

## Academic Engagement Policy

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### CONTEXT

1. This Policy is for all students who are attending the College on a Tier 4 or Student Route visa. For the purposes of this Policy, 'student' shall refer to these students only.
2. Students or learners who are not on a Tier 4 or Student Route visa should follow their respective attendance policies
  - 2.1. [Undergraduate Student Attendance Policy](#)

### INTRODUCTION

3. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and study points as required by New College of the Humanities (the College). Students must be fully academically engaged in order to successfully complete the full programme of study. The College monitors the engagement of all enrolled students. The College considers a student academically engaging if they are actively and consistently following their programme of study.
4. This Policy sets out how the College supports students to engage fully with their studies, what the College expects of students in relation to engagement with their programmes, how it will monitor that engagement, and what it will do where students are not engaging.
5. The College has a responsibility to its students and to external bodies to ensure that students are attending and studying, so as to comply with the relevant regulatory requirements, and the College's requirements.
6. This Policy governs all undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes taught or delivered by the College.

### COMPLIANCE WITH THE POLICY

7. UKVI has clearly stated in the Student Sponsor Guidance that, where the student fails to re-engage with their studies within 60 days of the first contact regarding their academic engagement (30 days for students undertaking their programme by remote learning), the College must withdraw sponsorship except in exceptional circumstances.
8. For the purposes of this Policy, any student who has not reached 70% academic engagement of key events (study contacts points) without

approval shall be regarded as having unsatisfactory engagement with their programme.

9. Exceptional circumstances must be very rare, for example, a serious illness or injury. However, the College still expects that the student informs the College as soon as they possibly can.
10. Where a sponsored visa student fails to meet the minimum requirements as set out in this Policy, the College will record on the student's file, the reason for the lack of academic engagement, any evidence (if applicable) and the steps taken to ensure the student re-engages with their study.

### **DEFINITION OF A STUDY CONTACT POINT**

11. A 'study contact POINT' for the purposes of academic engagement monitoring constitutes an engagement by the student at any single timetabled activity within a one-week period of timetabled activities.
12. Timetabled activities include lectures, seminars, and tutorials as published by the Timetable Department. Any activity that is not timetabled and, therefore, will not appear on students' Individual Student Timetables and will not be considered and recorded as a study contact.
13. A timetabled week or a standard teaching week is defined as Monday to Friday. Students timetabled activities will be shown in CELCAT. All undergraduate and postgraduate taught students should have access to CELCAT.
14. Examples of a study point contact:
  - 14.1. registration with the College
  - 14.2. a lecture, tutorial, seminar or lab session
  - 14.3. Study visits or any trip outside the College
  - 14.4. confirmation of a supervisory meeting
  - 14.5. an examination
  - 14.6. an oral examination (including viva)
  - 14.7. submitting summative or formative coursework
  - 14.8. in interim dissertation, coursework or report
  - 14.9. any in person or online progress review with member of faculty (Collections)member of professional staff
15. There may be some study contact points which are not in CELCAT and which means that attendance is not recorded in CELCAT, but they are recorded in other systems such as CANVAS, etc. but may not appear in CELCAT attendance registers. Some of these activities are referred as teaching events.

### SYSTEM IN PLACE TO MONITOR ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

16. The College uses CELCAT for the timetabling and academic engagement monitoring. Registers are generated through CELCAT, based on timetabled events. The visa compliance office monitors individual student academic engagement on a fortnightly basis.

### INFORMATION IS RECORDED TO CONFIRM STUDENTS ARE ACADEMICALLY ENGAGED

17. A register is generated every two weeks by the visa compliance office. These registers are saved in a Google drive folder for all visa students. Any students with lower than 70% academic engagement are identified and noted in an Excel spreadsheet and contacted via email. A response from the student is also recorded on the spreadsheet in the form of comments.

### ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT MONITORING PROCESS

18. The visa compliance office monitors student academic engagement on a fortnightly basis. Following actions are expected when a lack of academic engagement is identified:
  - 18.1. STAGE 1 will be triggered where a student has less than 70% academic engagement in the consecutive two weeks.
  - 18.2. STAGE 2 will be triggered where a student has less than 70% academic engagement in the consecutive four weeks or a demonstrable pattern of non-academic engagement causing concern.
  - 18.3. STAGE 3 will be triggered where a student has less than 70% academic engagement in the consecutive six weeks or a demonstrable pattern of non-academic engagement causing concern.
  - 18.4. STAGE 4 will be triggered if the student fails to improve academic engagement following Stage 3. Sponsorship will be withdrawn and the student will have five days to appeal against the Stage 4 decision.

#### STAGE 1

19. The student will be contacted via email if they have less than 70% academic engagement in consecutive two weeks or a demonstrable pattern of non-engagement causing concern.
20. The student will be asked to provide a valid reason and evidence (where necessary) via email. If the response received via email is satisfactory then no further action is required. Otherwise, the student will be asked to sign the Stage 1 warning.

14  
days

#### STAGE 2

21. If the student has not responded to Stage 1 or has less than 70% academic engagement in consecutive four weeks or a demonstrable pattern of non-

28  
days

engagement causing concern, then the student will be invited to attend an engagement hearing with the Compliance Officer (CO) and Assistant Registrar (Student Records) (AR(SR)).

22. If the student attends the meeting and the College is satisfied with their reasons and the evidence provided, then the student absences will be considered as authorised absence. The AR(SR) will ensure that the authorised absence is correctly recorded.
23. A verbal warning may still be issued to the student, but no further action is required. If the student attends the meeting but fails to provide valid reasons or evidence, then they will be asked to read and sign the Stage 2 warning. If the student fails to communicate and attend the meeting, then they will move to Stage 3.

### STAGE 3

24. If the student has not responded to Stage 2 or has less than 70% academic engagement in the consecutive six weeks or a demonstrable pattern of non-academic engagement causing concern, then they will be invited for a meeting with the Compliance Manager (CM) and Registrar.
25. If the student attends the meeting and the CM and Registrar are satisfied with their reasons and the evidence provided, then the student absences will be considered as authorised absence.
26. The Registrar will ensure that the authorised absence is correctly recorded. A verbal warning may still be issued to the student, but no further action is required. If the student attends the meeting but fails to provide valid reasons or evidence, then they will be asked to read and sign the Stage 3 warning. If the student fails to communicate and attend the meeting, then they will move to Stage 4.

42  
days

### STAGE 4 (WITHDRAWAL OF SPONSORSHIP)

27. If the student has failed to communicate and respond to Stage 3, the student sponsorship will be withdrawn and reported to the UKVI. The student will be given five working days to appeal against the withdrawal decision.
28. If the student appeals and the appeal is upheld by the College, then the student will be allowed to continue their studies subject to UKVI approval.
29. If the appeal is upheld but the UKVI refuse to reinstate student's sponsorship, then the College may assign a new CAS to the student so that they can make a fresh application from their home country (provided the remaining programme length is more than six months or the student cannot complete their remaining programme from overseas). The student must leave the UK within 60 days from the date of withdrawal of sponsorship.

49  
days

### GENERAL TERM ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT MONITORING (UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY)

30. In addition to the four stages of the academic engagement monitoring, formal reviews will be undertaken by the College in weeks 7 and 11 of the

Michaelmas and Hilary - calculating the percentage of academic engagement per student per degree programme from weeks 1 – 6 and weeks 8 – 11 of each term respectively.

31. Any student with below 70% overall academic engagement will be contacted and invited for a meeting with the Registrar and the CM. The student will be asked to provide the reason and, where necessary, evidence for their absences. The Registrar and the CM will make a decision to issue a warning depending on the outcome of the academic engagement hearing.

### **EVIDENCE FOR ABSENCE**

32. A student who is absent through illness or any other extenuating circumstances must notify the College. If a student is away for more than five consecutive Study Contact Points, a medical certificate or any other appropriate evidence will be required. Failure to provide evidence within 21 days of the student's return to College may lead to the relevant stage warning and hearing.

### **ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT DURING DISSERTATION PERIOD**

33. Normally, there are between three to five supervised study points during the dissertation period.
34. Supervised study points are recorded and monitored for the students writing their dissertation.
35. Stage 2 warning process will be triggered should the student fail to attend the first monthly study point.
36. Stage 4 withdrawal process will be triggered should the student fail to attend the second monthly study point and fails to establish any contact between the Stage 2 and Stage 4 time period.

### **ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT DURING DIGITAL OR ONLINE LEARNING**

37. Academic Engagement is recorded and monitored through CELCAT during any element of digital learning or distance learning of a particular subject where a student may or may not require on-campus studies.
38. The Academic Engagement Stage 2 warning process will be triggered where a student has less than 70% academic engagement in consecutive two weeks.
39. The Stage 4 withdrawal process will be triggered should the student fail to re-engage with their studies within 30 days of the first contact regarding their academic engagement.

### **SUPPORT TO STUDY POLICY TO RE-ENGAGE STUDENTS**

40. The College has a **Support to Study Policy** in place to ensure students are provided with full support and advice for academic re-engagement as per their individual circumstances and according to the Support to Study Policy.
41. The College supports re-engagement through the SSDT and the faculty, as defined in the Support to Study Policy – Initial Support, Stage 1 and through the formal procedure of Stage 2 following a referral from Stage 1.

### **STUDY DEFERRAL REQUEST**

42. The College understands that it must notify the UKVI and withdraw sponsorship where a student has deferred their studies for more than 60 days, unless exceptional circumstances as set out in the UKVI Policy guidance related to academic engagement “Changes to student circumstances table” apply.

### **STUDY DEFERRAL - EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES A**

43. The College may continue to sponsor a student who has deferred their studies for up to a maximum of 60 days providing the College feels confident that it can continue to carry out its sponsorship duties and the student will be able to complete their programme within their existing period of leave. If the College considers the student will not resume their studies after 60 days, the College will withdraw sponsorship.

### **STUDY DEFERRAL - EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES B**

44. In exceptional circumstances, such as serious illness or injury, the College may continue to sponsor a student for longer than 60 days, providing the student can still complete their programme within their existing period of leave when they resume their studies. It is for the College to decide whether it is prepared to continue sponsoring a student during a deferral and has the evidence to provide in order to verify this decision to the UKVI compliance officers.

### **ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT DURING WORK PLACEMENTS**

45. The College does not currently offer any programme involving work placement at the moment and the Policy shall be reviewed when the College may start offering any programme which includes work placements.

<b>Title: Academic Engagement Policy</b>					
<b>Approved by: Academic Board</b>					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Location	Proposed next review date
1.0	March 2021	March 2021	Visa and Immigration Compliance Manager	Academic Handbook/ policies and procedures/ academic policies and procedures	April 2023
Referenced documents	Undergraduate Attendance Policy; Support to Study				
External Reference Point(s)	Student Sponsor Guidance, Document 2: Band 2 – Study at a higher education provider at RQF 6 (SCQF 9/10 and equivalents), RQF 7 (Taught and Research) (SCQF 11 and equivalents), and RQF8 (SCQF 12 and equivalents)				