on-going medical condition you should obtain a letter from your doctor to outline your condition and suggest how this may affect your studies. You should then make an appointment to discuss this with a Learning Development Facilitator (LDF) which can be arranged via telephone or via your campus reception desk. If they feel you may have short periods of absence which is due to your condition they may give you additional day's authorised absence which will be agreed with your department. Your LDF will notify us with a copy of your doctor's letter and advise on how many additional days absence you have been granted. We will then contact you to advise how you use these.

Please note these additional days would be for short absences only, if you attend any appointments we would still require appointment letters and if you were absent for a period of a week or longer we would still require a medical certificate or doctor's letter to update your absence.

Unauthorised Absences

The following absences will not be covered by authorised absence, but can be covered by a self-certificate

- Community Service
- Weddings, Christenings, etc.
- Dental and Doctor appointments (non-emergency)
- Illness that is less than 7 days using a medical certificate
- Theory and Driving Tests (unless it can be shown that you could only get this date)
- Work-related activities

CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENT FUNDING

For authorised absences, and holiday notification, you can contact Student Funding by either emailing us at funding@forthvalley.ac.uk or by writing to:

Student Funding
Forth Valley College
Grangemouth Road
FALKIRK
FK2 9AD

Letters or documentary evidence can be handed into any of the campus receptions, but the following information should be included in all correspondence so that we can identify and assist you:

- Your full name
- Your ID number
- Date(s) of absence

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Do not wait until your student funding payment has been held to inform us of a problem to self-certificate or require an authorised absence, as this will be too late and your payment may not be released.

The payment dates are available on Moodle and will provide you with the following information: the period of attendance for each payment and final submission dates to hand in any evidence to cover absences.

If you are not paid due to poor attendance, you can appeal this decision. Please complete an appeal form which can be found in the Student Funding section on your moodle page and submit this with any supporting evidence. This can be submitted via email or via your college campus reception. Your appeal will then be reviewed by a member of the Student Funding Team.

If you find you are unable to continue with your course for any reason, you should notify Student Funding immediately. You may have to repay allowances already received as some payments are made in advance. Failure to notify us may mean that any overpayment may be higher.