

Attendance Policy

As part of their commitment to their studies students are required to attend 100% of their course of study. Students who attend their classes are generally more successful in their studies. Attendance is monitored regularly throughout all Language Gallery schools. If a student need be absent for any reason, it is important that TLG is informed of this as soon as possible before the absence begins.

At The Language Gallery students are expected to:

- Attend ALL scheduled lessons that form their programme of studies regardless of their visa type or immigration status.
- Arrive on time to scheduled lessons and to remain until the end of the lesson.
- Be in class for the attendance monitoring procedure. This is at the beginning of each class or each elective when the teachers update the daily registers.
- Provide explanations for absence and meet with the Student Engagement Officer (SEO) to discuss this when requested.

1. Attendance Monitoring Procedures

1.1 Record Keeping

Attendance monitoring is achieved by means of attendance input into the database by teachers or by the SEO. Attendance will be taken within the first 5 minutes of each lesson, or segment of a lesson. Students are responsible for attending class on time in order to be marked present.

2.2 Student ID Cards

- After Induction on the first day students will be issued with a student ID card and lanyard.
- The student ID card must be worn on the provided colour-coded lanyard at all times as it is essential for security.
- If a student is required by a member of staff to present his/her ID card whilst on campus, he/she must do so immediately.
- The ID card remains the property of The Language Gallery and can be retained by any member of staff, if there are valid reasons to believe that a student is not entitled to have it due to:
 - ❖ withdrawal from the programme,
 - ❖ cancellation of visa,
 - ❖ breach of the attendance policy,
 - ❖ suspension of student account due to outstanding fees etc.

The lanyard that students wear is colour-coded so that the safety and security of all staff is guaranteed. The coding is as follows:

Red: staff

Blue: adult student

Yellow: child student

Orange: visitor

Please be aware of this as you move about the school and report any unknown persons not wearing a lanyard to reception.

2. Absences and Notifications

3.1 Punctuality

- Students are expected to arrive on time and stay until the end of every lesson.
- Students are allowed 5 minutes of the class start and end time to record full attendance.
- If a student arrives more than 5 minutes late he/she will not be allowed to join the lesson and will be marked as absent for the first period of the lesson. The student may enter the class at the break.
- Arriving late and leaving early is distracting for the teacher and for fellow students. Please bear in mind that different cultures have different attitudes to punctuality and in the UK and the cultures of many students at TLG lateness can be seen as a sign of disrespect.

Persistent lateness will affect a student's percentage of attendance and may result in disciplinary action, including discontinuation of the course of study.

3.2 Authorised Absences

Although 100% attendance is expected of all Language Gallery students, it is understood that sometimes, due to unavoidable circumstances, a student might not be able to attend his/her scheduled lessons. In this case students are expected to inform the Student Engagement Officer of their absence as soon as possible.

Reasons and evidence that may be considered for authorised absence include but are not limited to:

- Death or illness of an immediate family member; spouse, parent, grandparent, guardian, sibling, son or daughter (members of extended family will not be accepted).
- Appointments with a physician, dentist or other recognised licensed/certified medical practitioner.
- Wedding ceremony; marriage certificate required.
- Serious personal difficulties.
- If you are ill and your attendance would endanger your health or the health of others; a medical certificate needs to be provided if the illness exceeds 2 days.
- Summons letter for appearances in court or an appointment with a legal officer.
- Wedding of immediate family members; for the day of the event only.
- Exams scheduled whilst a class is taking place; exam booking confirmation must be provided.

The individual student is responsible for catching up on any work missed as a result of absence.

If a student requires leave for exceptional circumstances outside official holiday periods, he/she must inform the Student Engagement Officer and receive authorisation first.

If a student wishes to request maternity/paternity leave, he/she must request this leave from the Student Engagement Officer for authorisation. Maternity/paternity leave is usually considered on an individual case basis.

Any student who is having personal issues that are affecting his/her attendance, or who is feeling unhappy or distressed in any way, can speak to our trained Welfare Officer at any time.

3.3 Unauthorised Absences

Reasons for non-attendance that will NOT be considered for authorised absence include but are not limited to:

- Domestic or personal disruptions such as, moving house and weddings outside immediate family members
- The death or illness of a member of your extended family
- Employment-related issues (for students with the right to work in the UK)
- Holidays outside the official holiday periods. Holiday allowance is determined by the length of your course programme.

3.4 Holiday entitlement

- Students are allowed to take holiday depending on the length of their course. This must comply with local visa regulations.
- Holiday must be requested from the school at least two weeks before the student intends to take the holiday.
- Upon arrival, the student must inform The Language Gallery Academic Management team how many weeks of holiday he/she wants to take during his/her period of study.

3.5. Attendance Monitoring and Attendance Warnings

- Attendance will be taken on a daily basis by the teaching staff to ensure students are attending. Teachers will report non-attendance to the Student Engagement Officer. In the absence of the Student Engagement Officer (SEO) this should be reported to the Academic Manager.
- Attendance via registers will be monitored on a weekly basis by the SEO to ensure students have satisfactory overall levels of attendance.
- The SEO will send out an email asking the student to confirm his/her welfare if a full day of study is missed and requesting that the student to explain his/her absence, via return of mail.
- Should a student miss two full days of study within a five day period, he/she will be sent an email informing him/her to meet with the SEO to discuss his/her attendance. At this point, the SEO will also inform the Academic Manager to remove the student from the register for the following day. This will preclude the teacher allowing the student access to class and will require the teacher to send the student to the SEO should the student attempt to enter the class. The class teachers will be informed not to readmit the student to the lessons without authorisation from the Student Engagement Officer, who will only provide this if the student has attended the attendance meeting with him/her.
- If a student is missing from class for three consecutive days and the Student Engagement Officer has been unable to contact him/her during this time, he/she may be reported to the police as a missing person. Any costs arising from this procedure, e.g. should the police have to force entry to accommodation, will be the responsibility of the student.

- If student attendance drops below 80% overall, the student will receive an official warning from the Student Engagement Officer and will be required to have a meeting with him/her to discuss this. At this point, the SEO will also inform the Academic Manager to remove the student from the register for the following day. This will preclude the teacher allowing the student access to class and will require the teacher to send the student to the SEO should the student attempt to enter the class. The class teachers will be informed not to readmit the student to the lessons without authorisation from the Student Engagement Officer, who will only provide this if the student has attended the attendance meeting with him/her.
- The Student Services Team will assess non-attendance explanations on a case by case basis.
- Regular non-attendance without valid reason will be subject to disciplinary action which may lead to suspension of account, refusal of movement to the next level and/or expulsion and withdrawal of sponsorship and visa depending on the sponsor arrangement.
- Students with attendance of lower than 85% will not be allowed to change level unless the academic needs of the class dictate this to be necessary.
- Absence due to illness that does not exceed 2 days may be authorised with a Student Statement of Sickness available from the Student Engagement Officer. After 3 consecutive days of sickness a medical note is mandatory.
- Continuous requests for authorised leave for one or two days unsupported by evidence, may be declined and could result in expulsion and sponsorship being withdrawn.
- Students who are studying with The Language Gallery must abide by the terms of their visa. The Language Gallery must report to the immigration services or the sponsoring organisation any international students who do not have satisfactory attendance. If a student is absent from classes this could lead to sponsorship being withdrawn and visa terminated.
- Once a student is reported to immigration services or their sponsor organisation for non-attendance there is no appeal process.

3. Absences and Notifications

3.1 Submitting an excuse

The SEO must be informed of reasons for student absence. If a student is found to be submitting fraudulent documents as evidence of absence he/she will be subject to disciplinary action which may lead to expulsion and withdrawal of sponsorship and visa.

3.2 Leaving Early

If a student needs to leave earlier than a class is scheduled to end due to valid reasons, he/she needs to inform the SEO at the earliest possible opportunity.

3.3 Mass Absence Request

As The Language Gallery embraces diversity and promotes equality, there may be situations where due to religious celebrations students may request for a class to be rescheduled or receive a mass absence authorisation. In such cases, The Language Gallery works on a case by case basis.

The request must be submitted and authorised prior to the event

The Language Gallery will make every effort to accommodate the students' request subject to availability of courses.

3.4 Submitting Medical Documents

If student absence through illness persists for three days or longer, a medical certificate is required to support any request for absence authorisation. Please note that prescriptions are not a sufficient substitute for official medical documents and cannot be considered in order to authorise absences.

There are three types of medical documents mostly used:

- Statement of fitness for work – those must specify the period the student has been unfit for studies and also must be stamped and signed by doctors
- Medical certificates issued by doctors – the period of time the student was unfit for studies must be specified as well and if the document is written on a headed paper, containing surgery's details and the doctor's signature.
- Medical certificates issued by hospitals/Discharge from hospital letters.

If there are any doubts over the validity of a medical document, the SEO has the right to contact the surgery/doctor to verify the document. If it is discovered that fraudulent documents have been submitted the student will be subject to disciplinary action which may result in expulsion and withdrawal of any sponsorship and/or visa.

4. Student Access to the Attendance Policy

Students are regularly notified about the Attendance Policy and are reminded to familiarise themselves with both the Student Handbook and Attendance Policy.

- Welcome emails are sent prior to arrival at The Language Gallery prompting students to read the Student Handbook and Attendance Policy.
- At Induction students are given information regarding the Attendance Policy.

During induction ALL students will be required to sign the school Code of Conduct that states they understand the expectations and the consequences of the Attendance Policy. **Please note attendance is mandatory.**