

# Westminster Tutors



## Attendance Policy

2025-2026

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Attendance is an important factor in academic success and in enabling students to benefit from the full range of support coordinated by Westminster Tutors. Westminster Tutors aims for full attendance for all students and monitors attendance at the individual lesson level. The attendance champion for the College is the Principal, Sean Doherty.
- 1.2 As set out in the Admissions Policy, Westminster Tutors does not register students of compulsory school age. However, Westminster Tutors applies expectations in line with best practice from the Department for Education and works closely with students and families where attendance issues arise.
- 1.3 While poor attendance due to disciplinary issues is rare, if a student's attendance falls below 95 percent, the Principal may recommend additional measures, such as scheduled supervised study sessions. These measures will be discussed and agreed with the student, parents or guardians, teachers, and personal tutor.
- 1.4 If attendance drops below 90 percent over a sustained period, Westminster Tutors may determine that it is no longer appropriate to coordinate the student's entry for public exams. In such cases, the student may be advised to enter as a private candidate. This decision will be based on Westminster Tutors' ability to ensure appropriate academic oversight, assessment, and safeguarding in line with awarding body requirements. Any such decision will be discussed with the student and their family, and appropriate support options will be explored where possible.
- 1.5 As stated in the registration form, if attendance falls below 90 percent, missed lessons will not ordinarily be rescheduled, regardless of the reason. Westminster Tutors' Administrator will notify students and their families if this threshold is reached. Otherwise, lessons missed with appropriate notice will be rearranged at a mutually convenient time.
- 1.6 Although Westminster Tutors is a sixth-form College and does not register school-age pupils, it draws on relevant government guidance where appropriate. In particular, Westminster Tutors' approach to monitoring and encouraging attendance is informed by the following:
  - [Current Government Guidance, Working together to improve school attendance, 2022](#)
  - [Statutory Guidance, School attendance parental responsibility measures, 2022](#)
- 1.7 These documents are not statutory for post-16 provision but provide useful benchmarks for promoting regular attendance in an educational setting.
- 1.8 Westminster Tutors monitors attendance by individual lesson rather than by morning or afternoon sessions. Students are expected to attend all scheduled lessons on time.

## 2. Unauthorised absence

- 2.1 Westminster Tutors monitors attendance at the level of individual lessons to help ensure that tuition arrangements are effective and that students are benefiting from the academic and pastoral framework in place.

- 2.2 Where no advance notice or valid explanation is received, an absence may be recorded as unauthorised. This classification helps Westminster Tutors track patterns of non-attendance and support students and families in identifying any underlying issues that may need attention.
- 2.3 Situations likely to be recorded as unauthorised include:
- Absence without notice or explanation.
  - Arriving more than 20 minutes late to a scheduled lesson without prior communication.
  - Non-attendance for reasons not aligned with academic or pastoral needs.
  - Holidays taken during term time without prior discussion and agreement.
- 2.4 Absences of this kind may impact a student's ability to make full use of tuition or to meet agreed academic goals. Where persistent unauthorised absence is identified, Westminster Tutors will consult with the student and their family to determine whether any changes to support arrangements or scheduling are required.

### 3. Authorised Absence

- 3.1 Westminster Tutors records authorised absence in cases where a planned or notified absence has been communicated to Westminster Tutors in advance and falls within a reasonable category for coordination purposes. This classification allows Westminster Tutors to inform the relevant teacher and adjust records accordingly.
- 3.2 Examples of authorised absence include:
- Medical appointments or treatment
  - Illness with timely notification
  - Bereavement or urgent family matters
  - Religious observance (see below)
  - University interviews, open days, or academic events
  - Family weddings or agreed personal events
  - Short-term exceptional domestic or pastoral circumstances
  - Participation in external enrichment activities (e.g. competitions, auditions, trials)
- 3.3 Students or parents should aim to notify Westminster Tutors by 4.00 p.m. on the Friday of the week prior to the planned absence. In some cases, Westminster Tutors may request confirmation of the reason in writing to support safeguarding or reporting obligations.
- 3.4 Authorised absence classification is for administrative and safeguarding purposes only. It does not guarantee that a missed lesson will be rescheduled. Whether a lesson can be rearranged will depend on teacher availability and on whether overall attendance remains within acceptable thresholds.

### 4. Absence for Religious Observance

- 4.1 Where a student will be absent due to a recognised religious observance, families are asked to notify Westminster Tutors in advance, ideally at the point of registration or at the start of the academic year. This allows Westminster Tutors to classify the absence appropriately and to inform the relevant teacher(s).

- 4.2 There is no statutory requirement for Tutorial Colleges to classify such absences as authorised. However, Westminster Tutors aims to support reasonable requests where these can be coordinated with teachers without significant impact on academic progress.
- 4.3 Where a proposed absence would affect a substantial number of lessons, Westminster Tutors may contact the family to discuss possible academic implications. This is intended to support transparency and planning, and to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be considered on parents and students behalf with teachers, if needed.

## 5. Procedures for Reporting Absence

Please see the *Client Terms and Conditions* for contractual notice periods.

- 5.1 To ensure that teachers can be informed and safeguarding responsibilities are met, all absences must be reported to Westminster Tutors with the appropriate level of notice.
- 5.2 Planned absences, such as medical appointments, university visits, or religious observance, must be requested at least seven College working days in advance of the affected lesson. Requests should be submitted by email to [info@westminstertutors.co.uk](mailto:info@westminstertutors.co.uk). For safeguarding and compliance purposes, Westminster Tutors may ask for further details if needed.
- 5.3 Unexpected absences, such as illness or emergencies, must be reported by 16.00 on Westminster Tutors working day before the scheduled lesson. If notification is received after this point, the lessons may not be rescheduled by teachers.
- 5.4 Where no reason is provided for an absence, it may be recorded as unauthorised and followed up accordingly. Missed lessons may not be rescheduled by teachers.

## 6. Reporting Attendance to Parents and Guardians

- 6.1 Westminster Tutors monitors attendance at the individual lesson level. This approach reflects the one-to-one nature of tuition and ensures accurate oversight of each student's engagement across their programme.
- 6.2 Where a student is absent or arrives more than ten minutes late for a scheduled lesson without prior notice, Westminster Tutors will attempt to contact the student directly. If the student cannot be reached, Westminster Tutors Administrator will contact the primary contact listed on the student's file. If the primary contact is unavailable, the secondary contact will be contacted.
- 6.3 Please note that under Westminster Tutors' safeguarding procedures, if the whereabouts of a student cannot be confirmed and no contact can be made with anyone listed on their file, Westminster Tutors may notify the police to ensure the student's welfare. This is in line with statutory safeguarding guidance and Westminster Tutors' duty of care.
- 6.4 Families receive termly attendance reports that include data for each subject, showing attendance, authorised absence, and unauthorised absence. Additional updates may be shared where patterns emerge that require attention or support.

- 6.5 The Principal is responsible for monitoring individual attendance trends and will liaise with families directly where attendance concerns arise. Westminster Tutors uses this data to inform pastoral support and to determine whether any changes to timetabling or academic arrangements are needed.

## 7. Attendance monitoring for students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

- 7.1 Westminster Tutors recognises that some students with Education, Health and Care Plans may face additional barriers to regular attendance due to medical, psychological, or educational needs. Attendance monitoring for these students is therefore considered within the context of their EHCP provision and agreed support arrangements.
- 7.2 Attendance for students with EHCPs is reviewed regularly by the Principal and the pastoral team as part of Westminster Tutors' wider safeguarding and pastoral monitoring processes. Patterns of absence are considered alongside information from mentors, teachers, and, where relevant, therapists or other professionals involved in the student's support.
- 7.3 Where attendance falls below 95 percent, Westminster Tutors may review the student's support arrangements with the student and their family to identify any barriers to engagement and to consider appropriate adjustments.
- 7.4 Where attendance falls below 90 percent over a sustained period, Westminster Tutors may contact the Local Authority responsible for the student's EHCP, usually through the named EHCP coordinator or case officer, to ensure that the student's provision remains appropriate and that any additional support required can be considered collaboratively.
- 7.5 Any attendance concerns relating to students with EHCPs will be managed in a supportive and proportionate way, taking into account the student's needs, safeguarding considerations, and the responsibilities of all agencies involved in delivering the EHCP.

## 8. Attendance descriptions and meanings

DESCRIPTION	MEANING
Present	Present
Educated off-site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Educational Activity
Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
Dual registration (i.e. student is also attending another establishment)	Approved Educational Activity
Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
Interview	Approved Educational Activity
Late	Present
Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
No reason has yet been provided for the absence	Unauthorised absence
Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity
Religious observance	Authorised absence
Study leave	Authorised absence
Traveller absence	Authorised absence
Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity
Work experience	Approved Educational Activity
Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendance
Student not yet on the admission register	Not counted in possible attendance
Westminster Tutors is closed to students.	Not counted in possible attendance

## 9. Managing Persistent Tardiness

- 9.1 Persistent lateness can disrupt learning and affect a student's ability to maintain progress. Where a student is late to lessons on multiple occasions without a valid reason, the matter will be raised during mentoring and monitored via MyConcern.
- 9.2 Mentors will work with students to identify any underlying issues and agree on a practical plan to improve punctuality. The senior leadership team will support mentors in managing these cases and will follow up directly with families where necessary.
- 9.3 Westminster Tutors reviews attendance and punctuality trends each term to ensure that its support strategies remain effective and proportionate.

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