



**Parents' Guide
To
PACA Sixth Form
2018-19**

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CODE OF CONDUCT AND GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Our policy is that we will treat students in an adult manner as long as they are able to conduct themselves in an adult manner.

We have four basic expectations of the students here:

1. All timetabled lessons, tutor sessions and supervised study are attended punctually.
2. Behaviour does not interrupt the learning of others.
3. All assignments are submitted by given deadlines.
4. Dress code is adhered to.

Work spaces

If students have a non-lesson period, they are welcome to leave the academy during breaks, provided that they sign in and out. However, if they choose to remain in the academy, there are two main areas within the Sixth Form where they can work:

- **Library** – a quiet study place. This is where students can work independently without interruption. If students are continually noisy they may be asked to work elsewhere so as not to interrupt those who require quiet to study.
- **Sixth Form Common Room and Cafe**– group work areas. This is where students can work in small groups and discuss their work, and socialise.

At break, lunch, before and after school, the common room is more relaxed although during the exam period students have found it beneficial to maintain the quiet rule for a period after the end of the school day.

Sanctions

It is unfeasible to expect that all students will miraculously become adults over the summer holidays and so it is still necessary to have some sanctions. The students also tell us that in the end they appreciate being given the sanctions because they then learn from their mistakes more quickly.

We have three policies in place, which address the key expectations of students within the sixth form: academic performance, attendance and behaviour. These can be found outlined on the following pages. We have found that the transparent nature of these policies have been effective for both parents and students.

THE ACADEMY DAY & KEY DATES

The Academy Day

Sixth form students can use their ID card to enter the building between 8 am and 5.30 pm.

8:30 Registration and tutorial
8:50 Period 1
10:10 Period 2
11:30 Break 1
11:55 Period 3
13:15 Lunch
13:25 Period 3
13:55 Period 4

Students **must** sign in and out each time they enter or leave the academy.

This is a health and safety requirement and could save lives in the event of a fire.

Study Leave

Experience has proved that students achieve better results when they continue to attend lessons up to the date of the examination.

A2 courses (Academic): Classes continue until the final examination in that specific subject. Once all examinations for a subject have been completed, students no longer need to attend lessons for that subject.

BTEC subjects (Applied General/Tech Level): As non-examination subjects, students continue to attend classes until the end of term in Year 12 or until all units have been signed off as reaching target grade in year 13. The deadline for this will be finalised in September but is likely to be around the summer half term.

Key Dates: A calendar of key dates is available on the School website which should be checked regularly. Students missing public examinations will be invoiced for the cost of entry. Subject teachers will be able to give specific examination dates from September. Examination timetables will be issued in November and March.

Individual subjects will have coursework hand in dates spread throughout the year. These will be published in course handbooks. Students will be encouraged to make note of these at the start of the year to ensure that they are able to organise their studies to maximise time. If you are concerned that your child does not know when units will be due in, please feel free to contact subject teachers. If the issue is across subjects, it may be easier to contact Mr Watson.

If you know that your child struggles with organisation and may need extra support in adhering to deadlines, please let us know.

CURRICULUM AND STUDY EXPECTATIONS

Curriculum

Students need to be studying at least three A Levels or equivalent to remain a full-time student at PACA, or to be enrolled on the Level 2 course. Students who complete the Level 2 course will be given the opportunity to apply for Level 3 courses for the following year and may stay for a total of 3 years to complete their courses.

The last date to change any course is Friday 23rd September.

Study Expectations

Students will have timetabled periods for each Level 3 subject. Ideally, you should expect your son or daughter to spend an equivalent amount of time on each subject as independent study.

Their teacher will direct some of this as coursework tasks or homework. They should make up the rest of the time with revision or research.

Target Grades

Target grades are set using the ALPS national database as a baseline and then adjusted in line with individual prior attainment in an equivalent subject where possible. The table below sets out what students *generally* achieve at A Level based on their GCSE grades. (Level 2 BTECS are not included in the calculation, as they do not give a true indication.)

Approximate GCSE grades (1-9)	Usual target grade	Expected A Level grades	Expected BTEC grades
Mainly 8 and 9	A*/A/D*	A*AAA	D*DDD
Mainly 8	A	AAA	DDD
Mainly 8/Some 7	B	ABB	DDM
Even split 7 and 6	B	BBB	DDM
Mainly 6/Some 5	B/C	BBC	DDM
Overall 5	B/C	BCC	DDM
Mainly 5/Some 4	C	CCC	DMM
Mainly 4	C/D	CDD	MMM
Some 4/Some 3	D	DDD	MMM

Target grades can be adjusted, particularly where we know certain grades are needed for a university course or if a student shows a talent for the subject and is regularly exceeding their original target. Targets will not be adjusted below the baseline as this would indicate the subject is unsuitable for the student.

Folders

Students are expected to have folders for EACH subject. It might be that there are numerous folders within each subject as they cover more units and course content. Folders are the most valuable revision resource that an A Level student can have and accordingly they should be organised using dividers and cover sheets. The folders will contain tracking sheets and personalised learning checklists for each subject. We will be carrying out on the spot folder checks, but would also ask that you encourage your child to take care of their folder and ensure they bring it to every lesson

Lockers

We have many lockers available for use. Students are required to bring their own padlock and they can have use of the locker for no charge. The lockers are ideal for keeping folders in, students should utilise them to ensure they have their work available to them should they require it during a lesson. I expect all academic students to have a locker and to have this in place by the end of the academic probation period.

ACADEMIC TRACKING

Teachers will report on student progress every half term.

This will take the form of a predicted grade and information will be given about reasons why your child may not be meeting their target grade if that is the case. The predicted grade is the grade that the student is most likely to achieve at the end of the current course if they continue to work in the way they are currently doing. These grades are based on assessed work and each teacher will have a record of the marks informing the grade. If you have a query, you may contact the Head of sixth Form – Mr Watson.

A report on student progress will be sent home in October, March and June.

There will also be 2 parents' evenings during the year to discuss progress with subject teachers. Support from our Widening Participation partner, University of Brighton and University of Sussex will be provided on those evenings for any queries related to university entrance and how the report may affect student prospects.

Students who are identified as underperforming will be subject to the Academic Probation policy, which is designed as an early intervention tool to support students and identify barriers to learning which can be broken down. An outline of this policy can be found on the following page. Students who are placed on academic review will meet regularly with their subject teacher and will be given a Learning Plan designed to support them. You will be kept informed if there are any issues with academic performance as we feel the most productive way for each student to fulfil their potential is for the academy, the student and home to work as a team.

Every aspect of the process is designed for maximum progress.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

The first four weeks of the Autumn Term are used as an academic probation period. During this time, students will be assessed for their suitability for the courses for which they have enrolled. Students will also get a chance to change courses if they decide their original choices are not for them. After the initial four week probation period, students' enrolment becomes binding and they are then expected to remain on those courses throughout their time at PACA.

ATTENDANCE

The Head of Sixth Form – Mr Calum Watson is responsible for monitoring attendance as a whole. Subject teachers will take action if attendance is low for a specific subject, but overall attendance should remain above 95% to ensure maximum progress.

If attendance or punctuality falls below an acceptable level, this will be treated as not adhering to the code of conduct and sanctions will be put in place as outlined in the 'Code of conduct' section.

Planned Absence: Interviews/Hospital Appointments etc.

Please try to make normal doctor and dental appointments outside of lesson times.

Driving lessons are also not permitted when students have a timetabled lesson. These must be booked for non-contact periods or outside of the school day. This is also true of work shifts and job interviews.

However, we understand that if students have to see a specialist for any reason or have a university interview, it is difficult to control the date and time of appointment. In this instance, a copy of the letter must go to Mr Watson and the absence will be coded as such.

If there is a planned absence, subject teachers must be seen before the absence to ensure that missed work is completed before subsequent lessons.

Unplanned Absence: Illness/Emergency

If students are ill or there is an emergency which means they will be late to sixth form or absent, Mr Phillips (sixth form officer) must be contacted directly either by the student or you. You can do this by telephone or by email.

Direct line: 01273 416300 (There is a voicemail facility)

Email: d.phillips@paca.uk.com

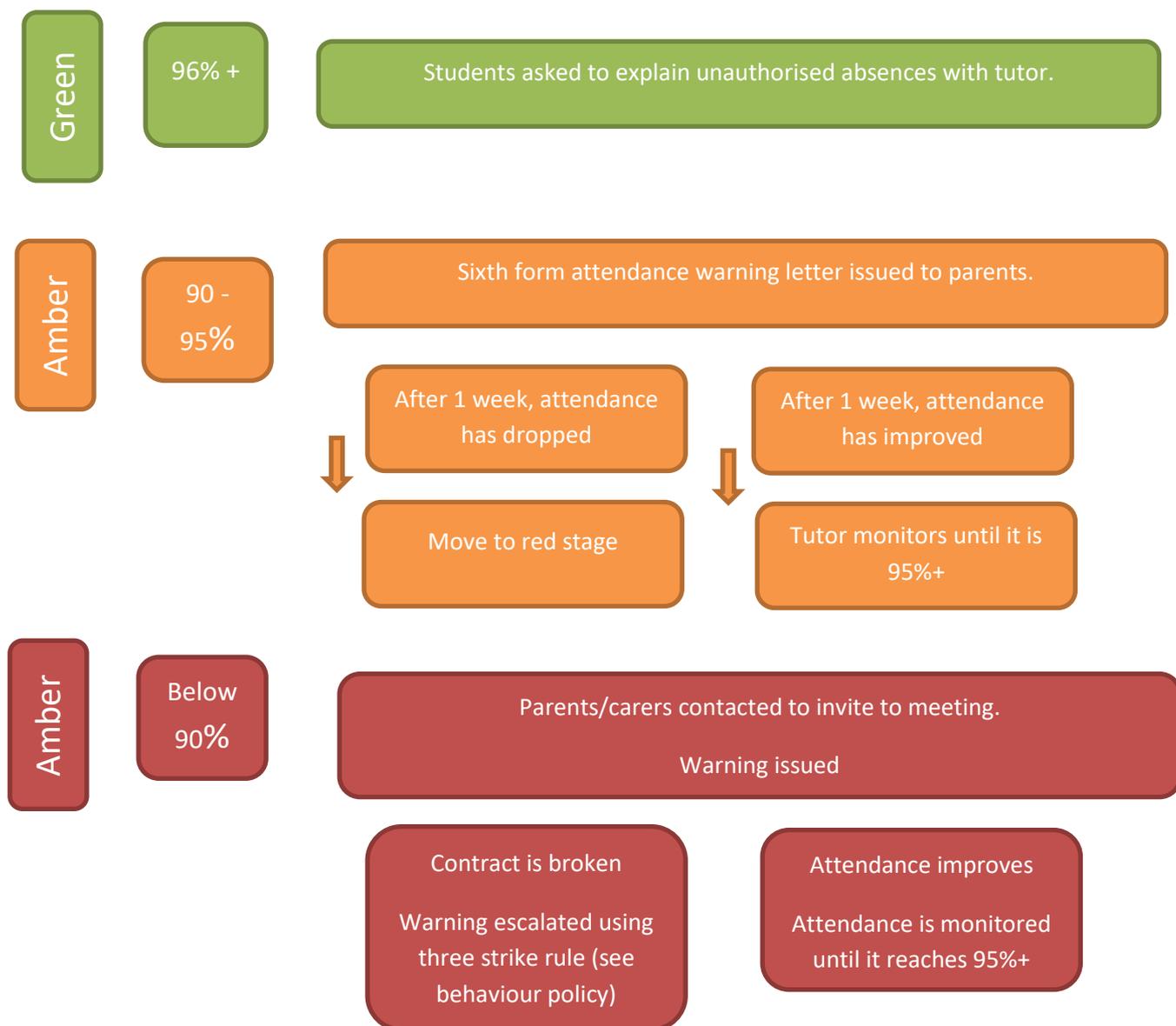
There must be contact on each day of absence. If absence is prolonged and therefore has an impact on study, evidence of contact with a doctor should be provided to Mr Watson. If we feel there is an excessive amount of absence that is only informed by the student, Mr Watson will contact you to verify the illness.

Wherever possible, contact should be made with teachers if a lesson will be missed. All teachers are contactable by email. They will be able to send work so that students are up to date when they return.

If students are unable to contact their teacher on their day of absence, they should do so immediately when they return instead of waiting until the next time they have that lesson. They should discuss their

absence with the pastoral manager in the sixth form office in order that the absence we recorded correctly.

ATTENDANCE POLICY



SIXTH FORM DRESS CODE

Our expectations are that students will present themselves in smart casual attire that is modest and appropriate for a professional working environment. In certain circumstances for particular subjects, you will be required to conform to health and safety requirements when working in particular settings such as science labs. Clear instructions and guidance will be issued in these cases.

In line with our staff policy footwear must be practical, and no open toe shoes such as flip-flops are permitted. We would expect our learners to determine what a professional and acceptable appearance is, but we may challenge certain items if they are felt to be inappropriate not in keeping with our dress code, and represent unconventional extremes.

In all cases the principal remains the final arbitrator in any uncertainty.

Generally, students not meeting the dress code will be sent home.

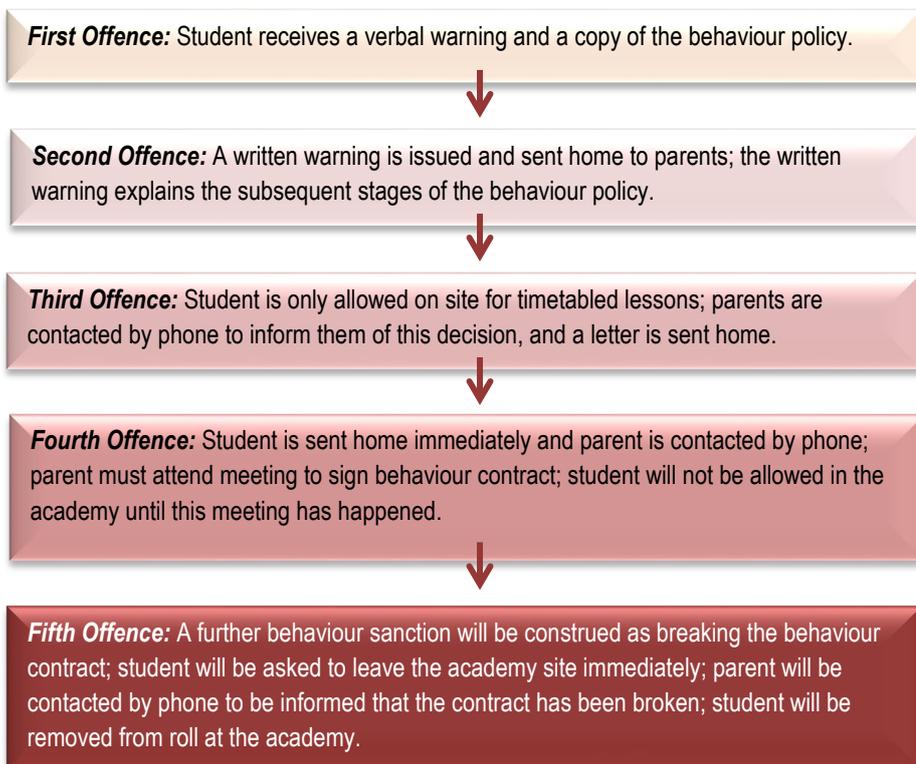
BEHAVIOUR

A student may receive a behaviour sanction for a number of reasons:

- Disruption of Learning in lessons or common study areas during lesson periods
- Disrespectful behaviour towards another student or member of staff
- Damage to academy property
- Damage to property belonging to another student or member of staff
- Behaviour which could be construed as presenting the academy in a negative light, including but not limited to behaviour in and around academy grounds and use of social networks.
- Continued disregard of PACA 6th form dress code
- Inappropriate use of academy facilities

The issuing and administration of a behaviour sanction is at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form. All behaviour sanctions will be recorded on the student's school record.

Procedure



UCAS AND GRADE CALCULATION

UCAS

UCAS is the system through which students apply for university. Each grade they achieve will carry a value in UCAS points. Universities will ask for either certain grades or a certain number of UCAS points to get onto their courses.

Year 12: Students will start thinking about university applications in the spring term. They will attend a Higher Education fair and have access to support from University of Brighton and University of Sussex Widening Participation team in identifying suitable courses and starting your applications. This will take the form of a workshop before the Higher Education fair.

Students will then register for UCAS in the summer term. They should start attending Open Days during year 12 to give the maximum amount of information possible.

Students should also be collecting 'experiences' such as leadership and work experience or volunteering. The benefit of being a smaller sixth form is that we can tailor experiences to individual needs.

University of Brighton and of Sussex will then return to conduct Personal Statement workshops with the students in order to maximise their chances of getting into university.

Please note that applications for: Oxbridge, medicine, teaching, veterinary science, dentistry, law, physiotherapy all require early consideration as there is extra preparation to undertake and additional entrance tests to pass in a number of cases. If students know that this is where they are aiming, they should inform their tutor or Mr Watson as soon as possible.

Some students already have a clear idea of courses which they are interested in. We strongly recommend making these plans known as soon as possible in order to best support students by inviting in appropriate visiting speakers, arranging for visits or work experience and highlighting appropriate Open Days.

Next year's round of summer schools will be advertised from January. If students meet the required criteria for these summer schools, they will be invited to apply and supported with their application.

Year 13: Students will have already registered for UCAS in Year 12. If they have not already done so, but think that they would like to apply for university they must speak to Miss Wales, the UCAS co-ordinator for PACA, immediately.

Students will need to write their personal statement and have it checked by their tutor to ensure that it 'sells' them to the universities they are applying for. They should carefully consider which courses are suitable for them, thinking about the grades they are likely to achieve.

References for UCAS are written by tutors on the basis of information provided by subject tutors.

No application to UCAS will be sent until it has been checked by Miss Wales.

Pearson BTEC Extended Diploma (QCF)	
Grade	Tariff points
D*D*D*	168
D*D*D	160
D*DD	152
DDD	144
DDM	128
DMM	112
MMM	96
MMP	80
MPP	64
PPP	48

Size band: 4+4+4 = 12
Grade bands: 4-14

A level and Advanced VCE

Official title: Advanced GCE and Advanced VCE

Grade	Tariff points
A*	56
A	48
B	40
C	32
D	24
E	16

Size band: 4

Grade bands: 4-14

Offered by AQA, CCEA, OCR, Pearson Edexcel and WJEC

Applications for specialist areas such as medicine, veterinary science, dentistry and Oxbridge need to be sent off by 15th October at the latest. All other applications must be sent by 15th January, although the academy deadline will be earlier than this to ensure that no student misses out. The cost for UCAS applications is £23 for up to five universities (maximum number of applications) and £12 for one university. Students may only apply for Oxford or Cambridge, and if applying for medicine, only four of the applications may be medical courses. The fifth should be a related subject.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Unlike some institutions, we believe that home support is a vital factor in success, and that while you are supporting your sons and daughters in their education, you are entitled to be kept informed of any issues. Although this may seem like an annoyance to the students at first, feedback from our students tells us that actually they are quite pleased that we have contacted home because it has enabled them to make better progress.

As already outlined, you will receive academic reports each of the first four terms. Although reports will not be sent home in the final two half terms, due to the nature of A Level exams and the structure of courses, grades will still be reported internally, and the BTEC courses in particular will still be carefully monitored by subject teachers and Mr Watson. If there are particular issues with achievement in BTEC courses, you will be contacted individually to be informed of any concerns.

Our aim is of course to encourage students to become mature, independent adults who take responsibility for their own learning. However, each teenager will take this journey at their own rate and so the level of parental contact and support required will vary from student to student.

Basic communication that you can expect from us will be: termly reports as outlined in the tracking section of the booklet, letters about parent/teacher consultation evenings, letters about events which parents are invited to such as university finance evenings, letters about whole academy information. Wherever possible, these will be posted home rather than relying on pupil post.

Any changes to courses will be fully discussed and not actioned without an interview with the head of sixth form. Any decision to change course will not be taken lightly and future plans, aptitude and current status will all be taken into account. Times for course changes are before the 29th September.

If you are concerned that you have not heard from us beyond the basic communication, please do feel free to contact us.

Mr Watson's contact details are given below, and contact can be made discreetly (without your son and daughter being informed) or openly. Please ensure that we are aware if you wish to keep the contact discreet so that we do not inadvertently mention it and cause issues.

Finally, if you have any suggestions about how we can improve the parent experience for students at the PACA sixth form, please contact Itziar Leighton Director or Mr Calum Watson.

Mr Calum Watson: Head of Sixth Form: c.watson@paca.uk.com



