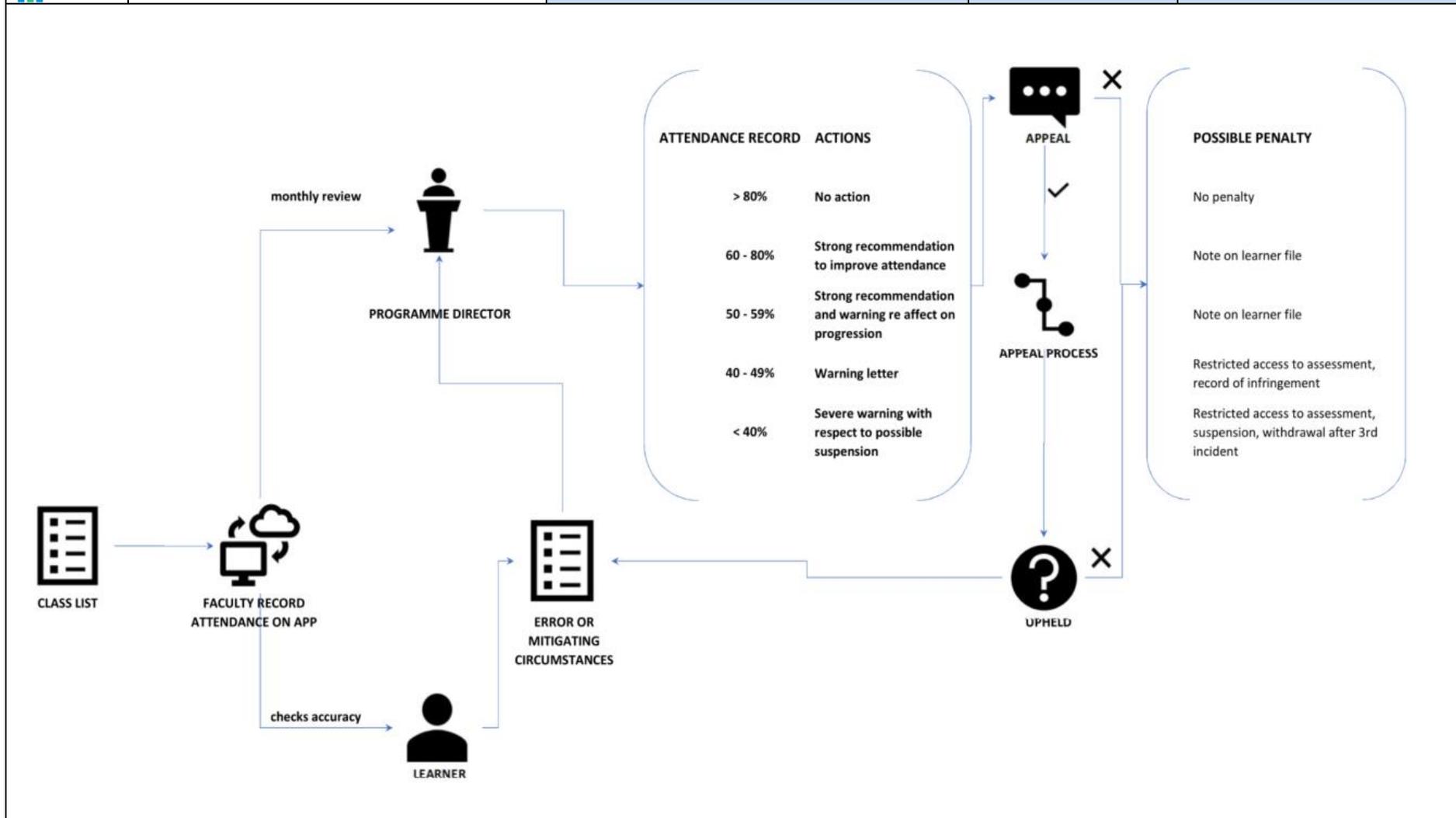


#	POLICY TITLE	POLICY AREA:	VERSION:	DATE ADOPTED :
	<b>7.10 ATTENDANCE POLICY</b>	7) SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS	3.0	AUGUST 2020



**Introduction and Context:**

SNMCI is a Higher Education Institution and the reputation of SNMCI and of its graduates depends upon upholding the highest standards of teaching, learning and academic activity. All learners are enrolled on staged modular programmes of more than one-year duration. All modules have assessment requirements. Some modules may involve 'real-time' continuous assessment such as in-class tests, presentations etc. Regular class attendance is crucial and is directly related to a learner's assessment performance. With particular reference to programmes of education and training, class attendance is critical to facilitate learning and progression, and to help affirm an educational relationship between lecturers and learners.

SNMCI requires a minimum annual class attendance rate of 80%, to facilitate successful academic achievement and progression.

It is understood there may be occasions when a learner's attendance may be affected by mitigating circumstances. Where learners have a valid reason for missing taught sessions or placement, it is their responsibility to inform the College, and in the case of Placement, the school or early years setting, and to provide any supporting evidence that may be required. (See Procedures section below)

The links between low attendance and progression vary on a case-by-case basis, but in general, poor attendance levels correlate with poor progression rates. It should be noted that in some cases, poor attendance may result in non-progression even if academic marks would otherwise allow for progression (see Procedures section below).

**Principles:**

- The Learner Attendance Policy has been developed as part of SNMCI'S commitment to provide a supportive learning environment that enables all learners to achieve their full potential.
- Regular class attendance and engagement is expected of ALL learners in ALL classes for which they are enrolled.
- Class attendance is recorded on a daily basis by SNMCI staff.
- Daily monitoring of attendance, with procedures to detect and prevent poor levels of attendance, contributes to higher levels of academic performance among learners.
- Attendance is a key component of learner retention, progression, achievement and employability

**Definitions:**

**Attendance:** - SNMCI defines class attendance as being present in the classroom (F2F or virtual) for the duration of scheduled lectures or other learning sessions and in the case of Placement, as being present on the agreed days at the agreed times.

**Punctuality:** SNMCI uses the Cambridge English Dictionary definition of punctuality as the 'habit of arriving or happening at the time that has been agreed' (CED)

The general policy approach of SNMCI lecturers is to allow a period of 15 minutes for learners to arrive to class after which learners will be

deemed absent for that session.

**Data Protection:**

- SNMCI staff dealing with attendance matters may often be in receipt of potentially sensitive information regarding learners' personal or medical circumstances, in order to excuse non-attendance. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- Such information will be kept securely in the archives for up to 1 year following the departure of the learner, after which it will be securely erased from the system.

**Note:** Learner's personal information provided to SNMCI is not, under any circumstances, shared with an external party without the expressed written consent of the learner, except where the College is required to fulfil a public function.

**Staff Involved:**

Lecturers, Year Heads (if appropriate) Programme Directors, Programme Managers, Head of Registrations and Examinations, DQAA.

**Policy:**

- SNMCI requires a minimum annual class attendance rate of 80%, to facilitate successful academic achievement and progression.
- Attendance will be monitored through the use of electronic Learner Attendance Lists. Lecturers receive lists of learners for each scheduled module;
- Lecturers will allow learners to 'sign-in' (in person or virtually) up to 15 mins past the beginning of class. The list at that point is the one that will be recorded electronically by the lecturer;
- It is the learner's responsibility to 'sign-in'/make their presence known.
- The falsification of learner attendance i.e. signing in on behalf of another learner is considered a major disciplinary offence and will be treated as such;

**This creation of false records has Health and Safety implications for 'on-campus' sessions in the event of an evacuation being required.**

- All electronic Learner Attendance Registers are retained for the duration of the learner's studies plus one year;
- A learner who is unable to attend class due to mitigating circumstances, such as illness, accident, or bereavement, must contact the Year Head or Programme Director on the morning of the first day of absence, to notify them of the absence and expected duration of absence;
- An absence due to illness which moves into a third day requires the learner to provide a medical certificate and to complete the Mitigating Circumstances Form (MC). Learners will be advised about completing the MC form for other types of absence. This form is available through the learner document centre on Moodle;
- The MC form must, in each case, be accompanied by supporting evidence/documentation;

- The form and supporting evidence must be submitted to the Programme Director
- The Programme Director will assess the documentation to determine whether or not the absence should be counted against the minimum attendance rate of 80%.
- Notifications will be made by e-mail where attendance falls below acceptable levels

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Learners are responsible for:**

- Attending all learning and teaching sessions either F2F or virtual (including Placement)
- Notifying their Programme Directors in advance (in person, by phone or by email) when they are going to be absent from timetabled classes.
- Obtaining prior permission from a Programme Director for planned absences lasting two or more days during term time
- Providing medical certs if absent for a third day
- Arranging to meet with lecturers to discuss arrangements for catching up on missed work.
- Arranging to 'make-up' all placement days lost due to absence

**Staff members are responsible for:**

- Reminding learners of the importance of regular attendance (all staff)
- Ensuring that attendance is registered properly (PD/DPD)
- Advising learners of SNMCI's College Attendance Policy during Induction. (PD/DPD/SEO)
- Monitoring and reporting on learners' attendance (PD/DPD)
- Ensuring that 'paperwork' regarding learner attendance is up-to-date. (PD/DPD)
- Informing learners at the earliest opportunity of alternative arrangements for class sessions when lecturers are absent. (PD/DPD)
- Directing learners identified to be 'a cause for concern' towards the support services available within SNMCI

### Policy Control Sheet

<b>Policy</b>	<b>QA 7.10 Learner Attendance Policy.</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Adopted/Effective</b>	August 2020
<b>Supersedes</b>	2.0
<b>Monitoring/Next Review Date</b>	Yearly/August 2021
<b>Responsible Officer(s) Designated Reviewer(s)</b>	Director of Quality and Academic Affairs; Head of Examinations and Registrations;
<b>Scope</b>	All programmes

### References

<b>SNMCI Policy area</b>	<b>7) Support for Learners: QA Vol 2</b>
<b>Developed with reference to</b>	<i>QQI Assessment and Standards, 2013 (Revised)</i> <i>QQI (2016) Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines</i> <i>QQI (2016) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis</i> <i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), May 2015</i> <i>Green Paper on Assessment 2018</i>
<b>Related SNMCI Policies / Forms</b>	FQA Mitigating Circumstances Form

### Revision

<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Revision Description</b>	<b>Originator</b>	<b>Approved By</b>
2.0/08/2020	Revision for blended learning	Office of DQAA	AB