

Attendance Policy and Procedure

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Version History

VERSION	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR	APPROVAL	EFFECTIVE DATE
V1	First Draft – Student Attendance Policy & Procedure	Kevin Bonello	June 2026	June 2026

Related Policies

P049 - Student Sickness and Mitigating Circumstances

P025 - Learning Support

P048 - Student Performance and Behaviour

P061 - Student Maintenance Grant

P004 - Complaints Policy and Procedure

External References

ITS Rules and Regulations - Chapter 4 (Student Attendance)

Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act (Cap. 413)

Data Protection Act (Cap. 586)

General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679

MFHEA Provider Accreditation Manual - ESG Standard 1.3

Definitions

Attendance	Physical or virtual presence at a scheduled learning activity, including lectures, practical sessions, tutorials, work-based learning visits, and examinations.
Authorised Absence	An absence formally approved by the Registrar or Student Cases Board, supported by appropriate documentation.
Unauthorised Absence	An absence for which no prior approval has been granted and for which no acceptable documentation has been submitted within the required timeframe.
Mitigating Circumstances	A serious, significant, unforeseen or unpreventable event materially affecting a student's ability to attend. Governed by P049.
Student Cases Board (SCB)	The Board constituted under Rule 4.7 of the Rules and Regulations with authority to review attendance cases, grant exemptions, and determine academic consequences.
E-Learning Session	A scheduled learning activity delivered through the ITS e-learning platform. Attendance is recorded and counts toward the student's attendance percentage.

Abbreviations

SCB	Student Cases Board
BOG	Board of Governors
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
MFHEA	Malta Further and Higher Education Authority

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A. Policy and Procedure

POLICY

The Institute of Tourism Studies recognises that active participation in lectures, seminars, and practical sessions is a fundamental component of the educational experience. Regular attendance is directly linked to higher levels of student engagement, the development of critical thinking skills, and the successful attainment of learning outcomes.

It is the policy of the Board of Governors to foster an environment where collaborative learning in the classroom complements rigorous independent study, and to set clear and fair attendance requirements that prepare students for the expectations of the professional workplace.

Principles

The following principles underpin this policy:

1. **Effective Learning:** classroom interaction allows students to benefit from the expertise of academic staff and the diverse perspectives of their peers.
2. **Holistic Development:** attendance ensures that students are exposed to the full breadth of the curriculum, including nuances that may not be captured in textbooks alone.
3. **Self-Directed Study:** while underlining the importance of physical or virtual presence, the Institute equally values a student's ability to engage in self-study and demonstrate competence through the timely completion of assessments.
4. **Professionalism:** punctuality and consistent attendance are regarded as key transferable skills that prepare students for the expectations of the professional workplace.

PROCEDURE

1. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled on full qualification courses at the Institute of Tourism Studies. It applies to all scheduled classes across all modules and all courses

offered by the Institute, including lectures, seminars, and practical sessions, whether delivered physically or virtually.

2. Recording of Attendance

2.1 Attendance shall be recorded for all scheduled classes, across all modules, and in all courses offered by the Institute. Lecturers are responsible for ensuring that attendance registers are accurately updated at the commencement of each session.

2.2 E-learning attendance is recorded through the ITS e-learning platform. A student is considered present for an e-learning session if they participate actively as defined by the platform activity log. Passive access to recorded materials does not constitute attendance.

2.3 Attendance records are maintained by the Registrar's Office and are accessible to students through the student portal. Students are responsible for checking their attendance records regularly and notifying the Registrar's Office promptly if they identify an error.

3. Attendance Requirements by MQF Level

The way attendance is treated in formal assessment depends on the MQF level of the course, as set out in the table below.

Course Level	Assessment Integration	Exceptions and Notes
MQF Level 4 or lower	Attendance is a formal part of the assessment pattern for all modules.	None. Failure to meet the minimum attendance requirement results in a failed module.
MQF Level 5 to 7	Attendance is not part of the formal assessment pattern.	Modules based on Continuous Assessment are governed by the rules and regulations concerning such modules as per the Rules and Regulations.

4. Absence Thresholds and Penalties

Standard Modules

The maximum allowed absence is 35%. A student must maintain a minimum of 65% attendance to remain in good standing and to avoid failure through absence in modules where attendance is part of the formal assessment pattern. This applies to all courses as indicated in section 3 above.

Continuous Assessment Modules

For modules where assessment is defined as continuous in part or in full, the final assessment must be based on a minimum of 65% of the individual assessments submitted.

Stipend Deductions

In all courses students eligible for stipend will be affected with a pro-rata deduction of the student's stipend on account of unauthorised absences, in accordance with P061 Student Maintenance Grant Policy.

5. Absence Notification

- 5.1 Students who are unable to attend a scheduled class must notify the Registrar's Office before the class begins, or as soon as reasonably practicable. Notification must be made via the student's official ITS email account.
- 5.2 For sickness-related absences, a valid medical certificate must be submitted to the Registrar's Office within 24 hours of the student's return by email to

studentdocs@its.edu.mt. Certificates must be issued by a registered medical practitioner and must cover the full period of absence. Any request to be excused must be supported by, and assessed against, appropriate evidence.

- 5.3 For other approved absences, students must contact the Registrar's Office in advance where possible, or as soon as practicable following the absence, together with any supporting documentation required.

6. Excused Absences

Absences falling under the following categories will not be counted toward the total absence percentage and will not result in stipend deductions:

- 6.1 **Certified Sickness:** absences supported by a valid medical certificate submitted to the Registrar's Office at studentdocs@its.edu.mt within 24 hours of return.
- 6.2 **Approved Absences:** absences pre-authorised by the Registrar or the Registrar's appointee, including bereavement, jury service, or representing the Institute.

All other absences are treated as unexcused and count in full toward the student's absence percentage. Repeated unexcused absences may be referred to the Board of Discipline.

7. Student Cases Board Process

- 7.1 When a student's attendance falls below the minimum threshold, or where a pattern of unexcused absence is identified, the Registrar's Office may terminate the student from studies as per provisions in Rules and Regulations.
- 7.2 Students who disagree with the decision may appeal the case to the Student Cases Board. The student will need to write to the Student Cases Board on scb@its.edu.mt within 5 working days of the communicated decision.
- 7.2 The SCB will communicate its decision to the student in writing within 5 working days of the review. The decision will include written reasons and will state any conditions attached to the student's continued enrolment.
- 7.3 Decisions of the SCB are only appealable to the Board of Governors.

8. Reasonable Adjustments

- 8.1 Students with disabilities, long-term health conditions, or specific learning difficulties may be entitled to reasonable adjustments to attendance requirements under the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act (Cap. 413). Such adjustments are agreed through the Learning Support Committee in accordance with P025 Learning Support and must be confirmed in writing by the Registrar's Office before they take effect.
- 8.3 Approved reasonable adjustments are recorded on the student's profile and communicated to relevant lecturers. They modify the attendance

threshold or recording method to reflect the student's individual circumstances but do not exempt the student from all attendance obligations.

9. Attendance Records and Data Protection

- 9.1 Attendance records are personal data processed by ITS in accordance with the Data Protection
- 9.2 Act (Cap. 586) and the General Data Protection Regulation. Records are held securely by the Registrar's Office and are accessible only to authorised staff, the SCB, and the Internal Quality Assurance unit.
- 9.3 Students have the right to access their own attendance records and to request correction of any inaccurate entry. Requests should be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing at studentdocs@its.edu.mt. ITS will respond within 20 working days.
- 9.4 Attendance records will be retained for five years from the date of the student's departure from ITS, after which they will be securely disposed of.

10. Relationship with the Rules and Regulations

This policy does not supersede the Rules and Regulations as published on the official website of the Institute of Tourism Studies. Where this policy and the Rules and Regulations interact, the Rules and Regulations prevail. This document is subject to annual review.

B. Document Retention

Category	Retention Period
Attendance registers	5 years from student's last day at the ITS
Medical certificates	5 years from student's last day at the ITS
Mitigating circumstances submissions and SCB decisions	5 years from student's last day at the ITS
E-learning attendance logs	5 years from student's last day at the ITS
Reasonable adjustments agreements	5 years from student's last day at the ITS

C. Review

The terms of this policy will be reviewed after its first year of operation and annually thereafter, or earlier if there is a material change to the Rules and Regulations, relevant legislation, or MFHEA accreditation requirements. The Registrar is responsible for initiating the review and presenting any proposed amendments to the Board of Governors for approval.

Document Control

Version	Purpose of Review / Changes	Date Published	Date of Next Review
V1	First issue of Student Attendance Policy and Procedure	June 2026	June 2031