

Student Attendance & Engagement Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy details Keele's approach to monitoring attendance and supporting student engagement.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Clarify the University's requirements in terms of student engagement and attendance
- Support students' health and wellbeing
- Promote academic attainment, standards and progression
- Enhance student experience
- Satisfy external reporting/accreditation requirements and legal obligations in relation to attendance

1.2 Scope

This policy:

- 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.
- 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 policy, further expectations regarding engagement with learning and teaching materials, attendance at learning and teaching events and assessments and the timely submission of in-course assessments will be set out in programme and module documentation.

2. POLICY

2.1 Overview

The University places student success at the heart of its mission and is committed to supporting all students to achieve outstanding outcomes. The University recognises that regular engagement in, and attendance at, teaching and learning activities is a key component of successful student retention, progression and academic achievement. Lack of engagement can also indicate that a student may be experiencing difficulties and might need support. By monitoring attendance and engagement, the University can offer additional support and guidance to those students who may need it. The university also recognises that

lack of engagement and attendance are not purely an individual student matter and can also have a negative impact on the experience of other students.

The University is committed to working in partnership with students to enable them to take an active role in engaging with their studies, underpinned by the responsible use of data which aims to provide the broadest possible picture of individual student engagement. Our purpose is to enable meaningful conversations and interventions, which aim to ensure a student's personal development needs and support requirements are met, providing them with the best opportunity to be successful within their studies.

The University also recognises that there are many factors that may affect students' engagement with their academic studies. This policy details expectations of how students will engage with their academic studies and how the university will monitor and support that engagement.

2.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, **engagement** encompasses engaging with, and participating in, guided independent or group study activities, assessment and feedback, and any other activity which supports learning and personal development, independently or in collaboration with peers. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Attending scheduled learning events
- Submitting assessments within defined deadlines
- Accessing and/or interacting with online learning materials (e.g., lecture recordings, learning materials)
- Utilising infrastructure in place to support student learning (i.e., the Library, Microsoft Teams, the Keele Learning Environment)
- Attending meetings with Academic Mentors

Attendance is one component of engagement. For the purposes of this policy, **attendance** is defined as being present at scheduled learning, teaching and other activities required by a module and/or programme. This may include:

- Physical attendance at face-to-face scheduled teaching and/or other learning events as required by the module and/or programme (e.g., lectures, seminars, laboratory sessions, tutorials, field trips and examinations)
- Virtual attendance at scheduled synchronous online teaching and/or other learning events as required by the module and/or programme (e.g., synchronous participation in an online seminar or tutorial)
- For the purposes of this policy the terms 'student' or 'students' refer to all those currently registered on an undergraduate or taught postgraduate programme (with the exception of online-only masters programmes) and who are not on leave of absence or otherwise excused from attending learning and teaching events and examinations and submitting in-course assessments on time.

2.3 Monitoring student attendance

The University has a duty, for the majority of its students, to monitor attendance at teaching and learning activities and to act on non-attendance¹. This 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.

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.

The University has additional compliance responsibilities in relation to students studying at the University on a student visa. These students are required to be in regular attendance as part of the ongoing conditions of their visa. As the student's immigration sponsor, the University has obligations to UKVI to closely monitor the attendance of these students at scheduled teaching sessions and to take appropriate action, including termination of studies, where attendance does not meet the requirements specified by UKVI. Where these requirements of UKVI are more rigorous than those set by the University in this policy, the requirements of UKVI shall prevail.

Students studying on a student visa will find that their visa status is impacted if their studies at the University have been terminated, suspended or interrupted (for the duration of the interruption). The University is required by law to inform UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) of any changes to a student's status within 10 days. The University outlines its reporting requirements to UKVI in Regulation A1.

Schools are responsible for monitoring student attendance. Schools will engage with a student concerning attendance if their overall attendance rate, based on all scheduled synchronous learning sessions, drops below 50% over the preceding two-week period or they are absent from teaching sessions for 6 consecutive (working) days. At that point, Schools will contact the student to check if they are well, signpost them to sources of support and recommend that they return to their timetabled teaching events. 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.

Following this initial contact, schools will continue to monitor and offer support to students whose attendance remains below required levels. This support may include invitations to meet with academic and/or professional service staff to discuss reasons for absence and any support required.

Should a student's attendance remain below required levels, despite support being offered by the school, the University may take the decision to issue either one or two formal non-engagement warnings to the student.

In exceptional circumstances, the University may take the decision to terminate the studies of a student who, after supportive and appropriate intervention and following issue of two formal non-engagement

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)

warnings, has failed to resume attendance. For students registered on programmes accredited by professional or statutory regulatory bodies (PSRBs) that have specific requirements regarding attendance, this decision may be taken at an earlier point aligned to those requirements.

Full information on how this policy is applied, including signposting to support and escalation processes, is detailed in the accompanying **Procedures for Monitoring Student Attendance**.

2.4 Supporting student engagement

The University is committed to supporting students to engage with their studies. In order to support student engagement, Academic Mentors, Senior Academic Mentors and Student Experience & Support Officers (SESOs) will have access to the My Keele Journey Student Engagement Dashboard and will review data on individual student engagement to inform preparation for meetings with students (i.e., academic mentoring meetings, support to study meetings), with the aim of supporting students to improve their engagement and signposting to further support if required.

Data from the dashboard will be considered alongside other data and knowledge about the student, including data on attendance, assessment grades and interactions with Academic Mentors, academic staff involved in delivery of teaching and learning and professional services.

The My Keele Journey Student Engagement Dashboard provides a broad picture of engagement across a range of activities at individual student and cohort level. Data on student engagement available through the dashboard will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Attendance at taught sessions
- Assessment submissions
- Engagement with, and use of, university systems, including: the Keele Learning Environment (KLE), Microsoft Teams, WiFi use in university spaces, use of library loans, use of printing facilities

Use of student engagement 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](#).

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 Supporting student engagement

The following table provides information on the staff roles that have access to the My Keele Journey dashboard. It also outlines the type/level of data they have access to, the purpose of that access and the responsibilities of staff using the dashboard.

Role / Area	Engagement Data Access	Purpose	Responsibilities
Academic Mentor	Individual student level data for all students within school for whom they act as Academic Mentor.	<p>Use information on their students' engagement profiles to help inform and guide Academic Mentor meetings, enabling focused discussion and agreement of goals and objectives.</p> <p>Review information to support the student's academic progress and development.</p> <p>Record summary of Academic Mentor sessions in 'Interventions'.</p>	<p>Review student engagement information prior to and during Academic Mentor meetings.</p> <p>Record brief notes and outcomes from Academic meetings including goals / targets etc. to be agreed and shared with student and visible to Senior Academic mentors and SESOs</p> <p>Refer students where necessary to Student Services for further support with welfare, disability, finance, or accommodation.</p>
Senior Academic Mentor	Individual student level data for all students within school for whom they act as Senior Academic Mentor. Also reports showing cohort level anonymised data	<p>For their own mentees, as an Academic Mentor – as above.</p> <p>Access to data to have oversight of the students' engagement in the School and ensure the academic mentoring process is operating effectively.</p>	<p>For their own mentees, as an Academic Mentor – above.</p> <p>Support Academic Mentors and SESOs in providing support to students as specific cases arise.</p> <p>Help provide training and practical support for Academic Mentors on using the dashboard with their mentees.</p> <p>Use reports to identify patterns of engagement and where actions may be required, to improve levels of engagement or the operation of the Academic Mentoring system.</p>
Programme Directors / Director(s) of Education	Individual student level data for all students within relevant School/Faculty Also reports showing cohort level anonymised data	Use information on their students' engagement profiles to help support Academic Mentors and SESO's.	<p>Support Academic Mentors and SESO's in providing support to students.</p> <p>Use reports to monitor engagement across the programme, identify any patterns of engagement which may inform module or programme level action.</p>

		Information on students' engagement to help inform and improve programme management and development.	Use reports to evaluate the impact of any actions taken.
SESO (Student Support & Success)	All	Information on students' engagement to help inform and guide meetings and to facilitate early response to referrals from Academic Mentors. Interrogate an individual student's data on a needs basis, to be able to respond to individual serious/urgent concerns.	Complementing and following up on referrals from Academic Mentors to support students with setting actions and objectives. Ensure record of meetings with students and any actions (through interventions) to allow for transparency with students and visibility for Academic Mentors / Senior Academic Mentors (non-confidential information only).
Specific Staff involved in external reporting where it is required (eg UKVI)	All	Oversight of student data (Student & Cohort level) to meet any external reporting requirements.	Help in the provision of support to relevant students in meeting their requirements. Help to ensure that School and Faculty processes are being followed. Highlight patterns of concerns at a student or cohort level, escalating to & within Student Support/Schools and Faculties as necessary.
IDS	All	Product support and development	

3.3 Expectations of students

The University considers all students to be active partners in their education. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the academic, social and personal development opportunities available to them to ensure that their time at the University is fulfilling.

In accordance with Regulation B8, the University requires students to attend all scheduled learning sessions associated with each module or programme which they have elected to pursue, regardless of mode of delivery (i.e., in-situ and online), and to engage with the relevant learning and support resources that are made available to them.

Students are responsible for recording their attendance at teaching sessions. Students must register attendance at taught sessions using the Keele App or via Keele card readers where these are in place for specified laboratory entry. Students must submit any planned or unexpected absence requests via the Keele App.

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.

Students are expected to submit all required assessments. If a student has an exceptional circumstance, such as a personal difficulty or health problem, which has a negative impact on their ability to participate in assessment, they should follow the Exceptional Circumstances Process.

A student may wish to consider interrupting their studies if there are valid reasons that may impact their ability to engage and/or result in their needing additional time to complete their degree programme. Students should discuss their circumstances with their Academic Mentor, Student Experience and Support Officer or another relevant member of staff in their academic school. Staff will be able to advise the student on academic implications, such as the availability of the course and particular modules when they return and their ability to progress to the next level of study with their peers. Further information can be found in the [Leave of Absence process](#).

Students registered on a programme of study regulated by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) and involving practical education in relation to patients, pupils, clients or service users are subject to specific expectations around their conduct, behaviour and in some cases health. These expectations are set out in the requirements of the PSRB accrediting the programme of study. The University is required to monitor its students in relation to the requirements of the relevant PSRB for their programme of study and if issues arise that are in breach of the requirements, or are suspected to be in breach of them, then the University must take action. These procedures are referred to as Fitness to Practise and also apply to applicants for accredited programmes.

In order to support active student engagement, students enrolled on programmes of study primarily being delivered within the UK will be provided with access to the My Keele Journey Dashboard. This will provide them with a detailed record of their own individual engagement over time, enabling them to understand where they are currently focusing and reflect on opportunities for engaging differently or in greater depth with their programme of study.

The University is committed to supporting student engagement. Members of University staff may engage with students in a number of ways to ensure they are progressing academically. In order for students to benefit from the support provided by the University, it is important that they respond to communications from the University in a timely manner, attend scheduled meetings with Academic Mentors and engage with support processes, if advised or required to do so.

3.4 Policy oversight

Strategic oversight of this policy 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 policy 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 and engagement 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 engagement and 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.

Guidance for staff and students using the My Keele Journey Dashboard can be found in *the My Keele Journey* pages in [Digital Keele](#).

Detailed information on the process for monitoring of student attendance can be found in the **Procedures for Monitoring Student Attendance**.

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](#).

Further information on the University's Academic Mentoring system and the expectations for both mentors and mentees can be found in the **Academic Mentoring Code of Practice**.

The following policies & procedures are related to this procedure:

- Support to Study Policy
- Discipline Procedure

5. REVIEW, APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

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

Approval: This policy will require final approval by Senate

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

6. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

Document Name	Student Attendance & Engagement Policy
Owner	Victoria Macfarlane, Academic Registrar, Academic Registry
Version Number	V1.0
Equality Analysis Form Submission Date	13 June 2022
Approval Date	22 June 2022
Approved By	Senate
Date of Commencement	1 September 2022
Date of Last Review	
Date for Next Review	1 September 2025
Related University Policy Documents	Procedures for Monitoring Student Attendance Academic Mentor Code of Practice Student Data Charter Student Privacy Notice Support to Study Policy Discipline Procedure
<i>For Office Use – Keywords for search function</i>	