**Procedures for Monitoring Student Attendance**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The document provides detailed information on the procedures for monitoring of student attendance, as specified in the Student Attendance & Engagement Policy.

### 1.1 Purpose

As set out in the Student Attendance & Engagement Policy, the University has a duty, for the majority of its students, to monitor attendance at teaching and learning activities and to act on non-attendance[1]. This legal duty arises from a requirement to report attendance to UK student loan agencies and to UK and overseas based external sponsors, as well as compliance responsibilities in relation to the sponsorship requirements of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for the monitoring of students studying in the UK on a student visa.

### 1.2 Scope

This procedure:

- Applies across all schools and all years of study for students undertaking all modes of study, including undergraduate, postgraduate taught, apprenticeships and professional doctorates.
- Does not apply to students studying online-only masters programmes and postgraduate research students. Guidance on attendance for postgraduate research students is provided in the Annual and Interim Progress Review Handbook for Research Degree Students.
- Does not apply to students studying on Keele programmes outside of the UK. Guidance on procedures for monitoring attendance on these programmes will be provided in programme documentation.
- Is aligned to the University's Regulation B8 which states that any student failing to engage appropriately with their studies may have their studies terminated by the University at any stage in their programme of study.

Beyond the information outlined in this procedure, further expectations regarding attendance at learning and teaching events will be set out in programme and module documentation.

## 2. PROCEDURE

### 2.1 Monitoring & supporting attendance

The University will proactively monitor and support student attendance to help students achieve the best possible academic outcome. The aim of the University's interventions process in relation

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[1] The University is required to abide by the Student Route Sponsorship duties outlined by UKVI. Attendance data is used to assess whether students are meeting attendance requirements of the Student Loans Company (SLC)

to attendance is to assist and support students to get the help they might need and, wherever possible, to resume attendance on their programme.

Schools are responsible for monitoring and supporting the engagement of their students with their studies, and for taking proactive steps to engage with a student where there is evidence of lower-than-expected attendance. In order to do this, Faculties will identify professional services staff to undertake monitoring of attendance across constituent Schools.

Schools will engage with a student concerning their attendance if their overall attendance rate, based on all scheduled synchronous sessions, drops below 50% over the preceding two-week period or they are absent from teaching sessions for 6 consecutive (working) days. For students registered on programmes accredited by professional or statutory regulatory bodies (PSRBs) that have specific requirements regarding attendance, contact may begin prior to this point and/or at a different attendance threshold in line with the specific PSRB requirements regarding attendance. There are specific requirements for students studying in the UK on a Student Visa, these are outlined in section 6 of this document.

At this point a message (contact point 1) will be sent to the student via the Keele App regarding their attendance. The message will check if they are well, signpost them to sources of support and recommend that the student returns to their timetabled teaching events. The students' Academic Mentor will be alerted to the message, and it will be visible to the Student Experience and Support Officer (SESO), via the attendance dashboard, for information.

Should the student not respond to contact point 1 within five working days, and should their attendance remain below 50%, they will be sent a second message (contact point 2) asking them to respond via the Keele App to explain the reasons for non-attendance. They will also be signposted to appropriate support where required. The students' Academic Mentor will be alerted to the message, and it will be visible to the SESO, via the dashboard, for information.

If the student has not responded to contact point 2, within five working days via the Keele App and their attendance remains below 50%, an app message (contact point 3) will be sent to the student inviting them – physically or virtually – to an informal meeting to discuss their absence. This meeting will take place under the Support to Study process at Stage 1 and for students studying in the UK on a Student Visa, this meeting should take place within a 2-week period. The meeting may be held with the student's Academic Mentor or Programme Lead. At this stage the Academic Mentor should liaise with the SESO to check if there are any other welfare concerns. In cases where the welfare or circumstances of the student is of concern, the SESO may advise escalation to Support to Study Stage 2. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the student to discuss their circumstances in more detail, and for the School – in engagement with the student – to put in place an agreed plan to support the student to resume attendance.

Should a student not resume attendance at a rate of 50% or above within two weeks of the agreed plan being put in place, the Academic Mentor, Programme Lead and the Student Experience and Support Officer (if required) will discuss and agree next steps (contact point 4). This could include the offer of further support to the student via the Support to Study process or could be the issue of a formal non-engagement warning, as outlined in section 3 of this document.

If a member of staff becomes concerned about the student's welfare at any point during this process, the Student Experience and Support team can be consulted to offer advice to the School and support to the student.

## 2.2    Issuing formal non-engagement warnings

Following the completion of the interventions to support attendance outlined in section 2 of this procedure, a School may take the decision to issue a formal non-engagement warning. All formal non-engagement warnings will include the following information:

- The reason for the warning being issued
- An overview of the students' attendance
- Details of communications between the student and the School about attendance and any actions taken by the School to support the student's attendance
- What actions the student is required to take in order to resume attendance and to adhere to the conditions of the warning
- The consequences of failing to adhere to those conditions

Following issue of a formal non-engagement warning, should a student not comply with the conditions of the warning and resume attendance at an acceptable level within two working weeks, a School may take the decision to issue a second formal non-engagement warning.

Formal warnings may only be issued with approval from the Head of School. In the case of Combined Honours or Major/Minor students, approval of both Heads of School is required.

## 2.3    Termination of studies for lack of attendance

In cases where there is a continued lack of attendance following issue of two formal non-engagement warnings, in alignment with Regulation B8, a recommendation may be made exceptionally to the Academic Registrar or nominee, who will have the authority to terminate the studies of the student at the University. In such cases, the student will be notified in advance of the recommendation to the Academic Registrar.

Where the recommendation to withdraw a student is approved, the student will be notified, and a final deadline will be set by which they may request to remain a student. Where the student subsequently requests to be permitted to continue with their studies, the request will be considered by the Academic Mentor, Programme Lead and the Student Experience and Support Officer in consultation with the Head of School.

Recommendations for termination of studies may only be issued by a Head of School. In the case of Combined Honours or Major/Minor students, approval of both Heads of School is required.

Students may appeal against any action taken under this policy using the academic appeals procedure set out in Regulation B6.

## 2.4    Validating Student Attendance

The Student Attendance & Engagement Policy outlines that the University expects students to act honestly in relation to their records of attendance. Any attempt by a student to falsify their attendance records will be addressed in line with the University's Student Discipline Procedure.

In order to validate student attendance, data from the Keele App will be used to review student proximity to the learning event at the point of check-in. Students are required to enable the Keele App to access location services when checking in using a mobile device. Schools will undertake periodic audits of attendance data to check for instances of falsified attendance.

Keele staff delivering teaching and learning events have the ability to check students out of events, where it is clear that they are not in attendance.

## 2.5    Students studying on a student visa

The University has additional compliance responsibilities in relation to students studying on a student visa. These are outlined in [Regulation A1](#). The University, as the student's immigration sponsor, is required to ensure that students understand and adhere to the conditions of their visa. Where the requirements of UKVI in relation to attendance are more rigorous than those set by the University, the requirements of UKVI shall prevail.

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) can request information on a students' attendance and engagement at any point, with this data a mandatory audit requirement. All reporting to UKVI must be made within 10 days. To enable the University to comply with this requirement, Schools must ensure that records of attendance and contact with students regarding attendance are kept up to date within the attendance dashboard.

Students are required to adhere to UKVI requirements for the duration of their student visa, when granted, regardless of the location of study. This includes students undertaking placements and completing dissertations. Schools are required to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to monitor the **attendance** of students undertaking placements (research or work based) as part of their programme. In instances where there are no scheduled taught elements of a programme taking place, for example during dissertation periods, UKVI requires that students' **engagement** must be regularly monitored. Detailed guidance on operational processes for Schools to meet these requirements is set out in the operational guidance for monitoring attendance.

Where students studying in the UK on a student visa do not maintain attendance at the level required by UKVI, they will be escalated through the processes outlined in this procedure, with the ultimate sanction being termination of studies.

Students studying in the UK on a student visa and undertaking programmes with expected awards below level 6, as stated on their Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), are required to attend a minimum of 15 hours of daytime (08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday) classroom-based study per week. This includes standalone Foundation and Pre-Sessional English. These students must maintain a minimum attendance of 70% or higher. To support these students in maintaining their attendance, Schools will contact a student where their attendance has dropped below 85%, following the procedure set out in this document.  If the attendance of these students falls below 70% for three consecutive months, the University will be required to terminate their studies unless there are exceptional and evidenced reasons for the non-attendance, such as serious illness.

Regardless of the level of study or mode of attendance, if a student studying in the UK on a student visa has not either attended scheduled teaching sessions / placements or undertaken academic engagement whilst completing a dissertation for a period of 60 calendar days - excluding non-term time (vacation) closure dates and the period of the students' visa after the end date of

their programme that is stated on their CAS – the University will be required by UKVI to terminate the studies of that student and withdraw sponsorship of their Student Visa.

For students studying on a student visa that is sponsored by Keele and that are undertaking an outgoing Study Abroad placement period (either for a single semester or up to one academic year), the host institution will be required to provide regular attendance and engagement information to Keele if the student wishes to keep their current student visa. Specific arrangements for monitoring attendance are developed with host partner institutions depending on the students' circumstances. This is facilitated by the Global Opportunities Team.

## 2.6 Accredited Programmes

Certain programmes, such as those accredited by professional or statutory regulatory bodies (PSRBs) and apprenticeships, may have their own specific attendance requirements, which must be met in order to fulfil the standards of that award. Where these are more rigorous than those set by the University in this policy, the requirements of the PSRB and/or apprenticeship provider shall prevail. For students registered on programmes accredited by professional or statutory regulatory bodies (PSRBs) that have specific requirements regarding attendance, contact with students may begin prior to the points set out in section 2 of this procedure and/or at a different attendance threshold in line with the specific PSRB requirements regarding attendance.

## 2.7 Placements

Schools are responsible for putting in place appropriate processes for monitoring student attendance at placements. Students will be advised by their School if they are required to check in to placements using the Keele App.

## 2.8 Reported absences

Schools are required to use the Absence Management System to approve or acknowledge absences reported by students and to put in place procedures to contact students in relation to any concerns related to reported absences.

## 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 Monitoring student attendance

Schools are responsible for monitoring student attendance in accordance with this policy and the accompanying Procedure for Monitoring Student Attendance.

### 3.2 Expectations of students

Expectations of students in relation to attendance are set out in the Student Attendance & Engagement Policy.

### 3.3 Policy oversight

Strategic oversight of this procedure is provided by the Academic Registrar. Education Committee will review and monitor the policy on behalf of Senate.  An annual report of the operation of the procedure and summary data on student attendance, engagement and resulting termination of studies will be provided to Education Committee at the end of each academic year, including

analysis of the impact of the policy in supporting student success and trends in institutional performance.

## 4. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This policy is aligned to Regulations A1 (Visa & Immigration) and B8 (Termination of Studies by the University).

Use of attendance data complies with Data Protection legislation (including the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and any supplemental legislation) and is handled in accordance with University Information Governance Policies. Further details can be found in the University's Information Governance pages.

Data on student attendance is managed in accordance with the Student Privacy Notice and the Student Data Charter, which sets out the University's commitment to using student data in ways that are ethical, beneficial, legal and proportionate.

Operational guidance for staff undertaking attendance monitoring can be found in the Education pages on the Keele intranet.

Information for students on managing attendance via the Keele App can be found on the Keele App pages.

The following policies & procedures are related to this procedure:

- Student Attendance & Engagement Policy
- Academic Mentor Code of Practice
- Support to Study Policy
- Discipline Procedure

## 5. REVIEW, APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

*Review:* This procedure will be reviewed by Education Committee before final approval.

*Approval:* This procedure will require final approval by Senate

*Publication:* This procedure will be published on the Keele website within the Policy Zone.

## 6. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

| Document Name | Procedures for Monitoring Student Attendance |
|---|---|
| Owner | Victoria Macfarlane, Academic Registrar, Academic Registry |
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| Related University Policy Documents | Student Attendance & Engagement Policy Academic Mentor Code of Practice Student Data Charter |

| | Student Privacy Notice |
|---|---|
| | Support to Study Policy |
| | Discipline Procedure |
| *For Office Use – Keywords for search function* | |