

Apprentice Attendance, Absence, Break-in-learning and Withdrawal Policy and Procedure

Purpose

This policy outlines the responsibilities of Kingdom College, the Apprentice and their Employer for Apprentices' attendance, absence and withdrawal during an apprenticeship.

The Commitment Statement is agreed by the Employer, Apprentice and Kingdom College. The commitment statement includes the commitment to regular attendance and a contribution to training towards the successful completion of the apprenticeship.

All Apprentices and staff are expected to adhere to Absence Management, Apprentice Commitment and Reporting. All Apprentice are required to mandatorily attend the timetabled learning sessions (1-to-1 coaching, workshops, seminars etc).

If Apprentices do not attend timetabled and scheduled learning sessions, Kingdom College will contact them to talk about their absence and will help them to find additional support if they are experiencing difficulties.

Kingdom College will

- Keep accurate attendance/participation records and use these to identify Apprentices at risk of leaving early (withdrawal)
- Support Apprentices and Employers in the event that an Agreed Break in Learning is required
- Determine, within 28 days of an Apprentice leaving training, their intention to continue the apprenticeship
- Encourage and support Apprentices in finding alternative employment if required
- Confirm withdrawal in writing to the Apprentice (to the last known address) should the Apprentice leave early without completing

Responsibilities of the Apprentice

- Attend work and training as agreed as long as fit to do so
- Advise the Employer of sickness or absence and their Kingdom College Assessor/Tutor and Kingdom College Admin team via admin@kingdomcollege.org.uk.
- Agree annual leave with their Employer and advise their Kingdom College Assessor/Tutor
- Contact Kingdom College immediately if employment ceases or changes

Commitment from the Apprentice

- Attend all required off-the-job coaching and workshops, Functional Skills sessions
- Notify Kingdom College and the Employer, in advance where possible, of non-attendance ([authorised absence](#)).
- Commit to the agreed milestones and learning activities required in each module, including any additional self-study and research (to take place during working hours).
- Complete any coursework, assignments and exams required to achieve the apprenticeship.
- Attend and contribute to the progress review meetings.
- Bring any issues to the attention of the Employer/Kingdom College, including any learning support/health issues that might affect the plan of training.

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Responsibilities of the Employer

- Agree working and training hours within the maximum hours allowed within the European Working Time Directive, taking note of special requirements for Apprentices under the age of 18 years Working time limits (the 48-hour week): Directgov – Employment.
- Record attendance and absence and address any issues promptly with the Apprentice and Kingdom College
- Attend progress reviews for Apprentices as agreed
- Advise Kingdom College immediately if an Apprentice is absent for an Assessor/Tutor visit or leaves employment

Why Apprentice commitment is important?

Attendance is a significant factor of success. Attending their face to face, online sessions, seminars and workshops provides Apprentices with opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully complete their course of work. A decrease in levels of engagement and attendance can provide an early warning of problems.

Attendance:

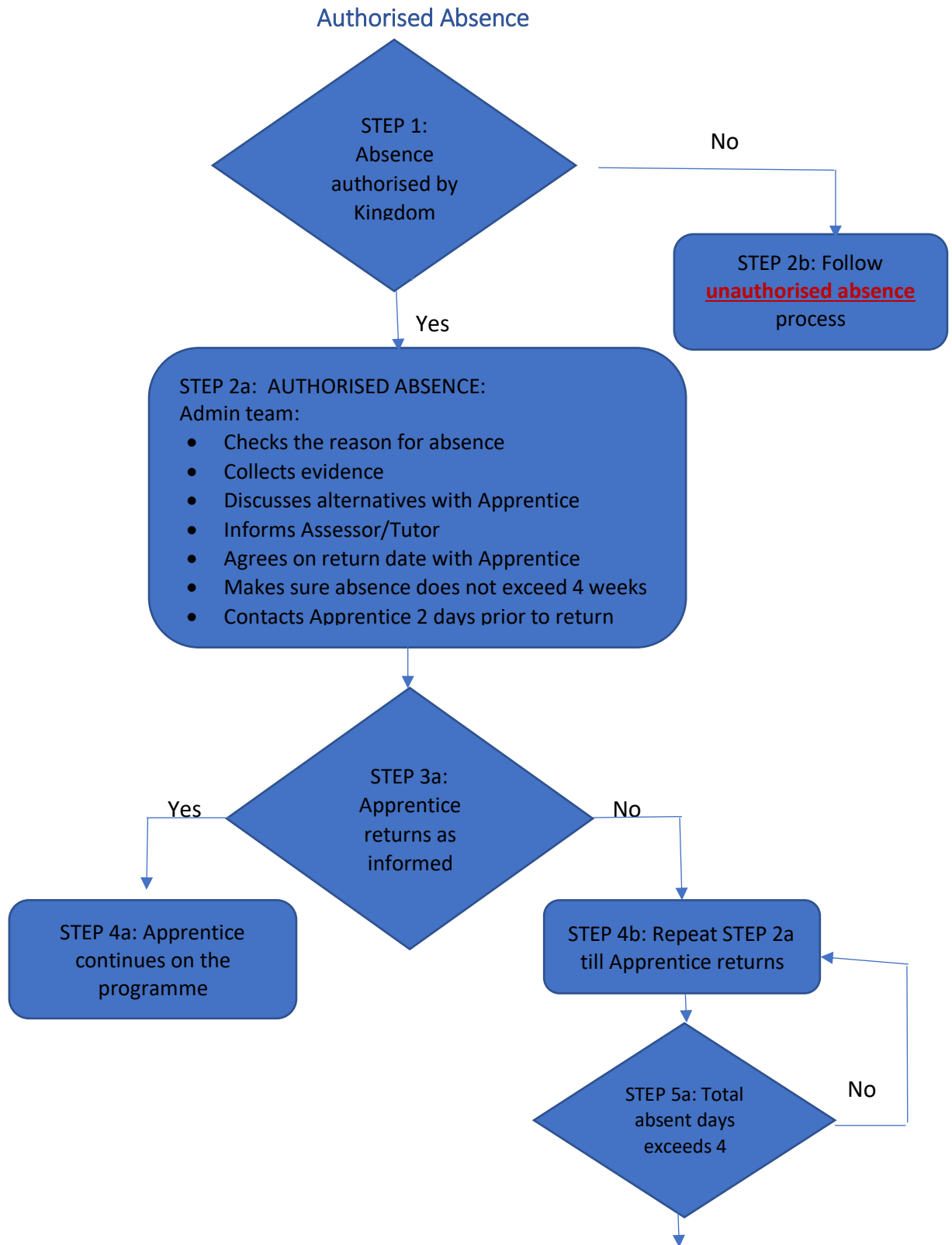
All scheduled sessions are mandatorily required to be attended by all Apprentices across all standards at all levels. Kingdom College intends all Apprentices to have 100% attendance whilst undertaking their apprenticeship programme.

Authorised and Unauthorised absences:

Authorised absence: An authorised absence is when an Apprentice has obtained permission from their Assessor and/(or) Tutor and have informed the Kingdom College Admin team prior to taking the leave from scheduled session. The Apprentice must return to the apprenticeship on the planned return date. If the Apprentice needs to extend their absence from learning, they must contact the Admin team, who will be responsible to check if the absence period exceeds 4 weeks. If it exceeds 4 weeks of non-attendance, Apprentice will be placed on [break-in-learning](#) (refer [break-in-learning](#) section) in consultation with the Employer. Including your authorised absence, if any, your attendance is required to be at 100% at all times.

Unauthorised absence: An unauthorised absence occurs when the Apprentice has failed to inform their Assessor and/(or) Tutor and/(or) Kingdom College Admin team regarding their absence. The Admin team would make take utmost efforts to contact the Apprentice. Apprentice will be reminded of their commitment and consequence on failure to attend. They will be sent 3 reminder emails followed by a warning email and then the final withdrawal email and letter (refer [withdrawal](#) section) before permanently withdrawing them from the programme. Their Employer would be kept updated at all stages by being copied into the emails and the final letter.

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Unauthorised Absence

Yes

STEP 6a: Follow **Break in learning** Process

STEP 2b: UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE:

- Assessor/Tutor reports Apprentice absence from a scheduled session (or)
- Admin team finds Apprentice absence from attendance log
- Admin team contacts Apprentice via phone and 1st reminder email sent to Apprentice.
- Employer and Assessor/Tutor are copied in the email.

STEP 3b: Apprentice contacts Kingdom College

Yes

Permission for absence

No

STEP 4c: Apprentice starts attending

STEP 4d:

- Assessor/Tutor schedule another session.
- Schedule informed to Apprentice via phone and email

STEP 4e: Follow **authorised absence** process

STEP 5b: Apprentice attends session

Yes

STEP 6b: Apprentice continues on the programme

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No

STEP 6c:

- Admin team contacts Apprentice via phone
- 2nd reminder outlining their responsibilities, commitment, funding rules, deadline (48 hours) to respond sent to the Apprentice
- Employer and Assessor/Tutor are copied in the email

STEP 7: Apprentice starts attending the scheduled session

Yes

STEP 8a: Apprentice continues on the programme

No

STEP 8b:

- 3rd and final reminder email sent to Apprentice in addition to phone calls
- Deadline (48 hours) to contact the College is mentioned
- Break-in-learning proposed
- Employer and Assessor/Tutor are copied in the email

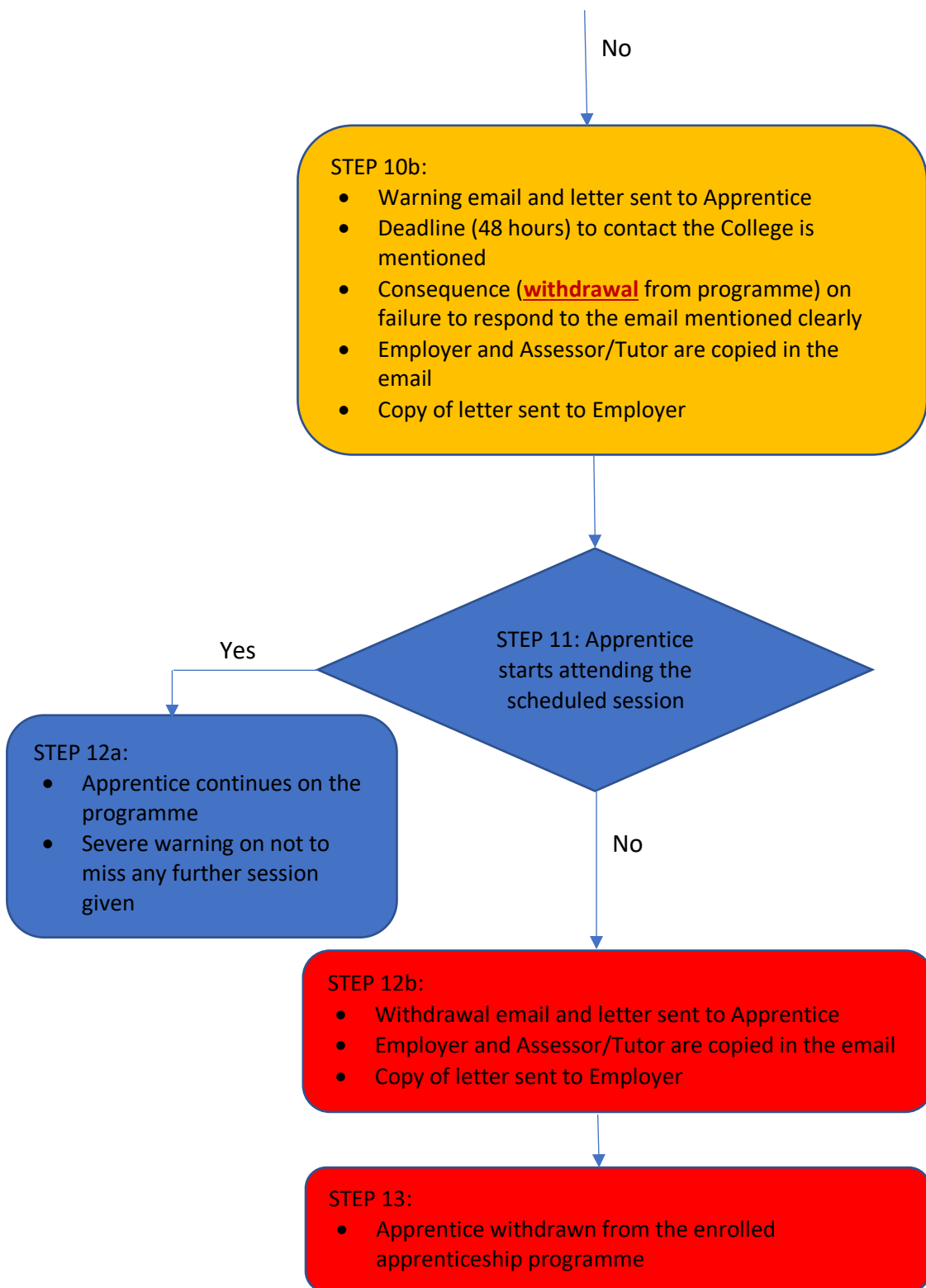
STEP 9: Apprentice starts attending the scheduled session

Yes

STEP 10a:

- Apprentice continues on the programme
- Warning not to miss any sessions given

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What are Mitigating Circumstances?

Mitigating Circumstances (MCs) are serious unforeseen, unpreventable circumstances that significantly disrupt Apprentice performance in assessment.

Apprentices are expected to plan their work so they can meet assessment deadlines at the same time as other obligations they may have. The mitigating circumstances process should only be used if they experience significant disruption to their studies due to circumstances that were unforeseen and out of their control.

In order for a mitigating circumstance claim to be accepted, Apprentice must demonstrate, to the Kingdom College that the mitigating circumstances:

- were outside their control; and
- were unforeseen and unforeseeable; and
- were serious; and
- were evidenced to be true; and
- relate directly to the timing of the assessment affected (i.e. that they occurred at the same time as the assessment date, or during the preparation period immediately prior to the assessment date); and
- either prevented them from submitting or presenting for the assessment by the due date, or where they have undertaken the assessment, adversely impacted on their performance such that if it had not been for those circumstances, they would have performed significantly better.

The following are the most common examples of mitigating circumstances for which a claim might be accepted (this list is not intended to be definitive):

- Serious short-term illness
- Death of a close relative or friend
- Sudden deterioration of a long-term condition

The following are examples of circumstances for which a claim will not normally be accepted (this list is not intended to be definitive):

- Medical circumstances that occurred outside the relevant assessment period;
- Holiday/employment commitments;
- Personal computer/printer problems;
- Poor study practice;
- Ignorance of due dates/times;
- Poor time management;
- Late disclosure of circumstances on the basis that a student felt unable or uncomfortable confiding in a Kingdom College staff member about their mitigating circumstances.

Independent documentary evidence

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The following examples of types of evidence is provided for guidance only. This is not an exhaustive list:

Medical Conditions

In the case of evidence relating to medical conditions, this must take the form of a medical certificate or doctor's letter that is either obtained at the time of the illness or evidence that makes it clear that they were unwell at the time. The evidence must state the time and duration of the illness and include a clear medical opinion. A note from the doctor indicating that the Apprentice told them they were unwell will not normally be accepted, and self-certification cannot be accepted.

Bereavement

Where the mitigating circumstances relate to the death of someone related to or known to the Apprentice, Kingdom College normally requires a death certificate or an officially certified copy of a death certificate, or equivalent official document to be provided. If they have been affected by a death of someone other than a partner, parent, child or close family member, Kingdom College requires them to explain the relationship to the deceased and the impact upon their studies. Bereavement will normally be considered to cover the assessments within the semester when the death occurred. If they feel they have been affected by a death beyond this they will normally need to provide additional evidence to indicate how the death has affected them personally e.g. a doctor's certificate.

Computer and information technology problems

Failures of equipment, including IT systems and computer viruses will only be accepted when they occur Practice-wide, site-wide.

Supporting evidence from Assessor/Tutor

Apprentice may seek a supporting statement from their Assessor/Tutor (or another suitably qualified member of Kingdom College staff), in order to help them to articulate their claim, if that individual is aware of the circumstances and their effects, although this cannot, in itself, constitute independent documentary evidence.

Submitting a claim for Mitigating Circumstances to Kingdom College

Mitigating Circumstances (MC) claims should be submitted to Kingdom College via admin@kingdomcollege.org.uk. Please note: Apprentice may be required to present their evidence to the Kingdom College for authentication.

Apprentices should seek advice and guidance from their Assessor/Tutor prior to submitting a claim. An Apprentice's misinterpretation or lack of awareness of these regulations will not be considered a valid reason for non-compliance.

Apprentice should be aware that discussing their circumstances with Kingdom College staff does not constitute a submission of a mitigating circumstances claim.

Agreed Break in Learning (Temporary withdrawal):

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A Break in Learning (BIL) is an authorised break in training where an Apprentice is not continuing with their apprenticeship but have agreed with their Employer and Kingdom College that they intend to resume their apprenticeship in the future.

- A break in learning can be taken either with, or without a break in employment but they cannot complete any off-the-job training or assessment towards their apprenticeship programme for the entire duration of the break.
- The decision to take a break in learning, the reason for the break and its expected duration must be agreed with the Employer and discussed with their Assessor/Tutor, who will in turn request Kingdom College Administration Office to process their BIL.

They may be eligible to take a Break in Learning if they:

- have a documented medical or personal reason that's making it hard for them to engage with and concentrate on their studies
- are going on a period of maternity or paternity leave.

It is important to discuss their options with their Employer and their Assessor/Tutor before they make a decision; a Break in Learning should ONLY be considered after they have explored all other options.

Closer to their agreed return date, they will be contacted via email by Kingdom College to confirm their resumption of studies. Upon their return from BIL, their Assessor will return them to learning.

Note: Annual leave, public holidays and short-term absences (up to 4 weeks) will not be recorded as Breaks in Learning.

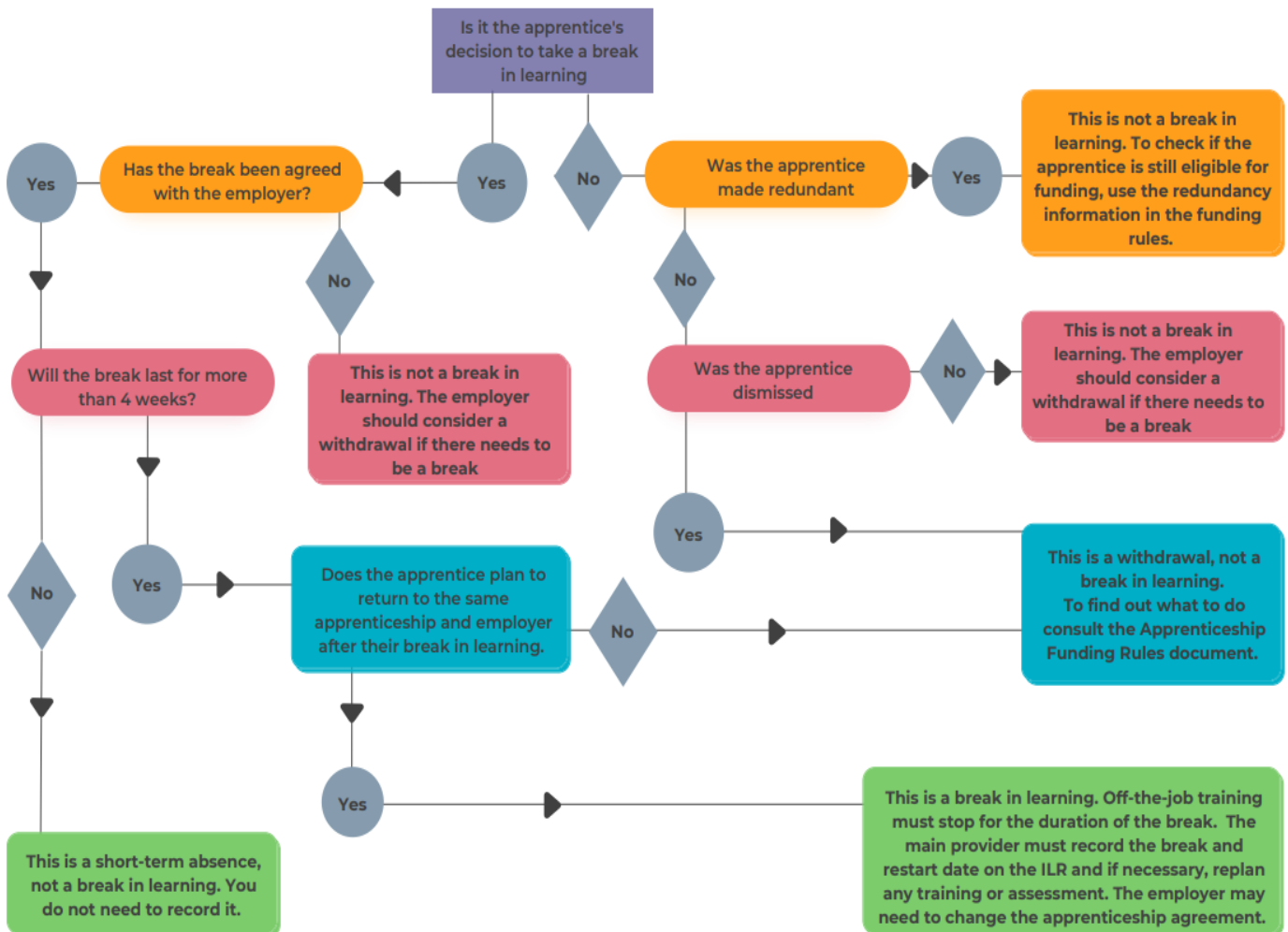
If an Apprentice wishes to apply for a break in learning, below process will be followed:

- Apprentice request to leave is made known to the Assessor/Tutor.
- The Apprentice and Employer will be invited by the Assessor/Tutor to a meeting to discuss the request.
- During the meeting, all available support options will be explored.
- If agreed by all parties that the best course of action is for the Apprentice to have break in learning, notes from the meeting will be made, BIL form completed and signed by all 3 parties.
- Following the meeting, a request for BIL is raised by the Assessor/Tutor via BUD in addition to submitting the signed notes and form from the meeting.
- The Operations Manager/IQA will investigate and review if the request can be approved.
- If satisfied with the reason, the Operations Manager will approve the request for break and back office will process the break. No request will be processed unless all stages are properly completed.
- If reason is unsatisfactory, the break will be rejected and the Apprentice will return to learning.
- Both Apprentice and Employer will be updated with the progress at all stages.

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- Once the Apprentice attends the first session after the break, Assessor/Tutor is responsible to do the 'return to learning' on BUD.

Flowchart: Break-in-learning



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Permanent Withdrawal:

When an Apprentice leaves, or stops taking part in their apprenticeship, before they have completed it, this is known as permanent withdrawal.

There may be occasions where an Apprentice needs to be withdrawn from their training programme/apprenticeship.

1. Apprentice fails to attend scheduled sessions even after continuous reminders and warning from Kingdom College (Disciplinary procedure).
2. Apprentice wishes to withdraw due to unavoidable circumstances.

1. Disciplinary Procedure

- In the first instance, the Assessor/Tutor or other Kingdom College representative will respectfully bring the issue of Absence and Apprentice Commitment to the attention of the Apprentice and discuss, where and how to prevent further issues.
 - If they continue to miss scheduled learning sessions – a three strikes rule will apply where the Apprentices will be sent 3 reminder emails outlining their commitment towards the apprenticeship. Employers and Assessor/Tutor will be copied into the emails.
 - Apprentices will be given the opportunity to consider break-in-learning (see break-in-learning section for more details).
 - If an Apprentice's absence continues to be unacceptable, they will be sent a final warning of withdrawal email and letter (both Cced to their Employer) giving a deadline of 48 hours to respond.
 - Upon failure to respond within the deadline of 48 hours, the Apprentice will be permanently withdrawn from the apprenticeship. Apprentice will be sent a withdrawal email and letter that will be Cced to their Employer.
 - Following an event where it has been necessary to remove an Apprentice from a programme, an investigation will take place, taking note of statements provided by the Apprentice, Tutor/Assessor and the Employer.
 - Where it is found that an Apprentice was removed from an apprenticeship with due cause, the Apprentice will no longer be an apprenticeship student at Kingdom College. They will only be accepted back onto future learning programmes on the condition their behaviour improves. Their Employer will be held accountable and may also be restricted in their access of future courses. No refund or credit will be made for loss of places (or other bookings) where an Apprentice has been refused future training.
 - If it is identified that the removal of the Apprentice was inappropriate, Kingdom College will accommodate the Apprentice, without charge, as soon as possible.
2. If an **Apprentice wishes to withdraw due to inevitable circumstances**, below process will be followed:

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- Apprentice/Employer requests withdrawal of Apprentice to the Assessor/Tutor.
- The Apprentice and Employer will be invited by the Assessor/Tutor to a meeting to discuss the request.
- During the meeting, all available support options will be explored both at Kingdom College and in the workplace.
- If agreed by all parties that the best course of action is for the Apprentice to permanently withdraw, notes from the meeting will be made, withdrawal form completed and signed by all 3 parties.
- Following the meeting, a request to withdraw is raised by the Assessor/Tutor via BUD in addition to submitting the signed notes and form from the meeting.
- The Operations Manager/IQA will investigate and review if the request can be approved.
- If satisfied with the reason, the Operations Manager will approve the request for withdrawal and back office will process the withdrawal. No request will be processed unless all stages are properly completed.
- Once Apprentice is withdrawn from training programme/apprenticeship, the withdrawal cannot be retracked. If Apprentice wishes to return, they must be re-enrolled on BUD.

Once the application for Permanent Withdrawal has been processed, Apprentice will no longer be an apprenticeship student at Kingdom College.

It is imperative that the Apprentice inform their Assessor/Tutor and Employer as soon as they feel that their ability to continue with their apprenticeship is being challenged. Although a temporary or permanent withdrawal may be an option, we want to, in conjunction with the employer, ensure that other options available to the Apprentice have been exhausted before a final decision is reached.

Last Reviewed date: 01-08-2024

Next Review Date: 01-07-2025

Mark Simpkins, Chair of the Advisory Board

