Attendance and Engagement Policy

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June 2022

UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

Document Title:	Attendance and Engagement Policy
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Approving Body:	Senate
Date of Approval:	22/06/2022
Date Effective From:	01/09/2022
Review Date:	**April 2023, then tri-annually**
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Summary: This document outlines the high level attendance and engagement monitoring procedures and expectations of students and staff. This document should be read in conjunction with the Academic Regulations, Supporting Students to Succeed Policy and Programme Handbooks. This document is supported by detailed operational guidance.	

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 The University acknowledges that student engagement is multifaceted, and that student success is dependent on many variables. We strive to facilitate the highest quality student experience, value face-to-face learning and enhancement opportunities and strongly promote these. There is a direct correlation between student attendance at and engagement in timetabled sessions and academic success and as such, the University expects full attendance at all scheduled classes.

1.2 It is important to acknowledge that non-attendance may lead to poor academic outcomes and could result in withdrawal from study and attendance and engagement will be taken into account when writing references for students. However, the University is mindful that, at times, there may be exceptional circumstances that prevent attendance, or impact upon engagement and there are a variety of support and guidance options available to students. Good communication between students and staff is key to ensuring students receive appropriate support during periods where their attendance may be affected.

1.3 This policy has been developed as part of a body of policies and procedures that shape a supportive and inclusive learning and teaching environment. The University needs to be able to record attendance at timetabled sessions for a number of reasons, including:

- Compliance with UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) requirements for those on a Tier Four or Student Route Visa – as a sponsor the University is fully committed to meeting all of its duties under its student route licence.
- Early identification of students at risk to aid their retention through timely interventions (academic and pastoral)
- To enable timely notifications of interruptions and withdrawals to appropriate external stakeholders

1.4 This policy covers all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students (including apprenticeships and foundation year students) and sets out the University's expectations with regards to the monitoring of student attendance and absence. Staff are expected to monitor attendance in line with this policy.

1.5 This policy provides a framework to assist faculties in responding to attendance concerns and sets out minimum expectations for attendance. However, some programmes, such as those with professional body accreditation, may have higher requirements and some cohorts, such as those on a Tier 4/Student Route visa, will have additional legislative requirements. Programme specific requirements will be clearly laid out in programme handbooks.

2. Monitoring of Attendance and Engagement

2.1 The University employs a range of methods to monitor engagement and attendance. These include attendance at scheduled sessions as well as submission of assignments, use of Canvas and other learning activities.

2.2 Attendance and Engagement are recorded on the dashboard via the University app. SSSAs and PATs will regularly review attendance data. Attendance is the primary focus of the University, with engagement activity supporting this.

2.3 SSSAs will identify students at risk of very low or nil engagement who have not responded to alert emails and will reach out to these students.

2.4 Poor attendance is defined as unauthorised absence of over 10 working days or sustained sporadic attendance. Module Tutors, PATS and SSSAs should work together to identify and support students with poor attendance.

2.5 Students who do not respond to reach out will be contacted by their PAT or SSSA and will be escalated to a follow up procedure.

2.6 Teaching staff will remind students periodically about checking in on the app. They will also conduct periodic manual attendance checks.

2.7 Teaching staff will conduct a manual check in for a student who presents at the end of a session and alerts the staff member to difficulties using the app. Teaching staff will not check students in retrospectively unless there is clear evidence the student was in the session.

3. Monitoring of International Students on Student Route Visas (Tier 4)

3.1 The University is fully committed to meeting its obligations of UKVI compliance under the Tier 4 and Student Route Licence. Under the current UK Visa & Immigration (UKV&I) Student Route regulations, the University must be in a position to confirm that any student, currently being sponsored under the Student Route, is actively engaged in studies and attending classes as required by their programme of study. Attendance and engagement of students on the Student Route is therefore recorded and monitored in line with the Student Visa Compliance policy and procedures https://winchester.ac.uk/about-us/leadership-and-governance/policies-and-procedures/?download=true&id=136

3.2. The University operates regular in person checks for current Tier 4 and those studying under the Student Route. This allows us to be assured that students are physically present on campus, and they support the attendance monitoring gathered by the app. The in-person checks are co-ordinated by the International Success Team.

3.2.1 These checks support the information provided about attendance via the app check-ins. Where attendance raises concerns (five or more missed sessions within 2 weeks)

students will be contacted by the Student Route Administrator (SRA). This contact will be done in conjunction with the PAT and will follow the agreed operational procedures.

3.2.2 Should a student not respond to the above contact and continue to have low attendance the concern will be raised to the International Success Team. The student will be contacted again by the International Success Team within a fortnight of the previous deadline and will be given an appointment slot with their PAT, SSSA, SRA and/or the Head of Student Visa Compliance in order to discuss their status.

3. 2.3 Should the student not attend the above meeting and have continued not to attend scheduled sessions, the International Success Team will contact them again via email immediately following the missed meeting, The student will be invited to another Stage 2 'staying on track 'meeting and will be alerted to the possibility of withdrawal. At this meeting it will be determined whether the student can continue with their programme of studies.

4. Expectations on Students

4.1 Students are expected to attend all scheduled sessions.

4.2 Students are expected to actively engage in all learning opportunities within their programme.

4.3 Students are expected to check in on the University of Winchester Mobile App (the app) within the first 15 mins of the start of the class. The app brings together core student information, such as timetable, email and class check-ins. The University will be using authentication tools to verify these check-ins.

4.4 Should a student be unable to check into the class they should inform the member of staff teaching the session at the end of the class and they will check the student in.

4.5 Students who are experiencing difficulties in attending should speak with their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) or Student Support and Success Adviser (SSSA) to ensure support is in place.

4.6 Students are expected to respond to alert notifications encouraging them to meet with their PAT or SSSA.

4.7 Students are expected to engage with the dashboard and monitor their own attendance and engagement and they should discuss these with PAT or SSSA.

4.8 Students should ensure they are aware of any additional attendance requirements relevant to them or their programme of study. These can be found in the programme handbook.

4.9 Students are expected to notify module tutors of absence as soon as possible in advance and where appropriate, should request an authorised leave of absence using the EC procedures outlined within the Supporting Students to Succeed Procedures.

4.10 Students who are unable to attend regularly should discuss their situation with their PAT or SSSA; options such as part time, interruption of studies, or withdrawal from study will be considered.

4.11 Students who are on a Tier 4 or Student Route visa and who are not actively studying or who do not have authorised absence will no longer be sponsored.

5. Implications of non-attendance

5,1 All students should be aware that non-attendance is taken seriously by the University. The University will work with students to put all measures in place to support attendance and success. However, should it not be possible for a student to maintain appropriate levels of attendance students may, as per the Academic Regulations, be:

- Penalised in accordance with specific programme attendance rules (detailed in programme handbooks);
- Denied the opportunity to repeat study, trail fail or transfer to another subject, programme or module;
- Required to leave the programme (withdrawn from study).