



Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

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Relation to QAA requirements			
Informed by UK Quality Code – Core Practices for Quality			

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This policy and the procedures annexed to it set out the regulations and processes employed by The London College to monitor student attendance and engagement on all programmes of study. They need to be read within the context of the College's efforts to enhance student success and retention, and the strategic initiatives deployed across the whole breadth of the student experience.
- 1.2. The College aims to improve the attendance and engagement of all students. It is in the interest of all students to attend their scheduled sessions. Attendance monitoring is valued for its potential to indicate those students at risk of leaving their course early

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Attendance refers to the expected attendance of all students on every element of their programme. This refers to all compulsory lectures, seminars, workshops, practical sessions, tutorials and any form of summative or formative assessment.

- 2.2. Attendance requirements are inclusive of all sessions whether completed as a large group in lectures, small group for tutorials, or individual sessions (such as dissertation supervision or work placement).
- 2.3. Attendance is expected for all sessions whether they are run by College academics, or outside professional/trainers.
- 2.4. Attendance is recorded using Biometric readers situated at the entrance of each classroom. In addition paper registers are also used as a backup mechanism to record attendance.
- 2.5. For online teaching sessions, attendance will be recorded automatically when students log onto the session. Attendance is captured automatically using student login date, time and duration.
- 2.6. Monitoring refers to all recording of student attendance, whether electronic or paper-based.
- 2.7. Student Engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.
- 2.8. Students funded via the Student Loans Company (SLC) are required by the College to have **60% minimum attendance and 70% attendance for good standing**, in each term of study.
- 2.9. Engagement is monitored thorough a combination of factors which include but not limited to student attendance, class participation, on-time assignment submission and timely communication with the college and staff.

3. Recording Attendance

- 3.1. The attendance will be recorded onto the College student-management systems through card reader information, paper registers and student login information.
- 3.2. Attendance for students arriving **20 minutes** after the scheduled start time will be recorded **LATE**.
- 3.3. Attendance for students arriving **40 minutes** after the scheduled start time will be recorded **ABSENT**.
- 3.4. All students will have their attendance monitored at every lecture, seminar, workshop, or practical session. These will be monitored through the use of paper and online registers.

- 3.5. Programme administrators will use the data to analyse and monitor individual student's attendance.
- 3.6. All authorised and non-authorised absences are recorded, and action taken where necessary (further information is given below).

4. Authorised Absence

- 4.1. Short-term absences (up to one week) due to illness or domestic circumstance may be authorised without any documentary evidence, but it is advised that the student contacts a member of staff to inquire whether the student is able to attend a fixed seminar/tutorial/practical/clinical session, or individual supervision meeting that has been pre-arranged.
- 4.2. Instances of illness that affect an assessment must be reported to the College, and where relevant, with medical evidence (doctor's or hospital note). The same is applicable for other extenuating circumstances.
- 4.3. Students are permitted to apply for temporary leave, suspension of studies, or deferral of their programme of study for personal or medical reasons.
- 4.4. The following rules apply to absences:
- 4.4.1. during term time students will not be given leave of absence for overseas national holidays or attendance at family functions, etc.
 - 4.4.2. no student will be granted authorised leave of absence for more than 2 weeks during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances and such leave is agreed with the Senior Management Team (SMT)
 - 4.4.3. any absence due to illness must be notified to the Programme Administrators as soon as possible, preferably before 10.00 am on the day of absence
 - 4.4.4. students who are absent from classes for more than 5 working days must provide a doctor's certificate
 - 4.4.5. all students must declare any medical condition or disability which is likely to result in their missing a significant number of classes. All female students must inform the College if they are pregnant. Any false declaration, or failure to disclose a condition may result in a student's enrolment being cancelled without any fee refund.

4.5. Long-term absence

- 4.5.1. If a student is absent for longer than four weeks without informing programme administrator, without providing appropriate evidence to support a legitimate absence (for example major illness or operation), they will be withdrawn from the College. In this circumstance, the College's Student Disciplinary Procedures

will not apply but the withdrawal will be recorded on the Student Information System for any future applications to the College.

4.6. Excused absences

4.6.1. There are some absences which can be marked as an excused absence. These include:

- illness;
- medical appointments, which could not be made out of college hours;
- a religious holiday;
- a university interview or
- a career-related interview;
- a work placement, which is an integral part of the student's programme of study and for which the student does not receive payment;
- attendance at a probation meeting or a meeting with social worker or UKVI or Consulate staff;
- severe disruption to a student's method of transport, such as a strike or snowstorm, that leaves the student with no alternative method of travelling to College;
- a College representatives' meeting or Student Council Meeting.

5. Unauthorised Absences

- 5.1. Unauthorised absences over one week, such as non-attendance due to undocumented medical, personal or other extenuating circumstances are not permitted if no evidence is presented, or the absence is not agreed in advance.
- 5.2. Students are not permitted to be absent from scheduled classes or practical sessions due to employment, unless agreed with the tutor or module leader.
- 5.3. Unless otherwise agreed with the tutor, students are expected to be in attendance for every scheduled session, whether a group, or individual meeting.
- 5.4. All examinations and assessments must be attended and completed on time (and within any pre-agreed extensions already granted), unless approved by the SMT of the College.
- 5.5. Unauthorised absences by students will result in a warning letter being sent by Programme Administrators.
- 5.6. Following the initial letter, if a student's absence is still of concern, s/he may be invited to improve the attendance rate and/or may be required to attend a meeting in the College to discuss the reasons behind such absence.

- 5.7. All students are at risk of removal from their programme after consistent and continued periods of absence are recorded. A student, whose attendance rate is below 50% at the midpoint of an academic term or is below 60% during the entire term, may risk removal from the programme with no opportunity to re-enrol on any programme. Should that occur, the College will inform the SLC, as well as, the relevant partner institution.
- 5.8. No extended period of absence is permitted unless authorised through application for temporary leave, suspension of study or deferral.
- 5.9. The following reasons for absence are **not** acceptable and **cannot** be marked as excused absences. They include:
- holidays
 - part or full time work which is not part of a programme of study
 - leisure activities
 - birthdays or similar celebrations
 - shopping
 - driving lessons

Students should be aware that if they take holidays during term time they may be withdrawn from examinations and/or coursework may not be submitted for marking and verification. They will also be called to a meeting in accordance with the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

6. Non-attendance

- 6.1. Students demonstrating non-attendance on a programme of study will be asked to attend a meeting in the College with the programme administrator. Should a student choose at that point to suspend or defer their studies, documentation must be completed to confirm this, and this will become effective as soon as the information is received centrally.
- 6.2. Students also have the option of leaving the course prematurely and taking an exit award, provided sufficient credits have been obtained and the exit award is a viable award route for their programme of study.
- 6.3. In instances where a student does not attend the scheduled meeting in the College and no acceptable reason is given for non-attendance at the meeting, the College would withdraw the student from the programme with no opportunity to re-enrol on any programme.

- 6.4. Should the decision be to withdraw a student from a course, the reasons for the decision must be sent in writing, prior to withdrawal.
- 6.5. In all instances of non-attendance, student will be issued with a notice of withdrawal and given 14 days to respond or take appropriate action.
- 6.6. Students are required to attend a meeting in the College where their attendance, academic progression and any other personal circumstances can be discussed.
- 6.7. In cases where students do not attend the meeting or no communications are received from the student or in cases where students attended the preliminary attendance meeting but no improvements in attendance are seen, the student could then be exited from the programme.
- 6.8. Students whose attendance is below the minimum attendance threshold set by the College will be **suspended from their studies** which will not give them access to attending classes and using library resources.
- 6.9. No exemptions from Council Tax, or requests for authorised absence, will be supported by the College where attendance falls below the minimum requirement.
- 6.10. Suspended students will be reported to the SLC, which may enforce repayment of loan moneys already advanced.

7. Engagement

- 7.1 Student Engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.
- 7.2 The college expects all students who have enrolled on a module to participate fully in the learning activities associated with each module and to undertake **all components** of assessment attached to it. The students' completion of the enrolment and confirmation process includes a commitment to the following **Participation Contract**:

"I undertake to participate fully in those activities which are described in each module as essential and I will inform the Programme Admins / Programme Leader if circumstances oblige me to miss any of these activities. I recognise that failure to participate adequately in these essential activities may lead to termination of my enrolment on my programme of study. I understand that I will be invited to explain my failure to participate before termination of enrolment on the programme occurs and failure to engage in this process will be considered to be withdrawal."

7.3 The college will monitor engagement at taught sessions from the first week of teaching and will undertake to contact students whose failure to participate without agreement or approval gives cause for concern. Taught sessions can be lecture, tutorial, seminar, online classes, support sessions, lab or workshop or studio-based. The contact made constitutes the invitation to explain failure to participate before termination on the programme occurs.

7.4 Attendance Review

7.4.1 College will conduct attendance reviews in Week 4 and Week 8 of each semester.

7.4.2 To continue studying at the College, students are required to meet the following criteria:

- a. An attendance record of at least 70% must be achieved over each semester. Exceptions are made for extenuating circumstances, though only when these are justified with credible supporting evidence
- b. Students must submit all relevant assignments on time to demonstrate your intent to student and fulfil the participation contract.

7.4.3 The **Participation Contract** will be considered as breached in any of the following circumstances, unless the student has negotiated alternative acceptable arrangements with the college academic team.

- (i) Student who has missed any 3 weeks of taught sessions for one module, either consecutively or intermittently. Or has failed to meet the attendance requirements specifically above without good cause or approved extenuating circumstances.
- (ii) The student will be given one week to confirm their intention to continue studying on the module and to plan remedial action for recovering the missed learning with the module leader and/or programme leader / programme admin or their representative.
- (iii) The student will be issued with a notice of withdrawal and given 14 days (W14) to respond or take appropriate action. If there is a nil response, or a negative response, the student's enrolment on the programme will be terminated. A record of the termination and the reason for it will be held on the student record.

7.1.3 A Student who does not meet the above criteria may not be permitted to register for the following term. In this case the College reserves the right to withdraw the student from the programme with no opportunity to re-enrol

8. Appeals

8.1 Where students are excluded on grounds of unsatisfactory progression [as detailed above], they have the right to appeal against the decision.

8.1.1. The appeal explaining the grounds for the submission must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of the communication of the outcome of the disciplinary meeting. Appeals should be submitted to the Principal.

8.1.2. The student will be advised within 5 working days of whether the request for a review has been accepted and if not, reasons why it has not been accepted.

8.1.3. If accepted, an Appeal Panel will be established. The student is entitled to attend a meeting with the panel in order to state their case, and to be accompanied in such a meeting by a friend, who is a student of the college, and, if the student is under 18 years of age, by their parent or guardian.

8.1.4. The outcome of the panel will be to:

- i. Confirm the original decision,
- ii. Annul the original decision or,
- iii. Amend the original decision which may include a reduction in the original penalty

8.1.5. If a student has completed this procedure and they are still dissatisfied with the outcome, they may be able to refer the issue as a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) providing that it is eligible under the OIA's rules. Information is available from the OIA's website at www.oiahe.org.uk

8.1.6 Students may also be able to raise a complaint with Pearson Education - the awarding body that accredits HNC/HND programmes. Currently Pearson Education is not in OIA membership.

8.1.7 Students on BA/BSc programmes accredited by the University of Derby, please refer to <https://www.derby.ac.uk/about/academic-regulations/> for more information.