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University College Cork**

Attendance Recording Policies

Incorporating

Attendance Policy
Attendance Recording Procedures
Disciplinary Procedures

For

BSc Nursing Students
BSc Midwifery Students
Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nursing Students

2019/2020

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ATTENDANCE POLICY	1
1. BACKGROUND	3
2. RECORDING OF THEORETICAL INSTRUCTION	3
3. MANAGEMENT OF UNSATISFACTORY ACADEMIC ATTENDANCE POLICY	4
4. SCOPE OF POLICY	4
5. PROCEDURE FOR RECORDING JUDGEMENTS	4
6. RECORDING OF CLINICAL PRACTICE.....	6
OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR ATTENDANCE RECORDING SYSTEM	7
7. OPERATING GUIDELINES	7
8. STUDENT GUIDELINES	7
9. Accountable Absences.....	8
10. MISUSE OF SYSTEM	9
11. LECTURER GUIDELINES	9
12. ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES	10
13. REPORTING SYSTEM.....	10
DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES RE MISUSE OF ATTENDANCE RECORDING SYSTEM ..	11
14. PURPOSE OF THE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE	11
15. PRE-PROCEDURE STAGE – INFORMAL COUNSELLING	11
16. FORMAL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE.....	12
17. SCOPE OF THE PROCEDURE	12
18. PRINCIPLES APPLYING TO ALL STAGES OF THE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE	12
19. NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.....	13
20. CONDUCTING A DISCIPLINARY HEARING.....	14
21. ISSUING WARNINGS UNDER THE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE.....	14
22. STAGE 1 - ORAL WARNING	15
23. STAGE 2 - FIRST WRITTEN WARNING.....	15
24. STAGE 3 - SECOND AND FINAL WRITTEN WARNING	16
25. STAGE 4 DISMISSAL	16

Attendance Policy

1. Background

- 1.1 The Requirements and Standards for Nurse Registration Education Programmes (2016) and Midwifery Registration Education Programme (NMBI 2016) and Public Health Nurse Registration Education Programmes (NMBI 2015) specify a minimum number of hours of both Theoretical and Clinical Instruction in line with EU Directives on Nurse/Midwifery/Public Health Education (Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland).
- 1.2 In order to register as a Nurse, Midwife or Public Health Nurse on completion of the BSc (Hons) Nursing/BSc Midwifery programme, Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nursing, the Head of School, or designated person, and the Director of Nursing/Midwifery or designated person, is required to certify that a student has satisfactorily completed all elements of the programme, both theoretical and clinical in line with the Requirements and Standards (NMBI 2015/2016) (Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland).

2. Recording of Theoretical Instruction

- 2.1 Attendance will be recorded on a cumulative year on year basis, and will be available to those designated with the responsibility of certifying student's completion of course requirements for the purposes of registration.
- 2.2 Attendance at lectures/tutorials/seminars/practicals and mandatory skills training sessions will be recorded by an electronic proximity barcode reader, located on entrance to each classroom within the School of Nursing and Midwifery. For classes scheduled outside this location, attendance will be recorded via a mobile reader/sign-in sheet facilitated by relevant lecturers.
- 2.3 Students are required to attend all lectures, tutorials, practicals or other elements as per the scheduled timetable.
- 2.4 Students are responsible for their own attendance at scheduled classes and for completion of required self-directed learning and examination/assessment preparation time.
- 2.5 Students are advised to access the ARC web reporting system to keep track of their own attendance record (Section 8).
- 2.6 Students with cumulative attendance **more than 70%** at the end of each year of study will have a **Satisfactory** judgement recorded.
- 2.7 Students with cumulative attendance **less than 70% but more than 50%** at the end of each year of study will have a **Borderline** judgement recorded.

- 2.8 Students with cumulative attendance **less than 50%** at the end of each year of study will have an **Unsatisfactory** judgement.
- 2.9 Any **abuse** of the mechanism for recording attendance will be deemed to be a serious disciplinary matter and will be managed in line with the **Attendance Recording Disciplinary Procedures** (Section 14-25). This includes:
- Misuse of own identification card.
 - Misuse of another student's identification card.
 - Swiping in for another student or being swiped in by another student.
 - Swiping into a class but not attending.
 - Deliberate falsification of documents.
 - Forgery of signatures.

3. Management of Unsatisfactory Academic Attendance Policy

- 3.1 Every effort will be made by all involved to make students aware of the standards of attendance, expected from them, and required by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland.
- 3.2 In general, Module Leader/Year Coordinator/Programme Leader or Postgraduate Programme Coordinator will deal with attendance issues on an informal basis promptly and fairly through discussion, counselling and appropriate assistance in conjunction with the student during each semester.
- 3.3 Attendance reports generated through the electronic attendance recording system will be considered mid-semester and at the end of each semester **and** by a Special Meeting of the BSc Nursing/ BSc Midwifery Undergraduate Committees and Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nursing Board of Studies at the end of each semester and year of study. **Meetings with students will always involve two members of academic staff.**
- 3.4 All documentation (e.g. attendance record, formal notifications and agreed plans for improvement) will be retained in the student's UCC file.

4. Scope of Policy

- 4.1 Unsatisfactory attendance record for semester and/or year of study.
- 4.2 Unsatisfactory cumulative attendance record over the duration of a programme of study.

5. Procedure for Recording Judgements

- 5.1 A report will be generated mid-semester and at the end of each semester (except for Year 3 Semester 1 which is of 3 weeks duration) by the Executive Assistant for Attendance; it will be thoroughly checked for inconsistencies.

- 5.2 This report will be circulated to the Year Co-ordinator and Programme Leader/Postgraduate Diploma Co-ordinator level.
- 5.3 This report will be reviewed and prepared for discussion at the relevant BSc Nursing/BSc Midwifery Undergraduate Committees and Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nursing Board of Studies at the end of each semester and year of study.
- 5.4 A judgement of **Satisfactory**, **Borderline** or **Unsatisfactory** will be recorded for each semester.
- 5.5 An overall judgement based on cumulative attendance for the year of study will be presented and agreed for each student at the special meeting of the undergraduate committee in May of each year.
- All students with attendance between 70 – 100% will have a **Satisfactory** judgement recorded.
 - All students with attendance between 50-69% will be judged as **Borderline** unless evidence of mitigating circumstances, for example certified absence, is provided.
 - All students judged **Borderline** will receive a letter detailing the cumulative attendance, stipulating conditions for improvement and outlining the consequences of failure to improve.
 - All students with attendance of **less than 50 %** will be judged as **Unsatisfactory** unless evidence of mitigating circumstances for example certified absence is provided.
 - All students judged to be **Unsatisfactory** will receive a letter requiring them to **attend a meeting** with the Programme Leader/Postgraduate Diploma Co-ordinator level. At this meeting the student's attendance record will be reviewed, conditions for improvement will be stipulated and the consequences of continued unsatisfactory attendance outlined.
- 5.6 As patient safety is the primary concern of the School of Nursing and Midwifery, **access to clinical placements may be withdrawn, should attendance continue to register below 50%**, despite ongoing discussions between the student and relevant staff members.
- 5.7 At the end of the programme of study a judgement will be entered at the relevant Board of Studies. This data may be brought to the attention of the relevant examination board.
- 5.8 This judgement will relate to the student's attendance record with respect to meeting the requirements and standards for application to the professional register.
- 5.9 These judgements will be recorded on the student's file and will be referred to as required for the purposes of academic references.
- 5.10 **An overall cumulative judgement of Borderline or Unsatisfactory Attendance** over the duration of the programme may result in the **non-signing of the application for professional registration** by the Head of School/designated officer.

6. Recording of Clinical Practice

BSc Nursing and BSc Midwifery Students

- 6.1 Attendance on clinical placements will be recorded and monitored. **One hundred per cent attendance for scheduled clinical placement hours is mandatory in order to successfully pass practice modules for each year of the programme** (Practice Placement Guidelines 2017) <http://www.ucc.ie/en/nursingmidwifery//>.
- 6.2 All time missed must be made up in order to pass the module.
- 6.3 Students are required to record their own attendance and submit the timesheet, signed by the Preceptor, for verification to the Allocations Office, UCC, **within the timeframe stipulated on the back of the timesheet.**
- 6.4 Any misreporting or falsification of clinical attendance will be deemed to be a serious disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in line with the School of Nursing and Midwifery Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures.
- 6.5 Extenuating circumstances while on clinical placement will be treated according to University policy.
- 6.6 Students with extenuating circumstances who bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate member of staff in a timely manner will be treated in a supportive way. However, students will be required to complete scheduled hours in order to pass the clinical module.

Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nursing

- 6.7 Public Health Nursing students do not use timesheets to record their attendance while on clinical placement. They are required instead to certify their attendance at the end of each clinical placement period on the relevant section in their clinical placement booklet. In the event of any absence from the clinical practice placement element of the Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nursing, students are required to notify their Preceptor/Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing/Clinical Midwife Manager and the Course Coordinator in UCC. Medical certificates (as appropriate) are required by the School of Nursing and Midwifery and the sponsoring Local Health Office area.

Operating Procedure for Attendance Recording System

7. Operating Guidelines

- 7.1 Attendance at lectures/tutorials/seminars and practical sessions will be recorded by an electronic proximity barcode reader located on entrance to each classroom within the School of Nursing and Midwifery. For classes scheduled outside this location, monitoring will be electronically recorded via a mobile reader or sign in sheet facilitated by relevant lecturers.
- 7.2 Recording of attendance is based on the scheduled timetable. Swipes are matched to the module code, the room location, time of class and the tutorial group. **For a swipe to be successful, it must occur:**
- **Not more than 10 minutes in advance of scheduled start of class.**
 - **Not more than 10 minutes after scheduled start of class.**
 - **In the room that the class is scheduled.**

8. Student Guidelines

- 8.1 Bring your student identification card to University every day and register your attendance at all scheduled classes. **If you do not have your student ID card or forget to swipe, attendance WILL NOT be recorded.**
- 8.2 **Register your attendance by passing your student identification card over the attendance proximity reader** – Note access to some rooms, for example the Clinical Skills Simulation Resource Centre and the IT Laboratory, is controlled via a swipe access point located outside the door. **However, this swipe access point is for room access only and will not register your attendance.** Please ensure that you swipe over the appropriate reader for recording of attendance.
- 8.3 If you do not pass your student identification card over the proximity reader, your attendance will not be recorded.
- 8.4 In the event of two consecutive classes been scheduled in the same room, it is necessary to re- swipe card for the second class for example

Time	11.00 - 12.00	12 – 13 o clock	
Thursday	NU2054 child bedf/L C_BHSC_G04* Wks: 10	NU2054 mat bedf/L C_BHSC_G04* Wks: 10	Swipe required at 11 and at 12 as same module but different lecture.
Friday	NU1032 VITALS G/L C_BHSC_G06* Wks: 10	NU1032 g/T C_BHSC_G06* Wks: 10	Swipe required at 11 and at 12 as same module but one for lecture and one tutorial.

- 8.5 **Please note, for 1st years or transfer students:** if, at the beginning of term, circumstances outside of your control result in a delay in receiving your student identification card, take the following action:
- Go to Administrative Office of the School of Nursing and Midwifery (G03) and obtain **Attendance Recording Form 1 (blue form)** (available for the first three weeks of semester one).
 - Complete form for each individual class taking care to complete all details.
 - Request lecturer to sign form at the end of the class.
 - Return the form to the G03 submission box each day.
 - Complete a new form each day.
 - These forms are only available for the **first three weeks** of semester one.
 - Attendance will be recorded for the sessions outlined.
- 8.6 In the event of queries with respect to the on-line attendance records, students are required to email the Executive Assistant for Attendance *within 10 working days of the queried class*.
- 8.7. Students must attend the class scheduled for their allocated tutorial group (a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,). If you attend another group, your swipe will not register for attendance purposes as recording is based on room allocation and group allocation.

9. Accountable Absences

- 9.1 Students who are absent due to extenuating circumstances (see list below), need to complete **Attendance Recording Form 2 (peach coloured form)**, attach supporting documentation and submit to the G03 submission box **within 3 working days** of the class. However, please note that attendance will not be recorded for these absent hours but will be highlighted as a certified sickness or an accounted absence to reflect the specific circumstances. This information will be retained on the student record, and will be reviewed, as necessary.

Extenuating Circumstances List

- A) Death of parent/guardian, sibling, spouse, child (or person to whom the student is *in loco parentis*),
- B) Death of mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparent/grandchild or any person who was habitually resident in the home of the applicant.
- C) Debilitating illness/condition.
- D) Circumstances **outside the control of the applicant**, which make it legally or physically impossible for the student to attend the class.

10. Misuse of System

10.1 It is recognised that the majority of students will treat this system maturely, professionally and honestly. However a number of incidences involving misuse of the system have occurred. Although it is recognised that a minority of students are involved, spot checks will be scheduled to deal with the following breaches:

- Misuse of own identification card.
- Misuse of another student's identification card.
- Swiping in for another student or being swiped in by another student.
- Swiping into a class but not attending.
- Deliberate falsification of documents.
- Forgery of signatures

10.2 Intermittent ad hoc attendance recording will be taken during the semester to ensure parity for all students. This information will be compared to that of the reader on the door. Any discrepancies will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action. Any abuse of the attendance recording system is considered to be a serious disciplinary matter and will be managed as per the School of Nursing and Midwifery Disciplinary Procedures related to Attendance Recording Policy.

11. Lecturer Guidelines

11.1 The student's attendance, as recorded via the proximity reader, is matched to the scheduled timetable. The accuracy of the scheduled timetable is therefore essential. Module Leaders are requested to inform the Timetable Administrator of any sessions that fall under the following categories:

- Scheduled as self-directed learning.
- Scheduled as part of a module with optional attendance, for example revision or evaluation sessions.
- Any unscheduled or last minute changes to the scheduled timetable for example nominating self-directed learning instead of a lecture, changing classrooms, combining groups, changing times.

These sessions can then be coded appropriately for the purposes of the attendance record. However, such changes should be minimal and are best planned well in advance in accordance with the Timetable Policy.

11.2 Attendance recording in classrooms outside of the School of Nursing and Midwifery will take place via readers/sign-in sheets. Lecturers are requested to print these from the intranet, and return them after the class to G03.

11.3 Lecturers are asked to cooperate with unannounced ad-hoc hand-held recording as they arise during the term.

11.4 Resolution of poor attendance or misuse of the attendance recording system will be managed as outlined in the Management of Unsatisfactory Attendance Policy (*Section 3*) and

Disciplinary Procedures related to Attendance Recording Policy, October 2019 (*Section 13 24*).

12. Administrative Guidelines

12.1 All entries into Syllabus Plus will be in accordance with agreed guidelines, and formats as per the Timetable Policy to ensure accuracy of data.

12.2 Validation of Syllabus Plus data and export of data will occur on a weekly basis as per Timetable Policy.

12.3 Data from Attendance Recording forms 1 and 2, sick certificates and extenuating circumstances will be entered at the earliest opportunity.

12.4 Timetable will be altered retrospectively by Timetable Administrator in the event of a class being cancelled or other changes to classes as reported by relevant Module Leaders.

12.5 Data in the web based reporting system will be up to date to the week preceding week of access.

12.6 Attendance Administrators will identify and arrange with appropriate Module Leader regular spot checks using the hand-held monitor and run appropriate reports.

12.7 Attendance Administrators will prepare reports for the appropriate committees at the end of each term and each programme of study.

13. Reporting System

Student Access

13.1 Web based reporting system is available and is up to date for week preceding date of access. Student access is via

[https://arc2web.ucc.ie/pow/StudentView.dll/mJveoerfndG2nJrendyZqujczgrtDdnui5ndncndm/\\$/](https://arc2web.ucc.ie/pow/StudentView.dll/mJveoerfndG2nJrendyZqujczgrtDdnui5ndncndm/$/) The following reports are available:

- Attendance per year.
- Attendance per module.
- Dates and times of absence.

13.2 **Levels of Access for BSc Nursing and BSc Midwifery**

Access for specific staff members is as follows:

- **Senior Programmes Administrator** – All reports for all sessions for all modules, all Programmes.
- **Programme Administrator** – All reports for all sessions for all modules, all Programmes.
- **Year Executive Assistant** – Report access for relevant year for all modules all Programmes.
- **Attendance Administrators** - All reports for all sessions for all modules, all Programmes.

Students, PLEASE NOTE: your registration for the BSc Nursing/BSc Midwifery Undergraduate Degree programme and the Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nursing implies that you agree to abide by these and all other policies of the School of Nursing and Midwifery.

Disciplinary Procedures re Misuse of Attendance Recording System

14. Purpose of the Disciplinary Procedure

14.1 The delivery of a high quality service requires all students to adhere to high standards of conduct. Misuse of the attendance recording system will be managed as a disciplinary issue.

14.2 If a lecturer observes a student or students misusing the Attendance Reporting System, they are advised to:

- Document the details of the event.
- Document the student(s) details, in particular student name and identification card number.
- Document details of any other student(s) identification cards involved.
- Discuss this event with the relevant Programme Leader/Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Programme Co-ordinator.
- Manage at either the pre-procedure stage of the disciplinary procedure or other appropriate stage depending on the circumstances. Counselling interviews or disciplinary hearings related to these events must occur within 10 working days of the incident.

15. Pre-procedure Stage – Informal Counselling

15.1 Counselling is an informal method by which the Module Leader and/or Year Coordinator and/or Programme Leader or Postgraduate Programme Coordinator will deal with shortcomings in a student's conduct without invoking the disciplinary procedure. The objective of the counselling interview is to alert the student to his/her shortcomings and to decide what measures should be taken to bring about the required improvements.

Informal counselling will at all times involve two members of academic staff. The following principles apply when conducting counselling interviews:

- The student shall be given precise details of the specific aspects of his or her conduct that require improvement (documentation relating to these events may be used to support this discussion).
- The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to these concerns and careful consideration shall be given to any explanations.
- Having made the student aware of deficiencies in his/her conduct, the Module Leader and/or Year Coordinator and/or Programme Leader or Postgraduate Programme Coordinator shall identify any measures that can be taken to assist the student, and formulate a written plan of action for achieving the required improvements.
- A written record of the counselling interview and any agreed action plan shall be maintained in the student file in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, and signed by all parties involved.

16. Formal Disciplinary Procedure

16.1 Where a student's conduct, does not meet the required standards despite informal counselling, the matter will be dealt with under the formal disciplinary procedure. There are 4 stages to the Disciplinary Procedure:

- Oral warning stage.
- First written warning stage.
- Second and final written warning stage.
- Dismissal stage.

17. Scope of the Procedure

17.1 This procedure relates to:

- Misuse of own identification card.
- Misuse of another student's identification card.
- Swiping in for another student or been swiped in by another student.
- Swiping into a class but not attending.
- Irregularities in spot check recording
- Deliberate falsification of documents.
- Forgery of signatures.

Note: this list is not exhaustive

18. Principles applying to All Stages of the Disciplinary Procedure

18.1 Decisions regarding disciplinary action will only be taken following a disciplinary hearing at which the student is afforded an opportunity to respond to the complaints and make representations.

18.2 Every effort will be made by all involved to address the student's conduct through informal counselling without invoking the disciplinary procedure.

- 18.3 While the disciplinary procedure will normally be operated on a progressive basis, the lecturer in conjunction with Year Coordinator/Programme Leader or Postgraduate Programme Coordinator or Director of Programme may bypass Stages 1 and/or 2, should the nature of the student's conduct warrant such action.
- 18.4 No decision regarding disciplinary action will be made until a formal disciplinary hearing has been convened and the student has been afforded an opportunity to respond.
- 18.5 The student will be advised of his or her right to be accompanied by a representative of their choice at any meeting under the formal disciplinary procedure. A representative under these procedures will normally be a colleague or union representative.
- 18.6 The student will be advised in advance of the disciplinary hearing of the precise nature of the complaint against him or her and will be given copies of any relevant documentation.
- 18.7 The student and student representative will be afforded the opportunity to state his or her case and challenge any evidence that may be relied upon in reaching a decision.
- 18.8 The student representative has an important role to play in supporting the student and is entitled to assist the student in presenting his/her case and make representations on his or her behalf. The student may confer privately with his/her representative if requested.
- 18.9 The relevant parties will not prejudge the outcome of the hearing and will take into account any mitigating circumstances before deciding on appropriate action.
- 18.10 The School of Nursing and Midwifery, UCC, will have staff of the appropriate level involved in all stages of the disciplinary process.
- 18.11 It will be considered a disciplinary offence to intimidate or exert pressure on any person who may be required to attend as a witness.
- 18.12 The investigation will be conducted thoroughly and objectively and with due respect for the rights of the student to natural justice, including a presumption of innocence.

19. Notification Requirements

- 19.1 The student should be notified in writing that s/he is required to attend a disciplinary hearing under the formal disciplinary procedure.
- 19.2 The student should be given sufficient notice of the hearing to enable him/her to arrange for representation and prepare a response.
- 19.3 The student should be advised of:
- The reason for the hearing.
 - The right to representation.

- The time and place of the hearing.
- The status of the meeting (i.e. that it is a formal disciplinary hearing under the disciplinary procedure).
- The precise nature of the complaint.
- Copies of any documentation that will be relied upon at the hearing (e.g. Lecturer's documentation of specific incident) must be provided to the student in advance of the hearing.

20. Conducting a Disciplinary Hearing

20.1 The purpose of the disciplinary hearing is to allow the student the opportunity to respond to the complaints before deciding whether disciplinary action is warranted.

20.2 Two staff members must be present for all disciplinary hearing with the most senior staff member at Programme Leader level or higher. The disciplinary hearing should follow a structured format as follows:

- Introduce those present and confirm that this is a hearing under the formal disciplinary procedure.
- Outline the nature of the complaint and refer to any supporting evidence.
- Allow the student to respond to the complaint and give an explanation for his/her unsatisfactory conduct.
- Invite representations on the student's behalf.
- Close the hearing by summarising the key points emerging from the hearing and allow the student and his/her representative to have a final say.
- Adjourn the meeting to allow for careful consideration of the facts and any explanations put forward by the student or his/her representative.

Re-convene the hearing and advise the student of the decision which may include the following:

- No further action on the grounds that the student has given a satisfactory explanation of events, or there were strong mitigating circumstances.
- Non-disciplinary action, e.g. arrange for the student to receive coaching/training and set targets for improvement.
- A formal warning (and other disciplinary sanction where appropriate).

20.3 The outcome of the hearing should be confirmed to the student in writing.

20.4 A record of the hearing and the outcome should be retained on the student's UCC file.

21. Issuing Warnings under the Disciplinary Procedure

21.1 The primary purpose of a warning under the disciplinary procedure is to give the student an opportunity to make the required improvements, whilst making clear the consequences of failing to do so. A warning (oral or written) should convey the following information:

- The stage of the disciplinary procedure which has been invoked.
- Details of the unsatisfactory conduct.
- Details of the improvements required and timescale for improvement.
- Measures to assist the student.
- Duration of the warning.
- What further action that will be taken if the student does not make the necessary improvements, or if there are further instances of unsatisfactory conduct.

21.2 A record will be kept on the student's UCC/ file of all warnings, both oral and written, issued under the Disciplinary Procedure.

22. Stage 1 - Oral Warning

22.1 A student whose conduct falls below the required standards as set out in section 2.13 of this document, may be issued with a formal oral warning by the relevant Year Coordinator and/or Programme Leader or Postgraduate Programme Co-ordinator.

22.2 The student will be advised of the precise nature of the complaint, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement.

22.3 S/he will be advised that the warning constitutes the first stage of the disciplinary procedure, and failure to improve or comply with agreements may result in further disciplinary action under Stage 2 of the disciplinary procedure.

22.4 A record of the warning will be kept on the student's School of Nursing and Midwifery file and will become inactive after a maximum of nine months, subject to satisfactory compliance/improvement during this period. Improvements may relate to no further evidence of misuse of attendance recording system.

23. Stage 2 - First Written Warning

23.1 If the student fails to make the necessary improvements, within the agreed timeframe or if the poor conduct is more serious, s/he will normally be issued with a formal written warning by the Programme Director, which will be copied to the Head of School.

23.2 The written warning will give details of the complaint, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement.

23.3 The student will also be advised that failure to improve may result in the issuing of a final written warning under Stage 3 of the disciplinary procedure.

23.4 The warning will become inactive after 9 months subject to satisfactory improvement during this period. Improvements may relate to no further evidence of misuse of attendance recording system.

24. Stage 3 - Second and Final Written Warning

- 24.1 If the student fails to make the necessary improvements, s/he will normally be issued with a final written warning by the relevant Programme Director, in conjunction with the Head of School.
- 24.2 The warning will be active for a maximum period of 12 months but may be extended in exceptional circumstances.
- 24.3 The warning will give details of the complaint, the improvements required, and the timescale for improvement.
- 24.4 The student will be advised that failure to improve may lead to permanent removal from the programme.
- 24.5 The warning will become inactive after 12 months, subject to satisfactory improvement during this period. Improvements may relate to no further evidence of misuse of attendance recording system.

25. Stage 4 Dismissal

- 25.1 Failure to meet the required standards of conduct following the issuing of a final written warning may result in a decision by the Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery, to implement the following sanctions:
- To dismiss the student from the programme. A recommendation would then be made to the College of Medicine and Health, to discontinue the student from the BSc Nursing or BSc Midwifery programme or Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nursing.
 - Withdraw permission to attend practice placement.
 - Be excluded from sitting relevant examinations.
 - Refusal to sign the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland registration form at end of programme. **Note: this list is not exhaustive.**