

Student Attendance and Engagement Policy (approved July 2017)

Rationale

1. Students of the Arts University Bournemouth become part of a community of practice, with a strong focus on the maker-culture. Our values include being both collaborative and connected. Consequently, whilst the University's higher education courses are designed to encourage and support independent learning, regular attendance at scheduled sessions is an important part of being a student at AUB.
2. Students are expected to demonstrate effective engagement with the course throughout their studies. All students are expected to show patterns of attendance consistent with full engagement with a full-time course of study (or a part-time course of study, where applicable). This forms part of the contract between the student and the University, and students should ensure that they are familiar with all course expectations.
3. In particular, Academic Board notes that 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.
4. 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 Tier 4 Visa to study in the UK may be required to leave the country if they do not meet the attendance requirements of the University.

Expectations

5. The following arrangements apply:
 - i) All courses will monitor attendance at selected scheduled sessions. This does not include independent study time within the studios or workshops, but only refers to 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 as appropriate.
 - ii) An assessment submission will constitute attendance, even where no other sessions are scheduled for that day and/or where assessments are submitted remotely.

- iii) If a student is on Work Placement or Exchange, this is marked as authorised absence. Work Placement and Exchange Providers are required to confirm the ongoing satisfactory attendance of the student, as requested by the University.
 - iv) If a student is on Work Release, this is marked as authorised absence. Tier 4 visa students are not permitted to undertake Work Release due to work and study conditions attached to their visa.
6. In the event of illness, a student should contact the University and notify staff of his/her 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.
7. 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; 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. 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. A student who is more than 10 minutes late for a class or rehearsal will be marked absent, and will be subject to sanction accordingly under this Student Attendance and Engagement Policy.

Monitoring process

8. The University will notify students if their engagement is inconsistent with full-time study, before ultimately leading to a termination of studies.
9. The Course Leader or a designated alternate (e.g. the Level Leader) will monitor attendance of the full student group. In respect of Tier 4 students, compliance with the terms of their Visa is monitored and a record of engagement kept for review.
10. If a student has an attendance or engagement record which does not meet University expectations he/she will receive a warning from the Course Leader that his/her place on the course is at risk due to poor attendance or engagement.
11. This warning will be sent by email to the student's University email account; and a printed letter will be sent to their term-time correspondence address. In the event that a student has an outstanding debt to the University and has been barred from using services, and hence has their email account suspended, this notification will be sent by printed letter only. This may result in some students receiving notification later than would have been the case had they not been in debt to the University, or otherwise subject to disciplinary action.

12. If a student continues to fall short of the expected attendance or engagement rate, his/her attendance and engagement will be considered by the Course Leader and appropriate action taken. The Course Leader may recommend a range of action, including but not restricted to a further warning letter, attendance at a compulsory meeting or termination of studies. Communications will be sent as per paragraph 11 and if termination of studies is recommended the student will have the right to appeal.
13. A student who demonstrates a lack of engagement, an extremely low attendance rate and/or 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 11 and the student will have the right to appeal.

Termination of studies and Appeals

14. Any student excluded on the grounds of attendance and engagement has the right of appeal to the Dean or designated alternative. A formal letter of appeal must be received by the Faculty Office within five working days of deemed receipt of the termination letter/email. The Dean or his/her 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.
15. Following expiry of the appeal window or unsuccessful appeal (if applicable), recommendation from the Dean that a student's studies should be terminated on the grounds of inadequate attendance will be made to the Deputy Vice Chancellor. The Deputy Vice Chancellor will review the evidence that the attendance requirement has not been met, and confirm that appropriate warnings have been issued in accordance with this policy. The Deputy Vice Chancellor will duly terminate the student's studies unless it is clear that this procedure has not been followed in some material way.
16. If the studies are terminated of any student holding a Tier 4 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.
17. 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.

Monitoring of the Attendance and Engagement Policy

18. The UKVI Group, chaired by the University Secretary, will receive regular reports on the number of warnings issued to Tier 4 students and any of these students receiving more than one such warning. The UKVI Group reports directly to the University Management Team.