POLICY & PROCEDURES

for

Student Attendance

2021

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Attendance Policy

1. Policy Statement

The objective of the attendance policy is to encourage and support students to attend and to ensure that student attendance is monitored.

Cavan Institute is committed to:

- having open and transparent procedures to monitor attendance
- providing support and assistance to students who have problems which affect their attendance
- complying with the Department of Education's and SOLAS' requirements in relation to monitoring, recording and reporting student attendance
- reviewing the attendance procedures regularly

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all students registered to study on full-time PLC Programmes at the Institute. The procedures to monitor and track attendance of full-time students are different from those that apply to students registered on part-time courses or on traineeship or apprenticeship programmes. Students on such programmes should consult their programme manager for policy and procedures applicable to them.

3. Aim of Policy

- All staff must ensure the effective and efficient implementation of the Institute's policy on attendance.

- The approach to attendance should be consistent across the Institute.

- All staff should positively reinforce good attendance.

Please note that attendance refers to classes delivered both on campus and online.

4. Procedures for Full-Time Students

All teachers should remind students of their obligations regarding attendance detailed in the student handbook and of the implications of poor attendance.

- negative impact on overall result may hinder progression
- possible impact on work experience
- impact on references from college
- possible sanctions on grant
- meetings with Student Support School Head
- possible withdrawal from course

5. Student Responsibilities

5.1 Student attendance is expected and required for all classes – student obligations regarding attendance constitute part of the student code of conduct and are detailed in the student handbook.

5.2 Students who know in advance that they cannot attend a class should contact their Class Tutor stating the expected duration of their absence.

5.3 It is the responsibility of all students to inform their Class Tutor of any absences.

5.4 Even if the absence is a medically certified absence, the student is deemed to be absent from the course for the duration of the certificate and this will be reflected in the attendance report produced for grant purposes

6. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

6.1   Subject Tutor

6.1.1   The legally binding source of attendance data is our electronic record from ePortal. All teachers are duty-bound to update ePortal records during class time, and where this is not possible, then attendance must be retrospectively recorded by the end of that teaching day. Any teacher unable to record ePortal attendance on a particular teaching day must notify their student support school head by email that day.

6.1.2   Report to class tutor any students who have missed four consecutive classes

6.1.3 Explain potential consequences to students who wish to apply for an exemption from their subject on the basis of previous award

6.1.4 Process Subject Exemption Forms (see appendix 11.1) as appropriate (providing copies to relevant individuals) and notify class tutor of request for exemption so that this can be communicated to eportal@cavaninstitute.ie

6.1.5 Report to eportal@cavaninstitute.ie any student whose name does not appear on the register, ensuring that class tutor is copied on the email

6.1.6 Report to class tutors any anomalies with the register of students (any students known to have withdrawn from a subject or changed class group, or students who are exempt from the subject)

6.1.7 Notify class tutor and student support school head of any student having previously withdrawn who then reappears in class so that a meeting with student support school head can be arranged with said student.

6.1.8 Complete attendance records for all non-contact days during the academic year.

6.1.9 Should the subject/class tutor witness in their class or the college environment an individual whom they know to have withdrawn from the course, then subject/class tutor should immediately inform a student support school head.

6.2 Class Tutor

6.2.1 Follow up with any students who have been reported as having missed four consecutive classes in a particular subject

6.2.2 Report to eportal@cavaninstitute.ie any anomalies with the class register reported by subject tutors (any students known to have withdrawn from a subject or changed class group, or students who are exempt from a subject)

6.2.3 Conduct student census at required junctures throughout the year

6.2.4 Review monthly attendance on ePortal detailing attendance records for their Tutor group for the previous month.

6.2.5 Following contact from subject tutor **and** in consultation with the learning support team (where relevant) and the student support school head and the student, complete a **Module** Withdrawal Form (see appendix 11.2) with any student who requests to drop a subject and whose circumstances are deemed by the student support school head to warrant withdrawal.

6.2.6 Submit scanned, signed Module Withdrawal Form to eportal@cavaninstitute.ie, retaining a copy for own records

6.2.7 Make contact with any student whose attendance falls below 60% in one calendar month

6.2.8   Seek out the student to discuss his/her attendance pattern

6.2.9   Log outcome of the communication with that student on ePortal in an "attendance report". For persistent absences, follow procedures outlined in sections 7.3.3 – 7.3.5 below.

6.2.10 Identify any supports that could be put in place for student to improve attendance

6.2.11 Inform student support school head by email upon learning of a student having withdrawn entirely from the course, so that the *Student Support School Head* can request that a **Student** Withdrawal Form (appendix 11.3) be sent to the student by admin@cavaninstitute.ie. *[Weekly list drawn up and sent to Deputy Director for approval].* Do this only in the case where the student has explicitly informed class tutor of his/her intention to withdraw.

6.2.12 PLEASE NOTE that only a student support school head can request @admin to issue the Student Withdrawal Form, subject to approval from the deputy director with responsibility for attendance.

6.2.13 The class tutor should be copied in by @admin on email sent to the student with the Student Withdrawal Form. The career guidance team gets involved at this stage.

6.2.14 Once the student is withdrawn from Facility by admin, an email will be sent to class tutor by admin. Class tutor to inform all subject tutors that said students has now withdrawn and been removed from class groups.

6.3 Student Support School Head

6.3.1   Act as point of contact for tutors unable to record attendance on ePortal by the end of the teaching day. Keep a record of same.

6.3.2   Identify at-risk students (those who have fallen below 60% attendance in the previous month). This information can be extracted from monthly attendance records uploaded to SharePoint on the first working day of each month (showing student attendance during the preceding month). Contact the relevant class tutor to ascertain if there are particular reasons why said students have not been attending college regularly during the previous month.

6.3.3   Request class tutor to contact any student on that list (with attendance below 60%) who has not given the class tutor a valid reason for their absence or who has not made any contact with class tutor during the previous month.

6.3.4   Monitor ePortal to ensure that the appropriate number of attendance reports have been created by the class tutor for any student identified as having fallen below 60% attendance. Where attendance reports are missing, contact relevant class tutor to request that they create reports.

6.3.5 If a student has been referred to student support school head already by class tutors following 15 days' absence (or more) or 3 attendance reports, email the student to request a meeting.

6.3.6 Meet with such students and record the outcome of the meeting on ePortal.

6.3.7 Update class tutor by email of the outcome of the meeting.

6.3.8 If student fails to attend the scheduled meeting, the student support school head adds that student to the weekly list of "withdrawals" to be sent to deputy director for review and approval.

6.3.9 Following approval from deputy director, request admin@cavaninstitute.ie to issue the student with a link to the online withdrawal form. Student support school head informs class tutor by email of the failure by student to attend meeting and subsequent steps taken.

6.3.10 Meet with students who, having been absent for an extended period, reappear in class. Notify all relevant parties of the reinstatement of the student (see section 9.3.3).

6.3.11 Provide detailed, structured information on a monthly basis on attendance records and patterns in respective schools at school head meetings.

6.3.12 Student withdrawal list to be drawn up weekly and forwarded to the deputy director for approval (or otherwise). Forward list to @admin following approval, so that admin can email online form to students.

6.4 eportal@cavaninstitute.ie

6.4.1 Amend class register for students who have changed courses. Administration to communicate this information to @eportal

6.4.2 Adjust anomalies with teaching groups reported by class tutor

6.4.3 Remove students from the relevant teaching group following instruction from **subject** tutor when the subject exemption process is complete

6.4.4 Remove students from the relevant teaching group following receipt of a Module Withdrawal Form from **class** tutor.

6.5 admin@cavaninstitute.ie

6.5.1 A weekly list of students to be emailed an online withdrawal form is drawn up and issued by the student support school head to the deputy director for approval. Once the deputy director approves the issuing of that form, email link to online withdrawal form.

6.5.2 In the case of direct contact from student, notify student support school head of student's request to withdraw so that follow-up with student can be initiated.

6.5.3 Record in Facility the date on which email was sent, allowing the student to act within 10 days. After 10 days, the student should be marked as left.

6.5.4 Enter reminder in MS Outlook Calendar, 10 days hence, to action the withdrawal on Facility and PLSS should no response have been received from student or should the form come back completed indicating the student's intention to withdraw.

6.5.5 As soon as the completed withdrawal form has been received by admin or after 10 days have elapsed since it was issued, mark student as having left, including date and reason, on Facility and PLSS. The student will automatically disappear from teaching groups.

6.6 Career Guidance

6.6.1 Follow up with a student who either wishes to withdraw or has been identified by the class tutor as suspected of having dropped out.

6.6.2 Communicate the outcome of engagement (or unsuccessful attempts at engagement) with student to the class tutor and student support school head.

6.6.3 Add a factual record of the meeting/engagement on ePortal.

6.7 Deputy Director

6.7.1 Take overall responsibility for student attendance and support all staff in maintaining accurate attendance records.

6.7.2 Where required, support the student support school head with the reintegration of students who have been absent for an extended period of time.

6.7.3 Review and approve (or otherwise) the list of students to be sent an online withdrawal form (by admin), which is drawn up and emailed by the student support school head to the deputy director for approval on a weekly basis.

7. Recording & Monitoring Procedures

7.1 Recording Attendance

Successful implementation of the attendance policy begins with each **subject tutor**. Tutors maintain attendance records for all students electronically – using ePortal. In situations where attendance cannot be recorded on ePortal during class time, records must be updated no later than the end of the teaching day.

Guidelines relating to all aspects of entering attendance (including codes to use) and entering attendance reports are available on the Staff Hub > Internal Communications > Attendance.

Class tutors must inform subject tutors by e-mail of known explained absences by students in their class group.

7.2 Attendance Reports

Class Tutors (and student support school heads) will be able to view monthly attendance on ePortal detailing attendance records for their Tutor group for the previous month. **The accuracy of this report relies totally on an Institute-wide approach to 7.1 above.**

7.3 Monitoring Attendance

7.3.1   Attendance records for all students in a subject group are to be monitored frequently and regularly by that group's subject tutor. When a student has four unaccounted for absences in any one subject, the subject tutor must report this to the class tutor by e-mail (if there has not already been a reason provided by class tutor for such absence).

After this has been reported to the class tutor, the subject tutor will continue to monitor the student's attendance. It is the class tutor's role to monitor that student's overall attendance across all subjects and contact the student re: their overall attendance.

7.3.2   If a student falls below 60% attendance in any one calendar month (informed by the monthly attendance report on SharePoint), the class tutor must make contact with the student either verbally or in writing (e-mail) and make an appointment to meet with him/her in order to discuss his/her attendance pattern. Contact with the student must be made no later than one week after monthly attendance reports have been issued. The outcome of this meeting must be logged on ePortal using the *Class Tutor Attendance Report No 1*.

7.3.3   If a student falls below 60% attendance in any subsequent month, the class tutor must again make contact by email with the student and make an appointment to meet with him/her in order to discuss his/her attendance pattern. The outcome of this meeting must be logged on ePortal using the *Class Tutor Attendance Report No 2*.

7.3.4   In the event that a third meeting is required, following attendance below 60% in a third calendar month, the student is referred to the student support school head by the class tutor after this meeting. The outcome of this meeting must be logged on ePortal using the *Class Tutor Attendance Report No 3*.

7.3.5   The student support school head will request by email that the student meets with them regarding their attendance. The student's parent or guardian is copied on the communication and invited to the meeting in the case of student aged under 18. The outcome of this meeting is logged on ePortal by the student support school head (*School Head Report).* The student support school head will inform the class tutor of the outcome of this meeting by email.

7.3.6   If a student is missing for **15 consecutive days**, he/she is referred directly to the student support school head by the class tutor. The student support school head will request by email that the student meets with them regarding their attendance (together with a parent or guardian in the case of a minor). The outcome of this consultation is logged on ePortal by the student support school head (*School Head Report*).

7.3.7   Should the student fail to attend the meeting, the student support school head will log that student's name on the weekly withdrawal list to be sent to deputy director for review and approval. Once approved by the deputy, the student support requests admin to issue a digital withdrawal form. Subsequent failure on the part of the student to complete the withdrawal form will result in the student being marked as left from the register with immediate effect.

9. Student Withdrawals

If a subject tutor becomes aware of a student withdrawing from the course, they must immediately inform the class tutor.

If a class tutor becomes aware of a student withdrawing from the course, they should immediately complete the steps below in the following order based on the appropriate category:

9.1 <u>Student who is engaging with the class tutor around their withdrawal</u>

9.1.1 Class tutor should talk with the student about their reasons for withdrawal and identify if any additional supports can be put in place for the student. Complete any follow up actions required as a result of this conversation which might result in retention of the student on the course.

[In the case of the student withdrawing from the course as a result of having secured employment, the class tutor should skip steps 2 and 3 below and immediately inform the student support school head and the admissions office by e-mail (admin@cavaninstitute.ie) of the student's decision to withdraw from the course. Step 4 is the next step to be followed in this instance.]

9.1.2 Class tutor to refer the student by email to the relevant career guidance tutor.

9.1.3 If the student fails to attend the meeting with career guidance or if, following the meeting, they remain convinced that withdrawal from the course is the right course of action, career guidance should inform the class tutor, the student support school head and the admissions office by e-mail (admin@cavaninstitute.ie) of the student's decision to withdraw from the course. The admissions office will email a link to the online withdrawal form to the student and will also copy the class tutor on this email. The email to the student will indicate that she/he has 10 days to complete and return the form and that if the form is not returned within the 10-day period the student will be automatically marked as having withdrawn from the course.

9.1.4 Administration to record in Facility the date on which email was sent, allowing the student to act within 10 days. Administration to create an entry in MS Outlook Calendar, 10 days hence, to action the withdrawal on Facility and PLSS should no response have been received from student or should the form come back completed.

9.1.5 As soon as the completed withdrawal form has been received by admin or after 10 days have elapsed since it was issued, the student should be marked as left on Facility and PLSS, including date and reason, if available. Students will automatically disappear from teaching groups.

9.1.6 Once the above has been completed by administration, an email should be issued from administration to the class tutor and student support school head informing them of the student's withdrawal from the course.

9.1.7 A request by a withdrawn student for a letter confirming that they are no longer on the course will be issued only after the student withdrawal form has been received by the admissions office, and upon return of the CI student card.

9.2 Student who is **NOT** engaging with the class tutor around their withdrawal

9.2.1 Class tutor should make efforts to contact the student to have a conversation about their reasons for withdrawal.

9.2.2 If the student fails to engage in this conversation, the class tutor should contact the student via email suggesting that the student meet a member of the career guidance team for support (cc'ing the relevant career guidance member of staff). If the student confirms that they wish to meet career guidance, the class tutor should refer the student by email to the relevant career guidance tutor linked to the School. If the student fails to respond, fails to attend the meeting with career guidance or if, following the meeting, they remain convinced that withdrawal from the course is the right course of action, career guidance should communicate this to the class tutor, the student support school head and the admissions office by e-mail. A withdrawal form will then be emailed by admin to the student.

9.2.3 Administration to record in Facility the date on which email was sent, allowing the student to act within 10 days. Administration to create an entry in MS Outlook Calendar, 10 days hence, to action the withdrawal on facility and PLSS should no response have been received from student or should the form come back completed.

9.2.4 As soon as the completed withdrawal form has been received by admin or after 10 days have elapsed since it was issued, the student should be marked as left on Facility and PLSS, including date and reason, if available. Students will automatically disappear from teaching groups.

9.2.5 Once the above has been completed by administration, an email should be issued from administration to the class tutor informing them of the student's withdrawal from the course.

9.2.6 A request by a withdrawn student for a letter confirming that they are no longer on the course will be issued only after the student withdrawal form has been received by the admissions office, and upon return on the CI student card.

9.3 In the case where a student has been issued with the withdrawal form, been removed from register and he/she she then re-appears in class, then following steps should be followed:

9.3.1 The subject tutor should notify the class tutor.

9.3.2 The class tutor should arrange for the student to meet with the student support school head and the relevant member of the guidance team.

9.3.3 Following the meeting with the student, the student support school head notifies the class tutor that the student has been readmitted, cc'ing the ePortal technician and administration on that email. They should also make contact, via email, with all subject tutors to inform them that the student has returned to the course.

9.3.4 Administration changes the student's status in Facility and PLSS, thereby restoring all of their records.

10. PLC Grants

Payment of the PLC grant is made through Cavan and Monaghan ETB and records are processed centrally by Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB (under the entity called SUSI, Student Universal Support Ireland). Payment is made subject to a declaration by the authorities of Cavan Institute that a student has satisfactory attendance for that particular grant period.

Satisfactory attendance for the purposes of payment of grants is defined as attendance at over 75% of lessons for that grant period.

Cavan Institute will use the ePortal electronic records recorded by subject tutors as the means of determining a student's attendance.

It is important to emphasise that payment of the PLC grant is for expenses incurred while attending college and therefore unsatisfactory attendance, for whatever reason, may result in the non-payment of the grant.

While it is accepted that students may be absent due to medical or other reasons, it is not possible to take medical or any other certificates into consideration when determining if a student has satisfactory attendance.

Please note that a declaration of satisfactory attendance by Cavan Institute will be made once per month for the previous calendar month and cannot be made retrospectively after grants have been paid for that month.

Students on long-term illness should contact their local social welfare office for information on any other benefits to which they may be entitled while absent from College.

Students have the right to appeal any decision on a declaration of attendance for grant purposes. Appeals must be forwarded in writing to admin@cavaninstitute.ie no later than two weeks from the date that the grant was due to be received.

11. Appendices

11.1 Subject Exemption Form

Subject Exemption Claim Form

This form must be completed if a student wishes to claim an exemption for an existing component towards a new common major or special purpose award.

Centre Code and Name:	Cavan Institute 76087R
Learner Name and PPS:	
Major or Special Purpose Award Code and Title:	
Assessor Name:	

I [student name] _____ confirm that I have read the guidelines overleaf which outline the potential consequences of my seeking an exemption in this subject and I wish to proceed with this request to be exempt from the subjects listed below.

Student Signature: _____

Component		New Component	
Code	**Title**	**Code**	**Title**

I confirm that I have seen the original QQI certificate and/or transcript listing the existing component(s) shown in the table above.

_____   _ _ / _ _ / _ _ _ _
Assessor/Teacher   **Date**

* A copy of this form and supporting documentation should be retained by the subject tutor and included with evidence for the external authenticator. A copy should also be provided to Louise Clarke, Deputy Director, and the relevant school head.

By signing this form, students confirm that they understand the following guidelines:

Exemptions and CAO

In relation to CAO and exemptions while components achieved by exemption contribute credit towards the major award, they do not get CAO points. This is important in the case of *non QQI awards* **such as ECDL, MOS**.

Be aware that CAS components achieved by exemption will also be graded as Exempt and will not get CAO points.

However, the graded FETAC 'old' components which gave those exemptions are in the learners' records and ***will give the equivalent CAO points, so there is no loss of CAO points for learners who claim exemptions using already certified FETAC awards***.

Note the usual proviso that learners applying to CAO for places at third level should refer to the admission requirements of individual higher ed. colleges. These may vary from college to college, particularly in relation to the admissibility of major awards achieved through **a single or multiple sittings**.

11.2 Subject Withdrawal Form

![Cavan Institute logo]   # Subject Withdrawal

AWARD TITLE   _____

AWARD BODY
(Tick one)   ☐   QQI
                    ☐   BTEC
                    ☐   Other (Please specify) _____

AWARD CODE   _____

STUDENT NAME   _____

STUDENT PPS NO.   _____

This is to confirm that, having discussed my progress with my subject tutor/class tutor/school head, I [your name] ……………………………………. wish to withdraw from the subjects listed below. The implications of this decision, related to certification entitlement, progression to further study and grant entitlements have been explained to me by my class tutor, and I fully accept and understand any consequences arising from my withdrawal.

Subject(s) *(name of subject being withdrawn from)*	Code	Subject Tutor Signature	Date

Student Signature   _____   Date   _____

Class Tutor Signature   _____   Date   _____

School Head Signature   _____   Date   _____

Note: Where a student is entitled to exemption from a subject, the Subject Exemption form should be used. Copies of this form should be made available to each subject tutor, class tutor, school head and the QQI Co-ordinator.

11.3 Student Withdrawal Form (from entire course)

This hard copy form has been replaced with an electronic form which requests the same details.

Cavan Institute
Student Withdrawal Form

Please complete and return this form to:
The Administration Office, Cavan Institute, Cathedral Road, Cavan, H12 E426
Or call (049) 433 2633 if you believe you have received this form in error.

This form must be completed by all students leaving the Institute prior to completing the academic year.

Course: _____ Year _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

I wish to give notice that I have withdrawn from the above course on ___/___/_____
                                                                                                                      D   M   Y

Reasons for leaving: (please tick the appropriate box)

☐ Employment
☐ Apprenticeship
☐ Other PLC
☐ Institute of Technology/University
☐ Repeating Leaving Certificate
☐ Financial Reasons
☐ Other (Please specify below)

_____

_____

Have you discussed your decision to leave with the Institute with your Tutor, Career Guidance Counsellor or Director/Deputy Director ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please be advised that should you not return this form or contact the Institute, you will be deleted from the register. Automatic deletion will take place from the register following absence from the Institute of 15 days. Cavan Institute Student ID cards must be returned on withdrawal.