

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This document sets out the policy and procedure employed by the University of West London to monitor student attendance and engagement in all University degree courses, including higher and degree apprenticeships (Level 4 and above) and while on assessed placements. It also outlines the activities the University undertakes to encourage students to attend scheduled classes and also engage with the full range of learning opportunities and, thereby, increase their success.

1.2 The Policy also sets out how the University monitors students sponsored under the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) student visa route in accordance with the University's statutory obligations under its UKVI license.

1.3 The Policy is set in the context of research which demonstrates that student attendance correlates strongly with student performance. While this is not the case for all students, the University believes that monitoring and encouraging attendance and engagement is important to support students in their academic studies.

1.4 The University aims to improve the attendance and engagement of all students. Attendance in on-campus activities including lectures, seminars and workshops provides students with the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully complete the course. It is, therefore, in the interests of every student to attend their scheduled sessions and engage with Blackboard. Engagement with UWLFlex (which provides online resources to enable catch up and review) and other available learning resources and submission to assessment are also key.

1.5 Attendance and engagement monitoring is central to the work being undertaken in Learning Analytics which aims to support student success as attendance and engagement levels have the potential to indicate those students at risk of leaving their course early or of failure. This aspect of the Attendance Engagement Monitoring Policy should be read in conjunction with the University's Learning Analytics Policy.

## **2. Attendance and engagement requirements**

2.1 Engagement is expected of all students in every element of their course. This includes attendance at on-campus sessions including lectures, seminars, workshops, practical sessions, and engagement with online learning resources and learning materials which form part of the course. It also includes all activities defined in the Course Handbooks and Module Study Guides as compulsory and submissions of formative and summative assessments.

2.2 Some Courses have their own Attendance and Engagement Policies instead of, or in addition to this policy. Where this applies, it will be written in the course handbook. They may set out compulsory attendance requirements which mean that if a student does not meet them, they will not be able to pass the course.

2.3 Where courses do not have their own Attendance and Engagement Policy, this policy also outlines expected attendance during an assessed placement in industry or practice.

2.4 Currently, teaching and learning takes place primarily in person. However, should the University be required under government guidance or through public health requirements to teach students online, their engagement will be monitored through attendance at online sessions and through their engagement with resources provided on Blackboard or other online platforms as appropriate.

2.5 Where students are not able to come onto campus for any authorised reason, their engagement will be monitored through access to the online study materials provided through UWLFlex (excluding Student visa holders).

### **3. UKVI attendance and engagement requirements**

3.1 The University has a particular duty to ensure that students sponsored on the UKVI student route are attending and engaging with their studies. This includes engagement during any placement, as a condition of the University's UKVI License. Non-attendance and non-engagement could result in withdrawal of sponsorship, which will be reported to the UKVI, consequently affecting the student's status in the UK. This monitoring and reporting is a legal requirement for all sponsors.

3.2 The requirements for students on UKVI Student visas, are set out in [section 12 below](#).

#### **4. Attendance and engagement monitoring**

4.1 Attendance monitoring refers to all recording of student attendance of scheduled on-campus sessions, whether through the Student Attendance Monitoring system or paper-based. Students are required to touch into all scheduled classes including lectures, workshops, seminars etc. at the beginning of the class using their University Student ID Card. Where taken, students are also required to sign any manual registers.

4.2 Engagement is monitored through the students' activity on Blackboard, their use of library resources and their assessment activity.

4.3 The University may also use touch-in data which is recorded every time students use their student ID card to enter a University building, recording the time and date that this occurred.

#### **5. Use of data for monitoring engagement**

5.1 The data collected as outlined in [section 4 above](#) is used as part of the University's Learning Analytics project to support student success. The data on a student's general engagement with the University and the learning resources, combined with attendance data, is used to model the successful study behaviours which enable students to succeed. It is also used to predict which students might require further support.

5.2 Students who are not attending or engaging with online learning resources will be contacted by the Student Experience Team to re-engage them with their course. A list is produced on a weekly basis and an institution-wide process is followed as set out in Appendix A: Non-engagement processes, [Item 1](#) and [Item 2](#). Please note that for UKVI students the requirements are different and are set out in [section 12 below](#).

5.3 The University has a separate process for Apprenticeships (Appendix A: Non-engagement processes, [Item 3](#)). Apprenticeships are a defined group of students and require significant data for reporting purposes. A key aspect of this process is to produce a clear reporting framework which includes excellent communication between all stakeholders involved.

## **6. Use of attendance and engagement data for reporting**

6.1 Attendance and engagement data is used to assess whether students are meeting attendance requirements for the Student Loans Company (SLC).

6.2 Where a student is not attending or engaging at the point of a census, we may suspend any maintenance loan until the student has re-engaged with their studies. If a decision is made to withdraw the student, this will be reported to the SLC, ending all future payments.

6.3 The Apprenticeship Non-Attendance Process ([5.3](#) and Appendix A: Non-engagement processes, [Item 3](#)) includes an outcome where the University contacts the apprentice's employer after continuing an unauthorised absence, or otherwise, as agreed with the employer.

## **7. Authorised absence**

7.1 Short-term absences due to illness do not need to be authorised except for students on apprenticeship courses, but it is advised that students contact a member of staff to inform them if they are not able to attend scheduled sessions, or individual meetings that have been prearranged.

7.2 Students should not normally be absent from scheduled classes for a period of more than five working days unless agreed with tutors. For students on UKVI Student visas, all absences of more than five days must be authorised by the UKVI Compliance Team. Absence for longer than 5 days during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Guidance and advice on these processes can be found on our [student attendance page](#).

7.3 Instances of illness or other extenuating circumstances that affect an assessment or examination should be reported to the University. Students who are undertaking assignments and are affected by illness or other factors may request extensions and mitigation in accordance with the Academic Regulations. Guidance can be found on our [extensions and mitigating circumstances page](#).

7.4 Students are permitted to apply for temporary leave, suspension of studies, or deferral of their course of study for personal or medical reasons. Guidance and advice on these processes can be found in the [Student Handbook](#), from personal tutors, or Student Administration. Restrictions may apply, such as having to complete a course within the maximum registration period, requiring employer approval of an apprentice's break in learning, or waiting to rejoin a different cohort after deferral, so students must seek advice before interrupting their studies.

## **8. Research students**

8.1 Research students must be in regular contact with supervisors and be able to provide evidence of continued research and progress in their research topic.

8.2 Lack of research progress and non-attendance at planned supervision sessions by research students will be investigated by the supervisor, and a determination of the reasons for it sought.

8.3 Where there is evidence that a student is not performing at an acceptable level, the student may be placed on probation and issued with a set of objectives which state what is required in order to meet the conditions of the probation.

## **9. Withdrawal for non-attendance and/or engagement**

9.1 The University may withdraw students from a taught course if they are not attending, engaging, and/or submitting assessments.

9.2 Research students who are not attending supervisory sessions or engaging with their research may be withdrawn.

## **10. Appeal against a withdrawal decision**

10.1 Students may appeal to the University Secretary against a withdrawal decision under the [University Appeal Regulations](#).

10.2 Student visa holders who have been withdrawn due to a breach of their Student visa conditions do not have the right to appeal.

## **11. Placements**

11.1 Students who are on assessed placements must attend their placement as required by the placement provider. At the end of the placement, students will be required to demonstrate that they have undertaken the required hours at their placement in addition to any assessment.

11.2 The attendance of students on UKVI student visas on placement will be monitored by the Placement Office fortnightly as set out below.

## **12. Non-attendance and engagement by UKVI Student Route sponsored students**

12.1 The University is required to abide by the Student Visa Route Sponsorship duties outlined by the UKVI. Under these duties, the University of West London is legally required to monitor all Student Visa Route sponsored students and to maintain attendance and engagement records, reporting non-attendance and engagement when necessary.

12.2 A student who has been issued a Student visa to begin their course (including pre-sessional courses) will be provided with a start date. If the student does not complete their enrolment and attend by the last date of enrolment (stated on the Confirmation of Acceptance to Study (CAS)), their non-attendance will be reported to the UKVI, and their sponsorship will be withdrawn.

12.3 All students are expected to attend and engage academically at all timetabled and scheduled sessions held on campus at the University. All student attendance is captured by the UWL student card swipe data. This will be monitored through the SEAtS workflow system. The SEAtS system alerts UWL departments about any student who has an unauthorised absence, and an automated email is sent to the

student's UWL email account. There are different stages in the workflow process. Any student who fails to attend for one week will be sent an email warning them of the consequences. If the student is still not in attendance after a second week, a second email will be sent and again attempts to re-engage them will be made. Where students do not re-engage at this point they will be referred to Student Experience and/or UKVI Compliance Team for further investigation. All students are expected to contact their School Administration Office to explain any absences, and details on how to do this can be found on our [student attendance page](#).

12.4 Students who do not re-engage with their study or contact the School Administration Office, as required, will have their sponsorship withdrawn and the UKVI will be informed in accordance with UKVI regulations. This will normally take place after a period of non-engagement but this period may be extended to 60 days for good reason as determined by the UKVI Compliance Team.

12.5 In addition to expected course attendance, students must attend all enrolment, induction and re-enrolment sessions, and enrol online as directed.

12.6 When a student is on an assessed placement/internship their attendance in the authorised workplace is compulsory, and attendance is monitored by the placement team on a fortnightly basis. Where a student is absent without authorisation, attempts will be made to re-engage but if this does not occur, and the student does not return to full-time study, the student will be reported to the UKVI and have their sponsorship withdrawn.

### **13. UKVI Students undertaking supervised dissertations and research**

13.1 Postgraduate research students are required to be in contact with their supervisors at least once per month and have their supervisions recorded and logged with the Graduate School. Where a student has missed a scheduled supervision, this must be investigated by the supervisor.

13.2 Masters students who are studying for their dissertations must have supervision meetings at least once per month. The Dissertation supervisor is responsible for logging meetings and investigating any absences. It should be noted

that undertaking a dissertation is deemed a full-time activity and should it run over the summer months it will be classed as term-time and not a summer break.

## **14. Students' Union Sabbatical Officer**

14.1 Where students sponsored for a UKVI student visa are elected as a full time sabbatical officer, they will be monitored by the Students' Union. If they fail to undertake their role as required, this will be reported to the University which will investigate and, if necessary, withdraw sponsorship.

### **Appendix A: Non-engagement processes**

#### **1. New student non-engagement process**

1.1 New students who have not completed online enrolment, attended induction nor attended first two weeks of teaching will be cancelled.

1.2 New students who have completed online enrolment, but did not attend induction nor attended in the first two weeks of teaching will be receive a final notice email and if no response is received will be cancelled.

1.3 New students who have completed online enrolment and attended induction, but did not attend in the first two weeks of teaching will be receive a final notice email and if no response is received will be cancelled.

1.4 All students will be contacted using multiple communication methods to encourage engagement prior to final action.

1.5 New students who have completed online enrolment, attended induction, and attended in the first two weeks of teaching, but then demonstrate zero engagement will be considered under the main non-engagement process.

#### **2. Returning student non-engagement process**

2.1 For returning students who have not engaged in two weeks

##### **2.1.1 Week Three:**

- List of students who have not engaged produced by the Student Experience Team
- Email and call regarding non-attendance/engagement from the Student Experience Team

##### **2.1.2 Week Four:**

- Follow up email and call from Student Experience Team to students who have not responded or engaged

##### **2.1.3 Week Five:**

- List of students who have not responded or engaged checked with Student Services to ensure at risk students do not receive a Withdrawal Notice
- Five-day Withdrawal Notice email sent by Student Experience Team to students who have not responded or engaged
- Responses to Withdrawal Notice monitored by Student Experience Team

##### **2.1.4 Week Six:**

- List of students who did not respond to the Withdrawal Notice produced by the Student Experience Team and sent to School and College Admin Managers to notify Head of School and/or Course Leader of withdrawal prior to action



- Withdrawal notification sent to Data Operations to action
3. Apprenticeships non-attendance process
- 3.1 For apprenticeship students who have not attended timetabled sessions
- 3.1.1 Week One:
- Non-attendance notification email is sent to the apprentice requesting information on why they have not attended a timetabled session.
  - Non-attendance reported to apprentice's employer, if the employer requires this.
- 3.1.2 Week Two:
- Second non-attendance notification email sent to the apprentice requesting information on why they have not attended a timetabled session.
  - If the reason for non-attendance meets the criteria for authorised absence, then the apprentice is requested to complete and submit the authorised absence form following the process on the [student attendance page](#).
- 3.1.3 Week Three:
- If there is continued unauthorised absence, the administrator contacts the course leader, module leaders and apprentice for clarification of non-attendance.
  - Apprentice moved to stage 3 in SEAtS.
- 3.1.4 Week Four:
- If there is continued unauthorised non-attendance, the employer will be consulted and the following next steps may be applied as a result:
    - The Apprentice is moved to stage 4 in SEAtS
    - The Apprentice is placed on a Break in Learning (apprenticeship paused) or the Apprentice is withdrawn

## **Appendix B: Student attendance and engagement procedures for UK subcontracted provision**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This document sets out the processes employed by the University of West London for partners to monitor their students' attendance and/or engagement in UK subcontracted provision.

1.2 The University aims to support UK subcontracted partners to encourage the attendance and engagement of all students. Attendance of on-campus activities including seminars and workshops provides students with the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully complete the course. Partners are required to inform students that they should attend their scheduled sessions.

1.3 Attendance and engagement monitoring are key to Learning Analytics which the University uses to monitor student success, as attendance and engagement levels have the potential to indicate those students at risk of leaving their course early or of failure.

## **2. Attendance and engagement monitoring**

2.1 Attendance monitoring requires UK partners with subcontracted provision to record the attendance of scheduled on-campus sessions for their students. Partners are required to report the non-attendance of their students to the University in accordance with the processes in [section 6 below](#).

2.2 The University may also monitor the engagement of its students on UK subcontracted courses through the students' activity on Blackboard and their assessment activity via Learning Analytics.

2.3 Partners are expected to contact their students who are not attending scheduled classes or engaging with their studies, to re-engage them with their course.

## **3. Use of attendance and engagement data for reporting**

3.1 Attendance and engagement data are used to assess whether students are meeting attendance requirements for the Student Loans Company (SLC).

3.2 Where a student is not attending or engaging at the point of a census, they may be withdrawn, and this will be reported to the SLC who will end payments.

## **4. Authorised absence**

4.1 Partners do not need to authorise short-term absences due to illness, but students should be advised to contact a member of partner staff to inform them if they are not able to attend scheduled sessions, or individual meetings that have been prearranged.

4.2 Students should not normally be absent from scheduled classes for a period of more than 5 working days unless agreed with their tutors.

4.3 Instances of illness or other extenuating circumstances that affect an assessment or examination should be reported to the University to inform the Course Administrator who will prepare the records for the appropriate Assessment Board. Students who are undertaking assignments affected by illness or other factors may request extensions and mitigation at the partner in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations.

4.4 Students are permitted to apply for temporary leave, suspension of studies, or deferral of their course of study for personal or medical reasons. Guidance and advice on these processes can be provided by the University's Course Administrator.

## **5. Withdrawal for non-attendance and/or engagement**

5.1 The University may withdraw students from a taught course if they are not attending and/or submitting assessments.

## **6. Student non-engagement process**

6.1 New students who have not enrolled with the University via the MyRegistry portal within the first 2 weeks of commencement of the course will be cancelled by the University and will be reported to the SLC.

### **6.2 Student Non-Engagement Process (for new and returning students)**

#### **6.2.1 Within the first two weeks of teaching:**

- New students who have enrolled but have not attended classes will be checked by the partner and will be reported to the University, who will determine whether the student would be confirmed, or cancelled and reported to the SLC.
- Returning students who have not enrolled and have not attended will be checked by the partner and will be reported to the University, who will determine whether the student would be withdrawn and reported to the SLC.
- Returning students who have enrolled but have not attended, and all new and returning students who have the enrolment status of 'Enrolled' or 'Mailweb' will be monitored in accordance with the steps outlined below.

6.2.2 From Week Three of the start of teaching, Where a student has not attended for two weeks:

- Partner to contact the student regarding their non-attendance using Outreach 1 example
- Partner to record on Attendance Report to the University

6.2.3 From Week Five, Where the student has not responded to the partner's Outreach 1:

- Partner to contact the student regarding their non-attendance using Outreach 2 example
- Partner to record on Attendance Report to the University

6.2.4 From Week Seven, Where the student has still not responded to the partner's Outreach 2:

- Partner to contact the student regarding their non-attendance using Outreach 3 example five-day Withdrawal Notice
- Partner to record on Attendance Report to the University

6.2.5 From Week Eight, Where the student has not responded to the five-day Withdrawal Notice Outreach 3:

- Partner to contact the student to confirm their withdrawal from the course by the University using the Notice of Confirmation of Withdrawal from Studies example
- Partner to inform the University of the student's withdrawal
- University Course Administrator to send a withdrawal notification to University Data Operations
- The University will report the student's withdrawal to the SLC

## **7. Appeal against a withdrawal decision**

7.1 The student may appeal to the University Secretary against a withdrawal decision under the [University Appeal Regulations](#).