Arts University Bournemouth

Student Attendance and Engagement Policy for Foundation (2026)

Rationale

1. Whilst the University's Foundation course is designed to encourage and support independent learning, it is essential that students demonstrate effective engagement with the course throughout their studies. All students are expected to demonstrate attendance consistent with full engagement with a full-time course of study. This forms part of the contract between the student and the University, and students should ensure that they are familiar with all course expectations.

2. In particular, the development of effective skills in collaborative working is key to successful engagement; team working forms an essential element within many units, whereby students are dependent on the input from their fellow team members. In addition, a number of units introduce new material which requires students' involvement and engagement, and even those units which can be developed off-site or use independent learning nonetheless have integral elements of tutorial monitoring, feedback and development.

3. Similarly, the University has a duty of care to its students and has a responsibility to ensure their wellbeing. Patterns of attendance which may indicate causes for concern will always be investigated in line with this policy. It should also be noted that overseas students who require a Student Route Visa to study in the UK may be required to leave the country if they do not meet the attendance requirements of the University. It should further be noted that Student Route Visa holders on Foundation courses are required to be timetabled for a minimum of 15 hours per week.

Expectations

4. The following arrangements apply:

    i) Student attendance will be recorded formally for all tutorials (individual or group) and seminars.

    ii) In addition, all courses will maintain a register of attendance at scheduled sessions. This does not include independent study time within the studios or workshops but only refers to all formal taught and timetabled sessions. Where activity is due to take place off-site, arrangements will be made for participation in this activity to be monitored and recorded.

    iii) An assessment submission will constitute attendance, even where no other sessions are scheduled for that day.

    iv) Should the need arise to move the course fully online, in response to unforeseen circumstances, engagement monitoring will continue in line with paragraphs 4i and 4ii.

5. In the event of illness, a student should contact the University and notify the Academic Quality Officer of their absence. Self-certification is permitted for up to one week of illness, after which time a doctor's note is required. While the University is sympathetic to students who are ill during the course of their studies, an extended period of absence through illness may result in the student being required to intermit their studies to give them the best opportunity of securing the necessary learning. Under all circumstances, any student who is absent through illness must remain in touch with the University, or their absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Monitoring process

6. The University has a process for monitoring absence which ensures that students are notified progressively if their engagement is inconsistent with the expectations of full-time study, before ultimately leading to a termination of studies.

7. The Academic Quality Officer will review all student registers at the end of each four-week period of each term (ie the end of weeks 4, 8, 12, 16 as appropriate) and inform the Course Leader where attendance letters are required. A student is required to maintain an attendance record of at least 85% of scheduled sessions, as described above, during each four-week period. The Academic Quality Officer will retain oversight of this process, to ensure compliance.

8. If a student has an attendance or engagement record which does not meet these minimum expectations during this four-week time period, they will receive a warning from the Course Leader that their place on the course is at risk due to poor attendance.

9. This warning will be sent by email to the student's University email account.

Termination of studies and Appeals

10. If a student continues to fall short of the expected levels of attendance or engagement, their position will be considered by the Course Leader and appropriate action taken. The Course Leader may recommend a range of actions, including but not restricted to a further warning letter, attendance at a compulsory meeting to discuss the student's engagement with the course, or where appropriate termination of studies. Termination of studies will usually be recommended only where previous warnings have been issued but insufficient improvement has been made; or where the student's engagement has fallen to a level which is inconsistent with their status as a student. Communications will be sent as per paragraph 8 and if termination of studies is recommended the student will have the right to appeal.

11. A student who demonstrates a lack of engagement, an extremely low attendance rate, fails to re-engage with their studies within 30 days of contact from the Course Leader regarding their lack of academic engagement and/or has long periods of unauthorised absences on a course of study may have their studies terminated immediately. In such circumstances, communications will be sent as per paragraph 9, and the student will have the right to appeal.

12. Any student excluded on the grounds of attendance and engagement has the right of appeal to the Dean of School or designated alternative. Students may contact the Compliance Team for advice on this policy or the appeals process.

13. A formal letter of appeal must be received by the Academic Office within five working days of deemed receipt of the termination letter/email. The Dean of School or their appointed nominee will consider the case (including meeting with the student and members of the course team as appropriate) and will provide a formal written response within seven working days. There is no further right of appeal.

14. Following expiry of the appeal window or unsuccessful appeal (if applicable), recommendation from the Deans of School that a student's studies should be terminated on the grounds of inadequate attendance will be made to the Academic Lead on Standards and Quality (ALSQ). The ALSQ will review the evidence that the attendance requirement has not been meet and confirm that appropriate warnings have been issued in accordance with this policy. The ALSQ will duly terminate the student's studies unless it is clear that this procedure has not been followed in some material way.

15. If the studies are terminated of any student holding a Student Route Visa, the University is required to inform UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) that this action has been taken, and the student is no longer registered at the institution. This is likely to mean that the individual is required to leave the country.

16. Students are reminded that the University's *Fees and Charges Payment Policy* sets out the circumstances in which fees are refunded. Termination on the grounds of poor attendance will not constitute grounds for a claim for the refund of fees over and above that set out in the Policy.

Sporadic attendance

17. The above arrangements notwithstanding, if a student's attendance and engagement with the course is giving cause for concern, the Course Leader may initiate a review. This entails consideration of the attendance registers, and consideration of any other salient factors, such as timely submission of work, engagement with the course and attendance at scheduled tutorials. It may also involve a meeting with the student. If, in their academic judgement, the Course Leader considers that the student is failing to engage properly with the course, a warning may be issued as described in paragraphs 8-9 above. This will constitute the first warning where none has previously been given; the second warning where a first warning has been given; and will recommend the termination of studies to the ALSQ if two warnings have already been given.

Late attendance

18. Late arrival to class or rehearsal is not acceptable. It denotes a lack of respect for the work and for other members of the group because the late arrival of a student is, essentially, disruptive and in some cases (e.g. a physical skills or workshop class) may be hazardous to the individual student. In the professional world late arrival is viewed as being extremely unprofessional.

19. A student who arrives within the first 10 minutes of the class will be deemed late and the lateness recorded in the register. Under normal circumstances, a student not more than 10 minutes late will be allowed to participate in the class, subject to the agreement of the tutor leading the session.

20. A student who is habitually late or who leave early without tutor approval may find their place on the course at risk, as both are forms of absenteeism. Where a student has been late for more than 25% of their scheduled classes, they will be given a written warning that their place on the course is at risk, following the procedure for sporadic engagement at paragraph 16 above. This can lead to a recommendation to the Course Leader - Foundation Art and Design that the student's studies be terminated.

21. A student who is more than 10 minutes late for a class may not be entitled to participate in the session, at the discretion of the tutor concerned.

Monitoring of the Attendance Policy

22. The UKVI Group, chaired by the University Secretary, will receive regular reports on the number of warnings issued to Student Route Visa holders and any of these students receiving more than one such warning. The UKVI Group reports directly to the University's Senior Leadership Team. The UKVI Group may recommend that a student is withdrawn from the course in line with this policy any such recommendation will be forwarded to the Course Leader.