

Westminster Tutors



Attendance Policy

2026-2027

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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.
- 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 94 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 Where attendance remains below ninety (90) percent over a sustained period, Westminster Tutors may review whether it can continue to coordinate the student's preparation and entry for public examinations. Any decision will take account of academic oversight, assessment evidence, safeguarding, awarding-body requirements, applicable deadlines, and the Client Terms and Conditions. The student and fee-payer will be informed in writing before any change is made, and alternative entry arrangements will be discussed where practicable.
- 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. The cancellation rule in section 9 also applies. Where an agreed remote lesson cannot proceed or is interrupted because of a technical fault attributable to the teacher or College, the lesson will be rescheduled under the Remote Learning Policy; this is not treated as a missed lesson by the student.
- 1.6 Although Westminster Tutors is a private further education college and is not subject to the statutory school attendance framework, it draws on relevant Department for Education guidance as a source of good practice where appropriate, including Working Together to Improve School Attendance and Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026
 - [Current Government Guidance, Working Together to Improve School Attendance, 2026](#)
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026](#)
- 1.7 Keeping children safe in education applies to Westminster Tutors in relation to students under 18. Working Together to Improve School Attendance does not apply directly but provides relevant good-practice benchmarks for promoting attendance, identifying concerns early, understanding barriers, and providing appropriate support.
- 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.
 - 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 Planned absences must be reported in accordance with the notice requirements set out in section 5 and the applicable Client Terms and Conditions.
- 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

- 5.1 Please see the *Client Terms and Conditions* for contractual notice periods.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 Planned absences must be notified by email to info@westminstertutors.co.uk at least seven (7) Westminster Tutors Working Days before the affected lesson. For safeguarding and compliance purposes, Westminster Tutors may ask for further details if needed.
- 5.4 Unexpected absences, including illness or emergencies, must be reported as soon as reasonably possible. Where the absence is known in advance, notification must be provided no later than 16:00 on the Westminster Tutors Working Day before the scheduled lesson.
- 5.5 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 If a student has not arrived within the first ten minutes of a scheduled lesson, the teacher must notify the College. The College will telephone the student. If there is no answer, the College will telephone the priority 1 contact recorded on the student's file, followed by the priority 2 contact if priority 1 does not answer. If priority 2 does not answer, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed.
- 6.3 Where the student's whereabouts or welfare cannot be established, the matter will be referred promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL or DDSL will assess the circumstances, including the student's age, known vulnerabilities, previous attendance, and any safeguarding concerns, and determine whether further action is required. This may include contacting the local authority, children's social care, the police, or another relevant agency.
- 6.4 Families receive half-termly attendance 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 94 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 sustained or significant absence raises concern about whether the provision specified in a student's EHCP is being accessed or remains appropriate, Westminster Tutors will contact the responsible local authority and work with the student, family, and relevant professionals to review barriers, support, and next steps.
- 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)	Present - Approved Educational Activity
Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Absent - Authorised absence
Dual registration (i.e. student is also attending another establishment)	Present - Approved Educational Activity
Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Absent - Authorised absence
Extended family holiday (agreed)	Absent - Authorised absence
Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Absent - Unauthorised absence
Family holiday (agreed)	Absent - Authorised absence
Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Absent - Authorised absence
Interview	Absent - Approved Educational Activity
Late	Present
Medical/Dental appointments	Absent - Authorised absence
No reason has yet been provided for the absence	Absent - Unauthorised absence
Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Absent - Unauthorised absence
Approved sporting activity	Present - Approved Educational Activity
Religious observance	Absent - Authorised absence
Study leave	Not counted - Authorised absence
Educational visit or trip	Present - Approved Educational Activity
Work experience	Present - Approved Educational Activity
Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted
Student not yet on the admission register	Not counted
Westminster Tutors is closed to students.	Not counted

9. Managing Persistent Tardiness

- 9.1 Students who arrive late are recorded as Late. If a student has not arrived after twenty minutes, the teacher may cancel the lesson. A lesson cancelled for this reason is not reschedulable. 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 Principal and Pastoral Coordinator 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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