

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

revised 2015

The purpose of this template is to guide policy makers in equality considerations whilst developing new or revising existing policies, practices or procedures. It should be used in conjunction with the Guidance Notes

Name of Policy:	Attendance Policy
Assessed by:	Louise Burnet
Date of Assessment:	31st May 2016

Step 1: Identify aims of the policy

<p>What is the purpose of the policy? How do these relate to equality?</p> <p>The purpose of the policy is to inform all further education students of the requirement to receive any student funding payment they are entitled to.</p> <p>The policy has to fit within SFC Guidance on attendance, for example SFC have said attendance should be 100% therefore our policy has to include that</p> <p>As a result of 100% attendance we have to have clear guidelines on what types of absence we will authorise and the policy looks to put a limit to the number of authorised requests a student can have in a teaching block to ensure students are attending and achieving. The policy will limit the number of authorised absences to 7 days per teaching block and these include: Funerals and Bereavement, Court Appearances, Jury Duty, Religious Holidays, Appointments in regard to a child and general illness of child, Job, College & University interviews. Medical Absences are being limited to 14 and these include Hospital, Orthodontist and Emergency Appointments, Medical Illness lasting more than 7 days, Bereavement and Serious illness of a child.</p> <p>This could impact on Students with disabilities, however there is a policy in place where these students can meet with the Learning Support Team, who along with Curriculum Manager can award additional days absence coverage to support the student's individual needs.</p> <p>There is also work done with the Learner Advisory team to ensure vulnerable students, for example Care Leavers, Carers, Students with no family support or Students moving from Benefits to College. The Learner Advisory team receive a copy of the attendance for these students to be able to review before a payment is sent and can recommend Absence coverage.</p> <p>The policy also introduces guidance on Maternity and Paternity leave. To ensure there is no discrimination between the Woman carrying the child and the partner, all Maternity related appointments will be authorised and not included in our maximum</p>
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number of days requested. Subsequently both Mother and Partner will receive 2 weeks leave on the production of the child's birth certificate and the Mother a further 2 weeks on the production of a medical certificate, again not counted in against any other authorised absence.

Step 2: Consider the evidence

What data or evidence do you intend to use for the purposes of the assessment? Are there any gaps in evidence? How will these be filled?

In 2015-2016 there were 1,497 Students awarded EMA and FE Bursary.

Of that 63% were female and 37% were male.

In age terms 23% were 16-18, 33% were 19-21, 13% were 22-25, 12% were 26-30 and 19% were aged 31+

Step 3: Assess likely impact

3.1 What does the information you have tell you about how this policy might eliminate discrimination

By changing FE Bursary to 100% attendance the same as the EMA – this eliminates any difference between attending as 16 year old to attending as an 18 year old.

The policy has built in reasonable adjustments to students with disabilities and vulnerable students and also for Students who are pregnant or have a partner expecting.

To support students with the change to 100% attendance payments will switch to fortnightly, this should help students who struggle to manage money or students in low income families.

The policy could have a negative impact that if Students use all their self certificates, authorised absences and medical absences they may not be paid and this may have an impact on retention. However there are reasonable adjustments in place for students with disabilities/long term medical conditions and vulnerable students. Also as attendance will be reviewed weekly if a student has a low attendance one week as long as they have 100% in the other week, they will receive half their payment rather than nothing under the current policy.

3.2 How does the policy contribute to advancing equality of opportunity?

The policy has reasonable adjustments built into to meet the needs of different groups.

3.3 How does the policy affect good relations?

This policy is designed to help students to understand that their Bursary is awarded on the condition of attendance and satisfactory progression, students who continually cover absences are not likely to progress and could have future funding at risk if they repeat courses.

Step 4: Decision Making

Use the options below to summarise how your assessment has informed your decisions

4.1 No major change (policy is robust)

4.2 Adjust the policy (take steps to meet the general duty)

4.3 Continue the policy (continue despite the potential for adverse impact)

4.4 Stop and remove the policy (where adverse effects are not justified and cannot be mitigated or where the policy leads to unlawful discrimination)

4.1 No Major change – Policy is robust

The policy fits SFC guidelines and has reasonable adjustments so there is no adverse impact on protected groups.

Step 5: Publication

Describe the arrangements for the publication of the results of assessment

This EQIA will be submitted to SMT for review as part of the approval for changes to the policy

Step 6: Monitoring and Review

Describe how the policy will be monitored and reviewed

Funding will monitor how quickly students use these absences up, this will also help identify trends with students and feed into the current review of attendance monitoring that is being lead by the LDW service.

Please return completed impact assessment to equality@forthvalley.ac.uk

If you require any assistance in completing the form contact equality@forthvalley.ac.uk