

Lincoln Bishop University

Document Administration

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STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ENGAGEMENT & ABSENCE POLICY

VERSION CONTROL TABLE

<u>Version Number</u>	<u>Date Authorised</u>	<u>Summary of Key Changes</u>
1.0 – 4.0	27 July 2018	Policy first introduced and approved by Senate
5.0	14 July 2021	Updates to align with new Faculty Structure
5.1	18 October 2023	Update for September 2023 including removal of the appeals process as students who do not attend or engage in accordance with this policy are referred to other policies, all of which have specified appeals routes. Clarification has also been provided regarding the definition of unsatisfactory attendance
5.2	21 August 2024	Changes to process to meet new University structure
5.3	11 March 2026	Rebrand – University Logo and Name changes

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1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 1.1. The Student Attendance, Engagement & Absence Policy has been developed as part of the University's commitment to provide a supportive learning environment in which encouragement is given to all students to develop a range of skills and approaches to their studies.
- 1.2. The University has responsibilities to a number of bodies to ensure that students attend the programmes for which they are enrolled and to encourage engagement leading to successful outcomes in assessments. These bodies include, but are not limited to, public authorities who finance programmes of study; the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) that accredit some of our awards; and to the UKVI to monitor the attendance of international students whose student visa is sponsored by the University.
- 1.3. This policy is supported by the Student Route Compliance Policy, which sets out the expectation for all students who require a visa in order to enter, remain and study in the UK to adhere to the requirements of their visa and UK immigration rules at all times during their studies.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 2.1. The University recognises the investment that students and their sponsors make when a student enrolls on a programme. As a responsible institution, the University has a duty to act on non-attendance or lack of engagement so that students can be offered the opportunity to be supported to complete their programmes of study successfully.
- 2.2. This policy applies to all enrolled undergraduate and taught postgraduate students at the University.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. The University defines attendance as having active presence at scheduled academic sessions (held in person or online), placements, compulsory field and other trips, scheduled assessment and group work activities.
- 3.2. The University defines engagement as the act of a student participating in programme requirements, scheduled academic sessions (held in person or online), use of the virtual learning environment, use of study and library resources, and related opportunities which aim to help students to achieve their potential in their studies.

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4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- 4.1. Attendance and engagement are key components in student retention, progression, achievement and employability. Regular attendance and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who actively participate in their learning are more likely to:
 - 4.1.1. enjoy a rewarding and collaborative experience in which their knowledge, skills and abilities are developed;
 - 4.1.2. successfully complete their programme; and
 - 4.1.3. realise their full potential.
- 4.2. The University expects students to attend and engage with learning, teaching sessions and materials associated with the programme on which they are enrolled unless exemption has been agreed with tutors or reasonable adjustments agreed through Student Advice and Wellbeing. The University will work with students to support them to ensure they are able to meet expectations of attendance and engagement. The learning and teaching methods for each programme and component module are set out in the validated programme documentation.
- 4.3. The University will keep attendance records for all taught lessons, lectures, tutorials or seminars (relevant to the course), whether they are held physically or online. If a student's attendance becomes a cause for concern, the student will be informed, and they will be invited to meet or have a conversation with their Programme Leader. The Programme Leader will explore the reasons for lack of attendance and/or engagement and will provide practical information and guidance to support engagement with study. If a student's attendance and/or engagement continues to be a concern, the student will be informed, and they may be invited to a further meeting or to attend a Support for Study meeting.
- 4.4. Unsatisfactory attendance and engagement includes but is not exclusively confined to:
 - 4.4.1. failure to attend regular learning and teaching sessions (including placements) without providing a satisfactory reason to tutors for absence;
 - 4.4.2. persistent late arrival or early departure from learning and teaching sessions or placements;
 - 4.4.3. failure to attend tutorials;
 - 4.4.4. failure to engage with the virtual learning environment, related materials and designated tasks;
 - 4.4.5. failure to respond to communication from the University.

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- 4.5. If a student fails to attend meetings with their Programme Leader (or nominee) or fails to address concerns raised about their attendance and engagement, the student will be referred to Stage 3 of the Code of Practice for Support for Study. This would only be held where significant and ongoing concerns have been identified and in particularly serious circumstances this may lead to a recommendation to terminate a student's enrolment on their programme of study. Students who do not attend or engage with their programme of study may be required to withdraw by the Board of Examiners.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

- 5.1. Students are expected to arrive on time for classes (held physically or online) and remain for the duration of the session. Registers will be taken at the start of a session to record attendance.
- 5.2. As outlined in the Student Charter, students should engage with teaching and learning activities and should take responsibility for their own learning.
- 5.3. There will be circumstances occasionally where ill health or other legitimate reasons prevent students attending sessions. Students are responsible for completing the notification of absence form located on the Student Portal or informing the Module Tutor and/or Programme Leader of these circumstances in advance of their absence or as soon as is reasonably possible.
- 5.4. If students are on placement they must inform their Programme / Module Lead, the Placement Office and their placement setting. Those trainees who are undertaking a placement leading to Qualified Teacher Status should also record their absence on their electronic record of professional development (ERPD).
- 5.5. If a student is absent for an extended period, they may need to suspend their studies. The Code of Practice for Break in Study (Intercalation of Studies) gives further information about the procedures for this.
- 5.6. If a student is unable to meet a deadline for assessment as a result of an absence, they should refer to the Code of Practice for Extenuating Circumstances.
- 5.7. Where a student has been advised of a concern about their attendance or engagement, they are required to engage with any recommended support in order to seek to address this concern.

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6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS UNDERTAKING AN INDEPENDENT STUDY OR DISSERTATION

- 6.1. Students who are undertaking a taught postgraduate-project or dissertation are required to have a meeting with an academic member of staff (academic tutor or dissertation supervisor) at least once per month during their independent study.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY

- 7.1. The University will alert students to concerns about their attendance or engagement via their student e-mail and will seek to identify and implement relevant interventions to support the student.
- 7.2. The University will make available the promised learning and teaching opportunities for students. Timetabled classes will only be postponed in exceptional and unavoidable circumstances, e.g. staff illness. If it is necessary to postpone a scheduled academic session, the University will notify students promptly and seek to make reasonable alternative arrangements.
- 7.3. Programme Leaders will ensure that Module Tutors actively record attendance for relevant sessions using the University systems.
- 7.4. Academic staff and members of the Faculty Administration Team will review recorded attendance and engagement data and co-ordinate action at identified review points.
- 7.5. The Faculty Administration Manager and Head of Faculty Operations will apply the relevant regulatory procedures, e.g. Student Withdrawal Policy, that may be triggered as a result of non-attendance/engagement. They will ensure that the International Office is kept informed of any processes involving students holding a student visa.

8. APPEALS

- 8.1. Any appeals against action taken as a result of attendance and engagement monitoring will be managed in accordance with the policy under which that action was taken, e.g. Professional Suitability Policy, Student Withdrawal Policy.

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9. ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCEDURE

- 9.1. The University will record attendance data for students on undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes and modules at scheduled academic session taught both on campus and online.
- 9.2. At the start of teaching period the University will inform students of their responsibilities in respect of attendance at scheduled academic sessions and absence reporting, and of the support available.
- 9.3. Attendance and engagement data will be monitored regularly by the programme team.
- 9.4. If a student's attendance and/or engagement becomes a cause for concern, the student will be informed, and the Support to Study policy will be initiated and followed where appropriate. This will include where a student's attendance at scheduled academic sessions drops below 60% and/or their engagement with the VLE shows prolonged inactivity.
- 9.5. If an international student holding a student visa has been flagged through this procedure, in addition to the actions detailed in 9.4, the International Office will be notified and the compliance log will be updated. In accordance with UK Immigration Law, the International Office may report the student to the UK Visa and Immigration Directorate of the Home Office (UKVI). Further details are outlined in the Student Route Compliance Policy.
- 9.6. It should be noted that one possible sanction arising from persistent non-attendance and engagement could be enforced withdrawal from the University. For sponsored international students this will lead to sponsorship being withdrawn and a report being made to the Home Office.
- 9.7. If there is reason to believe a student has withdrawn from their studies and not informed the University then the presumed withdrawal process should be followed.

10. COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

- 10.1. Franchise partner organisations will abide by this policy. Non-franchised partner organisations are expected to have a procedure that is equivalent to that of the University.