

## **Inclusive Attendance Policy – British Creative Institute (BCI)**

*Location: 6 Dyas Road, Birmingham, England*

**Author:** Robert Edwards (MD)

**Effective Date:** 21 April 2025

**Next Review Date:** 21 April 2026 (Annual Review)

### **1. Purpose and Scope**

**Purpose:** This policy establishes BCI's inclusive, equitable approach to attendance for all members of the college community. It sets out expectations and support mechanisms to ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality, which are vital for safeguarding, academic success, and personal development (). The policy aligns with the **SEND Code of Practice (2015)** and current **gov.uk** attendance regulations, promoting consistency with national standards (). It also embeds the principles of the **Equality Act 2010**, ensuring no individual is discriminated against due to disability or other protected characteristics.

**Scope:** This attendance policy applies to **all students (post-16 learners across all programmes)** and **all staff (teaching staff and general/support staff)** at BCI, across every discipline and department. It covers expectations for attendance and punctuality in scheduled classes, work placements, and work hours, as well as procedures for reporting absences and supporting those facing attendance barriers. Where relevant (e.g. learners under 18 or vulnerable adults), parents, carers, and external partners are also included as stakeholders in upholding this policy. The policy is to be implemented equitably and consistently throughout the institution.

### **2. Policy Statement and Principles**

BCI is committed to fostering a culture of regular and punctual attendance for everyone. We recognize that consistent attendance is key to learners achieving their full potential, and we believe in a supportive approach that identifies and addresses barriers to attendance. Our guiding principles are:

- **Safeguarding and Right to Education:** We ensure every learner is safe and able to exercise their right to education through consistent attendance (). We treat attendance as a safeguarding priority – prolonged or unexplained absence is investigated to ensure student well-being.
- **Inclusivity and Equality:** We are unwaveringly inclusive, taking positive action under the Equality Act 2010 to support individuals with protected characteristics (). In line with legal duties, BCI will **not discriminate, harass or victimise** anyone and will **make anticipatory reasonable adjustments** to prevent disabled students or staff from being placed at a substantial disadvantage. This means proactively considering potential needs (visual/hearing impairments, mobility challenges, autism and other neurodiverse conditions, etc.) and removing or reducing any attendance obstacles.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Attendance and punctuality are a priority for **all members of BCI** – students, teaching staff, support staff, and leadership (). Everyone has a role in promoting and modeling good attendance practices. Teaching and support staff are expected to model punctuality and commitment, creating an environment where learners value regular attendance.

- **Communication and Collaboration:** We maintain positive, open communication about attendance expectations and issues. BCI will communicate attendance requirements and updates clearly to students, staff, and where applicable parents/carers, fostering a partnership to improve attendance (). We also work with external agencies and services to address and overcome barriers to attendance beyond the college's immediate control (for example, specialist support for health or social issues) ().
- **Continuous Improvement:** We monitor attendance data and set improvement targets for the college as a whole and for specific cohorts as needed (). BCI uses this data to identify trends (such as persistent absenteeism or disparities among groups) and will intervene early. We are committed to reviewing and refining our attendance strategies regularly as part of our annual policy review cycle.

These principles ensure that our approach to attendance is **inclusive, equitable, and aligned with statutory requirements**. All staff are expected to understand and embody these principles in their daily practice, and all students are made aware of the importance of attendance from the outset.

### 3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by and compliant with relevant legislation and government guidance, including:

- **SEND Code of Practice (2015)** – Statutory guidance under the Children and Families Act 2014 that outlines the responsibilities of colleges to support students with special educational needs and disabilities up to age 25. BCI has due regard to this code, ensuring that attendance practices accommodate the needs of learners with SEND and that we use our best endeavours to secure appropriate support for them.
- **Equality Act 2010** – BCI meets its legal obligations under the Equality Act by ensuring our attendance expectations and procedures do not discriminate against individuals on the basis of disability, age, sex, race, religion or any other protected characteristic. We actively make **reasonable adjustments** for disabilities related to attendance (this includes anticipatory adjustments, as noted above, to plan for the needs of disabled students/staff in advance).
- **Education Act 1996 & Education and Skills Act 2008** – These laws (and subsequent amendments) establish the context for compulsory participation in education or training until age 18. While students over 16 are not of compulsory school age, BCI acknowledges the duty (for those under 18) to participate in education/training and supports parents/carers in ensuring attendance (). For adult learners, attendance remains crucial for successful course completion and is treated with equal importance.
- **DfE Attendance Regulations and Guidance** – The policy reflects guidance from the Department for Education on attendance monitoring and intervention. This includes adhering to regulations on maintaining attendance registers, authorizing absences, and managing persistent absence. For example, BCI complies with **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** and its amendments () for recording attendance, even as a post-16 provider. We also align with best practices outlined in *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (DfE guidance) adapted appropriately for a further education setting.
- **Ofsted and Funding Requirements** – We recognize that attendance is a factor in Ofsted inspections (under Leadership and Management and Quality of Education criteria) and in

funding agreements (e.g., Education and Skills Funding Agency expectations for study programme attendance). This policy ensures BCI meets these requirements by proactively managing and supporting attendance.

By aligning with these frameworks, BCI ensures its attendance policy not only meets legal standards but also embodies national best practices and the rights of learners.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

Achieving excellent attendance is a collective effort. The following outlines the responsibilities of different stakeholders under this policy:

| Stakeholder                                                 | Responsibilities and Expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Students (Learners)</b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attend all scheduled lessons, workshops, training sessions, and work placements punctually.</li> <li>- Follow established procedures for reporting absences or lateness (e.g. informing the college by a set time with a valid reason).</li> <li>- Proactively communicate with tutors or support staff if facing difficulties that affect attendance (such as health issues, transport problems, or care responsibilities), so that support can be offered.</li> <li>- Engage with any support plans or interventions put in place to improve attendance.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Teaching Staff</b>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set a positive example by maintaining high personal attendance and punctuality, demonstrating commitment to classes and scheduled duties.</li> <li>- Accurately record student attendance for every session using the college's attendance system, within the required time frame.</li> <li>- Monitor and identify attendance issues early (e.g. frequent lateness or absences) and approach the student with empathy to discuss underlying issues.</li> <li>- Differentiate instruction and provide make-up work or online materials to help absent students catch up, particularly those who missed class due to valid reasons or SEND-related needs ( ).</li> <li>- Refer persistent or unexplained absences to the appropriate support team or management in line with the intervention procedures.</li> </ul>                  |
| <b>Support Staff &amp; Administration</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure the accuracy of the centralized attendance records (e.g. updating the management information system with attendance data and absence codes daily).</li> <li>- Contact students (and parents/carers when appropriate) promptly regarding unexplained absences, following up to inquire about reasons and offer support.</li> <li>- Assist in identifying patterns or causes of non-attendance through data analysis and communication with students.</li> <li>- Work closely with teaching staff, personal tutors, and external agencies (if needed) to coordinate support for students facing attendance barriers (for instance, arranging counselling, mentorship, or adjustments).</li> <li>- Maintain confidentiality and sensitivity when handling attendance data and personal issues disclosed by students.</li> </ul> |
| <b>College Leadership (Principal, MD, Department Heads)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote a college-wide ethos that values attendance, reinforcing this policy's importance in communications and meetings.</li> <li>- Provide training and guidance to all staff on implementing the attendance policy effectively, including how to support learners with SEND or other difficulties affecting</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## Stakeholder

## Responsibilities and Expectations

|                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                     | <p>attendance. - Monitor overall attendance rates and trends across the college and within departments; review regular reports on attendance and follow up on areas of concern. - Allocate resources (staff, time, budget) for attendance improvement strategies – for example, investing in attendance tracking systems, or funding additional support staff for mentoring students. - Engage with external partners (local authority, support services) especially for learners under 18 or those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), to share information and strategies to improve attendance. - Ensure recognition and rewards are in place for excellent or improved attendance (such as certificates, positive communications home, etc.) to encourage a positive attendance culture ().</p> |
| <b>Parents/Carers</b> (for learners under 18 or with support needs) | <p>- Ensure that the learner attends college as required, and notify the college of any genuine reasons for absence (e.g. illness, emergency) on a timely basis. - Support the learner's routines and transportation to facilitate prompt attendance. - Communicate with college staff about any long-term issues affecting attendance (medical conditions, family circumstances), and collaborate on any attendance support plans. - Attend meetings or discussions about the learner's attendance when invited, and work in partnership with BCI to improve attendance outcomes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

*Note:* The term “**general staff**” includes all non-teaching employees (administrative staff, technical staff, librarians, etc.). They are expected to adhere to BCI's staff attendance requirements (e.g. work schedules, reporting sick leave) with the same level of commitment as teaching staff. BCI's HR policies (sickness absence policy, etc.) complement this attendance policy to ensure staff attendance is managed supportively and fairly. Staff with disabilities or health conditions are entitled to reasonable adjustments in their work pattern as needed, in line with the Equality Act and institutional HR procedures.

## 5. Attendance Expectations and Procedures

### 5.1 Students – Attendance and Punctuality

All students are expected to maintain **100% attendance** where possible, aside from authorized absences. BCI defines **authorized absence** as an absence approved by the college in advance or justified by an acceptable reason (such as illness with notification, medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside class time, recognized religious holidays, bereavement, or other emergencies). **Unauthorized absence** refers to absences without a valid reason or proper notification. Repeated unauthorized absence or patterns of lateness will trigger intervention (see Section 6).

**Punctuality:** Students should arrive on time for all sessions. Arriving late disrupts learning for everyone. If a student arrives after the official start time, they must follow the sign-in procedure for late arrival and will be marked as late in the register. Persistent lateness will be addressed by personal tutors or course leaders as an attendance concern.

**Reporting Absences:** BCI has a clear procedure for students to report if they will be absent or late on a given day:

- Students (or their parent/carer, if applicable) should notify the college **by a designated time** (e.g. by 8:30 AM for morning classes) through the established channel (phone hotline or online attendance portal).
- They should provide their name, student ID, reason for absence, and expected return date if known.
- For pre-planned absences (medical appointments, religious observance, etc.), students must inform their tutor and the administration **in advance** and provide evidence where appropriate (e.g. appointment letter). The college will endeavour to accommodate important appointments or interviews, but students should arrange these outside class time whenever possible.
- If an absence extends beyond a certain number of days (typically 3 days or more) without contact, BCI will reach out to the student and emergency contact as per our safeguarding procedures.

**Authorized vs. Unauthorized Criteria:** The college uses standard DfE attendance codes for record-keeping. Examples of authorized absences include: verified illness, health appointments, university open days, court appearances, funerals, or other serious personal matters. Taking holidays during term time is **strongly discouraged** for post-16 students; such absences will not be authorized except in exceptional circumstances approved by senior management. Work commitments are not an acceptable reason for missing scheduled classes (since study programmes are full-time commitments).

## 5.2 Staff – Attendance and Work Hours

All BCI staff are expected to adhere to their contracted working hours and to be present and punctual for all assigned duties (classes, meetings, support sessions, etc.). Staff attendance is vital to providing a consistent learning experience and to modeling the professionalism expected of students.

**Reporting Staff Absences:** If a staff member is unable to attend work (due to sickness or other urgent reason), they must follow BCI's staff absence reporting procedure: typically, notifying their line manager **as early as possible** (preferably by phone before their start time, or by a set deadline in the morning). They should also inform the HR department according to HR guidelines. Teaching staff must, when feasible, provide lesson plans or materials so that a substitute or colleague can cover the class to minimize disruption to students.

**Cover and Support:** Department heads are responsible for arranging cover for absent staff members to ensure continuity of teaching and services. For longer-term staff absences, BCI will communicate plans to students (for example, assigning a long-term substitute or adjusting schedules) to mitigate impact on learning.

**Staff Attendance Support:** BCI is committed to supporting staff well-being. If a staff member has frequent absences due to health conditions or disabilities, the college (through HR) will engage with them in a supportive discussion, possibly involving Occupational Health, to identify reasonable adjustments that can facilitate better attendance or health management. This could include flexible scheduling, remote work options (if appropriate), modification of duties, or assistive resources. All considerations will be in line with the Equality Act and the college's HR policies.

Persistent staff attendance issues will be managed through BCI's HR procedures (which may involve review meetings, attendance improvement plans, or disciplinary steps if necessary), always aiming

first to provide support and adjustments rather than punitive measures. Staff have access to the Employee Assistance Programme and other well-being resources to help resolve any personal issues affecting attendance.

## 6. Support for Students with SEND and Other Barriers to Attendance

BCI recognizes that some students may face additional challenges in maintaining regular attendance, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or other personal circumstances. Our approach is to identify these challenges early and provide tailored support so that every student can attend and participate fully. In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice and Equality Act, we implement the following inclusive provisions:

- **Individualized Support Plans:** If a student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or disclosed disability, the Student Support team (including the SENCO or disability coordinator) will ensure that attendance requirements are discussed as part of their support plan. We use a **“reasonable adjustments and support” plan** for each such student, outlining any accommodations needed regarding attendance or punctuality. For example, a student on the autism spectrum might have a plan that includes allowance for short breaks during a long class or access to a quiet space if feeling overwhelmed, which can help them remain in college for the full day.
- **Accessible Environment:** We ensure the campus environment and class schedule are as accessible as possible. For students with **mobility impairments**, all teaching locations at 6 Dyas Road are wheelchair accessible or have lift access; scheduling is done to minimize room changes that could pose difficulties. Reserved seating or classroom layouts can be arranged for those who need it (e.g. a student with a visual impairment sitting close to the front). For students with **visual impairments**, we provide course materials in large print or Braille as needed and ensure that any important announcements (like a room change or emergency information) are given in an accessible format (verbal and written). For students with **hearing impairments**, we provide necessary support such as sign language interpreters, hearing loop technology in classrooms, or written summaries of spoken information. Such adjustments ensure students can follow along and are not marked absent due to missing information.
- **Flexibility for Health Needs:** Some students with chronic health conditions or disabilities may have more frequent medical appointments or periodic health issues that impact attendance. BCI treats health-related absences sensitively and as authorized absences when properly communicated. We do not penalize students for disability-related absences; instead, we work on a case-by-case basis to support catching up on missed work. **Remote Learning Options:** When appropriate, and especially for those with conditions that might flare up unexpectedly, BCI can offer flexibility such as joining classes remotely (if feasible) or accessing recordings/online materials. Our commitment is that no student should be disadvantaged in their learning progress due to a health condition.
- **Support for Neurodiverse Learners:** Students with autism spectrum conditions, ADHD, dyslexia, or other neurodiverse profiles may benefit from adjustments to improve their comfort with the college routine. For example, an autistic student might have a mentor or support worker to help establish a consistent routine for attendance and to check in with them each morning. Clear and structured timetables, visual schedules, and advance notice of any changes in routine are provided to reduce anxiety-related absences. For students with anxiety or mental health challenges, the college Counselling Service or Mental Health

Support Team is available to help address issues that could be causing non-attendance (such as anxiety about social situations or workload).

- **Collaboration with Specialists:** In line with best practice for SEND support, BCI will involve external specialists when needed. This can include consulting with educational psychologists or autism specialists to develop effective strategies for keeping a student engaged, or working with healthcare providers for students with significant medical needs to plan a suitable schedule. Where a student has an EHCP, we work closely with the local authority and the student's support network to meet the attendance-related outcomes in that plan.
- **Training for Staff:** As part of delivering this inclusive policy, all teaching and support staff receive training on SEND awareness and inclusive classroom strategies. Staff are trained to understand that what may appear as "truancy" or disinterest could be a sign of an underlying need, and to refer such cases to the Support team rather than simply pursue disciplinary action. Training includes how to make minor accommodations in class (like allowing a short movement break for a student with ADHD) and how to use assistive technologies or differentiated materials. The governing body and leadership ensure that staff keep their skills and knowledge up to date for supporting students with SEN or disabilities.

Through these measures, BCI ensures that **universal SEND provisions** are in place for post-16 learners. The emphasis is on removing barriers: whether they are physical, communicative, or emotional. We strive to create an environment where all students, regardless of need or background, can meet the attendance expectations set out in this policy. If any student feels their needs are not being met with regards to attendance, they (or their advocate) are encouraged to contact the Student Support team to discuss further accommodations.

## 7. Monitoring Attendance and Early Intervention

BCI has a robust system for monitoring attendance on an ongoing basis, which allows us to identify issues early and intervene supportively:

- **Attendance Recording:** The college uses an electronic attendance management system. Teaching staff take attendance at the start of each class/session (or within the first 10 minutes) and input it into the system (. For any sessions where technology is not available, paper registers are taken and later input by admin staff to ensure no data is missing. This system generates daily attendance records for every student and flags unexplained absences for follow-up.
- **Data Monitoring:** Designated staff (e.g. Heads of Department, Attendance Officer, or Progress Coaches) review attendance data **weekly**. They look for patterns such as repeated absences on certain days, multiple absences in a short period, or consistent lateness. The system may highlight students falling below a certain attendance percentage (for instance, below 90%). Additionally, **persistent absence** is closely watched: if a student misses 10% or more of sessions (the definition of persistent absenteeism used in national statistics), this is escalated for intervention.
- **Alerts and Follow-up:** When a student is absent without notification, the college will contact them (and their parent/carer if appropriate) on the same day, usually via text or phone call, to check on their well-being and remind them to provide a reason. For repeated absences, formal letters or emails are sent expressing concern and inviting the student to a meeting to

discuss support. BCI's tone in communications is supportive and not accusatory – we make it clear that our goal is to help the student attend, not to punish them.

- **Attendance Reviews (Students):** If a student's attendance falls below acceptable levels or shows a worrying trend, an **Attendance Review Meeting** is arranged. Participants may include the student, their personal tutor or Progress Coach, a member of the Student Support team, and possibly a parent/carer (for younger students) or an external support worker. In this meeting, the team explores reasons for absences (academic difficulties, health issues, financial or transport problems, personal issues like young caregiving responsibilities, etc.). Together, we create an **Attendance Improvement Plan** that outlines strategies and support for the student. This plan might include targets (e.g. "attend at least 90% of classes next term"), scheduled check-ins with a mentor, adjustments to the timetable or workload, counselling sessions, or other agreed actions. The tone is collaborative: we ask "What can we do to help you improve your attendance?"
- **Use of External Agencies:** In cases where outside factors are influencing attendance, BCI will reach out to or recommend external agencies for help (). For example, if a student is struggling with housing or homelessness (affecting their ability to attend morning classes), we might connect them with local housing charities or youth services. If mental health is a barrier, we can refer to NHS mental health services or local counselling organizations. For students with significant SEND-related absences, we liaise with the local authority's SEND team or specialist advisors. Any engagement with external support will be done with the student's consent and in a confidential manner.
- **Rewarding Improvement:** Alongside interventions, BCI believes in positive reinforcement. Students with excellent attendance records or significant improvements will receive recognition. This could be through certificates, acknowledgement in assemblies or newsletters, or eligibility for certain rewards/events. Celebrating good attendance encourages others and helps build a culture where coming to college regularly is valued ().

Through continuous monitoring and early, supportive intervention, we aim to prevent small attendance issues from escalating. By addressing problems promptly – whether they require academic support, pastoral care, or adjustments – BCI helps students stay engaged and successful in their education.

## 8. Communication of Policy and Expectations

Clear communication is crucial to the successful implementation of the attendance policy. BCI ensures that all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities and the support available:

- **Student Induction:** At the start of each academic year (or upon enrollment for late starters), all students attend an induction program. During induction, the attendance policy and expectations are explained in student-friendly terms. Students are informed of the importance of regular attendance, how it links to their achievement, and the procedures for reporting absences. They are also introduced to the support services (counselors, student support officers, etc.) that can help if they experience difficulties attending. Each student receives a **Student Handbook** (in print or online) that includes a summary of the attendance policy, key contacts for attendance issues, and a reminder of the reporting procedure. For students with additional needs, this information is also provided in accessible formats (e.g. easy-read or a one-to-one explanation with their support worker).

- **Staff Training and Meetings:** All new staff members are briefed on the attendance policy as part of their orientation. In addition, BCI holds periodic staff development sessions (at least annually) to review attendance procedures, update on any changes in regulations, and share best practices for improving attendance. Teaching staff meetings regularly include attendance as an agenda item (), where trends are discussed and strategies coordinated. By keeping attendance on the radar in staff communications, we ensure sustained focus.
- **Parental/Carer Communication:** Although BCI is a post-16 institution, we recognize the role of parents and carers for younger students and those with high needs. We communicate attendance expectations to parents/carers through welcome letters, our website, and information evenings. If a student is under 18, we may ask parents/carers to sign an acknowledgment of the attendance policy. The college provides access for parents/carers to view their child's attendance records (via an online portal or on request), to maintain transparency. When concerns arise, parents/carers are contacted early so they can support improvement efforts at home.
- **Ongoing Updates:** BCI uses various channels to remind and reinforce attendance expectations throughout the year. This includes posters on campus with slogans like "Every Day Counts" or attendance tips, regular emails or text reminders to students about being present, and segments in the student e-newsletter highlighting the importance of attendance. The policy itself is published on the BCI **website and intranet**, making it accessible to all students, staff, and stakeholders at any time. Any changes to the policy or procedures (for example, adjustments due to public health guidelines) are promptly communicated via official email and announcements.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** We involve students in discussions about attendance – for instance, through the Student Council or feedback surveys – to understand their perspectives and to improve our approaches. Similarly, staff feedback is sought during the annual review of this policy. By engaging stakeholders, we promote a sense of shared ownership of the attendance expectations.
- **Support Awareness:** Communication is not only about rules but also about support. BCI makes sure that students know where to go if they are struggling. In classrooms, tutors remind students "If you're having trouble making it to class, please talk to me or the support team – we are here to help." Flyers or digital signage around campus provide information on counseling services, financial support (e.g. travel bursaries), and health services that can remove barriers to attendance. We want the message to be clear: **the college will work with you** to help you attend, as long as you reach out.

By communicating expectations and support clearly and frequently, BCI builds a community-wide understanding of the importance of attendance. All stakeholders know not only what is expected, but also that they will be supported in meeting those expectations.

## 9. Policy Delivery, Monitoring, and Review

To ensure this Attendance Policy is effective, BCI has put in place structures for its delivery, regular monitoring, and annual review:

- **Policy Delivery:** The **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** is responsible for the overall delivery of the policy. They ensure that the policy's provisions (such as attendance monitoring systems, support programs, and training) are operational. Specific members of staff (e.g. an

Attendance Officer or Director of Student Services) may be designated to coordinate day-to-day attendance matters. The SLT will oversee that all departments implement the policy consistently – for example, through spot checks of register completion, or ensuring that every department has attendance as a standing agenda item in team meetings (). Any identified shortfalls in implementation (like a class where attendance isn't being recorded properly, or support plans not being followed) are addressed promptly by management.

- **Ongoing Monitoring:** As described in Section 7, attendance data is continuously monitored at various levels (tutor, department, whole-college). The SLT and governing body receive **attendance reports** each term summarizing overall attendance rates, persistent absence figures, and comparative data (e.g. against previous years or benchmark averages). These reports also include data broken down by key groups (such as students with SEND, different age groups, etc.) to ensure the policy is equitable in effect. If any group is found to have disproportionately low attendance, BCI will investigate and take action (this might include reviewing whether additional support or adjustments are needed for that group).
- **Quality Assurance:** The policy's effectiveness is also reviewed through internal quality assurance processes. For instance, internal audits may be conducted to verify that registers are kept correctly, or that intervention steps are being documented. Student feedback about the attendance policy (e.g. whether they feel supported or just "punished") is taken into account. Likewise, feedback from staff (on the practicality of procedures, or suggestions for improvement) is collected. These inputs help ensure that the policy is not just well-intentioned on paper, but working in practice.
- **Annual Review and Update:** This policy will undergo a formal review **one year from its effective date**, i.e. by **21 April 2026**. The review will be led by the policy author (Robert Edwards, MD) in collaboration with the Academic Board or a designated Policy Review Committee. The review process will consider: compliance with any new legislation or updated government guidance (for example, if the DfE issues new post-16 attendance directives or if the SEND Code of Practice is updated), the outcomes of the past year's attendance data, and feedback from stakeholders. If changes are needed, they will be drafted and presented for approval by the BCI governing body or appropriate authority. Once approved, the updated policy will be re-issued to all stakeholders with clear communication of what has changed.
- **Document Control:** A record of revisions will be maintained at the end of the policy document, noting the date of review, what was updated, and who approved the changes. This ensures transparency in how the policy evolves.

BCI is committed to continuous improvement. If issues are identified at any point before the annual review (for example, an unforeseen gap in procedure or a need for additional guidance), we will not wait – interim updates or addendums can be made with leadership approval, and stakeholders will be notified.

**Provision for Urgent Updates:** In exceptional circumstances (such as changes required by emergency public health situations or immediate legal changes), the Managing Director has the authority to make temporary adjustments to attendance procedures. These will be documented and later incorporated into the policy at the formal review.

Through diligent monitoring and a robust review cycle, BCI ensures that this Attendance Policy remains a living document – one that adapts, improves, and continuously serves the best interests of our students and staff.

## **10. Approval and Acknowledgements**

**Authored by:** Robert Edwards (Managing Director, BCI)

**Approved by:** BCI Executive Leadership Team and Board of Governors

**Date:** 21 April 2025

**Next Review Due:** 21 April 2026

This policy was developed with reference to statutory guidance and best practices in the sector. Key sources and guidance documents that informed this policy include the Department for Education's directives on attendance and the SEND Code of Practice, as well as internal expertise and stakeholder feedback. BCI acknowledges the contributions of staff and student representatives in creating an attendance framework that is supportive and inclusive.

By adhering to this policy, BCI reaffirms its commitment to every student's success and every staff member's well-being, fostering a culture where **every day of learning counts**.