



# Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

<b>Responsible Office</b>	Student and Registry Services
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Registrar
<b>Approving Authority</b>	Academic Board
<b>Date of Approval</b>	July 2022
<b>Effective Date</b>	July 2022
<b>Related Procedures</b>	Student Engagement Framework and Process <a href="#">Programme Delivery Statement</a>
<b>Related University Policies</b>	Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes Mitigating Circumstances Policy Learning Analytics Policy
<b>Amended (if applicable)</b>	June 2022
<b>Supersedes</b>	January 2022 Interim Policy
<b>Next review due</b>	Tbc (Threshold names in appendices updated 12/12/2022)

## Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

### **Purpose**

This policy sets out why we monitor student engagement and outlines the expectations and responsibilities of students to enable them to make informed decisions about their engagement and attendance with their course. It also outlines the University's support mechanisms to enable students to get back on track with their learning journey and the steps the University may take if a student's engagement falls below agreed thresholds (**My Engagement thresholds as documented in Appendix A**).

Bath Spa University recognises that studying for a degree is a significant commitment. We seek to promote the environment that enables our students to gain as much as possible from their learning journey with us. Our research tells us that students who are most engaged with their course feel the most settled at the University and national research suggests that the more involved students are with their course, the better they do.

Student attendance at centrally timetabled events, as well as their engagement with a range of learning resources, are known to be key factors in student success. To achieve academic success, most students will need to fully engage.

The University operates the Student Engagement and Attendance policy under the following principles. The policy aims to:

- 1.1. Ensure that the University works in partnership with students to support their learning journey and enable them to make the most of their University experience
- 1.2. Provide students with the tools to review and drive their engagement and participation with their learning and support, with assistance from key University services
- 1.3. Operate a proportionate approach to interventions designed to assist student engagement and attendance levels based on the impact of these levels on their studies
- 1.4. Support student retention, engagement and success in an appropriate way, recognising both the need for effective support mechanisms, as well as consideration of the students best interests and successful progression and completion of awards
- 1.5. Assess a variety of evidence sources and information as part of the decision making process relating to the application of interventions, resources and outcomes from sustained low engagement
- 1.6. Review the outcomes from this policy on a regular basis and implement improvements as a result

### **1. Scope**

This policy applies to all students who are registered on a taught or research programme that is awarded and delivered by Bath Spa University and Bath Spa London. Collaborative partners are responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place to support and monitor students' engagement and success.

### **2. Support for Student Engagement**

This policy is complemented by the University's Learning Analytics policy. The **My Engagement Dashboard** (introduced in September 2022) provides students, Student Engagement and Retention staff and Academic Advisers with the online tools to support student engagement. Where a student's pattern of engagement falls below accepted

## Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

thresholds (as documented in **Appendix A**), they will receive automated notifications outlining the support available to them to help them in considering their approach to engaging with their studies. Students are also encouraged to contact their Academic Adviser, or the Student Engagement and Retention Team for support.

**If a student is experiencing circumstances preventing them from engaging with their course they must seek advice and support from one of the following:**

- [Academic Adviser](#)
- [Module Leader](#)
- [Supervisor or Personal Tutor \(research students only\)](#)
- [Visa Compliance Team](#) (for Overseas Sponsored Students only)
- [Student Engagement and Retention Team](#)
- [Student Information Team](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Services](#)
- [Students' Union Advice Centre](#) for independent advice

### **3. Student Responsibilities**

#### **3.1. Students are expected to:**

- Attend all centrally timetabled events, including lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, labs, placements, site visits and in the case of research students, scheduled meetings with supervisors, whether delivered in person or online, associated with the course on which they are enrolled
- Arrive on time for sessions and remain for the duration of the session
- Check in their attendance via the MyBathSpa App
- Access Minerva Blackboard Ultra (Bath Spa University Virtual Learning Environment) including timely submission of all assessments, make use of Panopto for recorded lectures as guided by tutors and Library Resources via Talis
- Notify their module tutors in advance if they expect to be absent from any module event

The Bath Spa University [Programme Delivery Statement](#) sets out our focus on delivering the best possible in person experience for students and the importance for students of engaging with that experience

### **4. Monitoring Student Engagement**

- 4.1.** Alongside the legal duty of monitoring student engagement with their course and to act if engagement falls below the accepted standard, the University cares about enabling students to connect with their studies and personal learning journey. The University proactively reviews student engagement data on **MyEngagement** because lower engagement can be a sign that a student requires support. When student engagement is consistently dropping, Academic Advisers and the Student Engagement and Retention Team will reach out to offer support and advice, rather than waiting for a student to ask for it.
- 4.2.** The University's legal duty arises from the requirement to confirm registration and attendance with Student Finance England, as well as meeting the sponsorship requirements of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for the monitoring of sponsored

## Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

international students' attendance whilst studying in the UK.

**4.3.** The University collects data about individual student engagement including:

- Attendance check in via the MyBathSpa App
- Activity in Minerva (our Virtual Learning Environment) including timely submission of Assessments
- Panopto (Online Lecture Recordings)
- Library Loans via Talis
- Attendance registers for non-centrally timetabled sessions

All together this information gives an overview of a student's level of engagement with their course.

**4.4.** The University collects individual student data as well as aggregated and anonymised data sets which cover groups of students, such as whole programmes and levels of study. This data is collected and used in accordance with the Applicant and Student Privacy Notice, the Study Terms and Conditions and the University's Learning Analytics Policy.

### **4.5. Misuse of Engagement Monitoring Systems**

Students will be regarded as in attendance at the University, or engaging in University activities, whether they are present within the University buildings, participating in online activities or engaged elsewhere on some legitimate activity pursuant to the programme (e.g. attending a field course), always provided that they maintain regular academic contact with tutors and adhere satisfactorily to the programme for which they are registered. If attendance is deemed unsatisfactory within University attendance and engagement procedures, the University will take appropriate action, which may include termination of registration.

**4.6. Students found misusing the Engagement Monitoring system will be liable to disciplinary action. Examples of misuse are:**

- Checking in attendance via the MyBathSpa App, but not remaining for the entire duration of the event
- Sharing the one time only code with another student
- Using a one time code provided by another student to check in attendance in the MyBathSpa App, but not attending the session

Such behaviour will be treated as misconduct by the University, as outlined in the University's Academic Regulations.

## **5. Sponsored International Students**

As a sponsor, Bath Spa University has a responsibility to make sure that Student Visa or Tier 4 Student Visa holders meet the terms of their visa in respect of engaging with their studies.

As a sponsor, Bath Spa University has a legal obligation to monitor Student Visa and Tier 4 Student Visa holder's engagement with their studies, and report any changes to the Home Office.

## Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

This section of the policy has been developed in line with the Student Sponsor Duties as set out in the UKVI Sponsor Guidance.

Sponsored international students are expected to attend and engage actively and consistently with their course throughout the academic year. Failure to meet satisfactory attendance levels will result in withdrawal action being taken in line with the University's International Sponsorship Duties issued by UK Visas and Immigration (as documented in Appendix B of this policy) . Full information relating to responsibilities of international students can be found on the [University's Visas and Immigration webpages](#).

### **6. Placement Students**

Students undertaking a placement as part of their course are responsible for ensuring that their attendance matches the requirements set out by the course and their placement provider. Placement providers will inform the University if a student is failing to maintain a satisfactory attendance record, which may lead to the student being withdrawn from the placement activity and potentially from their programme of study.

Note: All international sponsored students commencing a placement must liaise with the Visa Compliance Team ([visacompliance@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:visacompliance@bathspa.ac.uk)) prior to the placement start date as the University must notify UKVI of placement details. Failure to make this notification will result in Illegal Working.

### **7. Postgraduate Research Students**

If a PGR student is found not to be engaging with their supervision meetings, does not have satisfactory attendance at other activity deemed essential to their studies by their supervisor, or is deemed by their supervisor not to be engaging appropriately with their research, the supervisor will inform the Graduate College team who will take the appropriate steps to ascertain the reason for non-engagement.

## 8. Appendices

### A. My Engagement Thresholds:

My Engagement Dashboard	
Threshold	% of Engagement
Very High	80-100%
High	60-79%
Moderate	40-59%
Low	20-39%
Very Low	1-19%
None	0%

### B. Sponsored International Students

#### UKVI Band 1 - Pre-Sessional English Students (RQF Level 5) and below

The Home Office requirements of Pre-Sessional English students are as follows:

Students studying at RQF level 5 and below must attend a minimum of 15 hours of daytime (08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday) classroom-based study per week.

Where the student has not reached 85% attendance of their classroom-based study in any given month, the sponsor must review the reason for the student's absence.

The student's record must then be annotated with the reason for the non-attendance and the steps being taken to improve the student's attendance.

Where a student's attendance falls below 70% for three consecutive months, the sponsor must withdraw sponsorship due to lack of academic engagement unless there are exceptional and evidenced reasons for the non-attendance (e.g. illness).

The expectation for students following the intensive Pre-Sessional English courses, delivered by the English Unit (ELU), is that daily attendance is required.

The ELU will record and retain that record of student attendance and engagement on their courses. Any absence or non-engagement on part of the student will result in intervention by the ELU. Absences and the reasons for them will be recorded and retained. Any serious concerns regarding a student's attendance or engagement will be escalated to the Immigration Compliance Team.

## Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

### **UKVI Band 2 - Study at RQF Level 6 (Undergraduate) and RQF Level 7 (Taught and Research Postgraduate degrees)**

Academic engagement in band 2 is indicated by activities such as:

- Attending required lectures, seminars or tutorials
- Undertaking required laboratory work
- Undertaking research or fieldwork
  
- Submitting essays, assignments and attending examinations

Postgraduate Taught students undertaking dissertations are not required to attend scheduled classes, therefore active and consistent engagement is determined by engagement with dissertation supervisors.

In this case a sponsored student's supervisor will be required to establish a programme of contact points with a minimum of one academic contact every four weeks, though more frequently if required.

Every four weeks, the Immigration Compliance Team will contact dissertation supervisors to confirm engagement.

Further interventions will be required where there is little to no engagement in the 4 week period.

### **Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Interventions (Sponsored Students)**

Engagement below 40% of scheduled events

Stage 1: After two consecutive weeks of attending less than 40% of their scheduled classes (online and in-person) the student will be sent an email reading their poor engagement.

Stage 2: After four consecutive weeks of attending less than 40% of their scheduled classes (online and in-person) the student will be sent an email regarding their poor engagement. The course leader will be included in this email to add any relevant information.

Stage 3: After six consecutive weeks of attending less than 40% of their scheduled classes (online and in-person) the student will be required to attend a mandatory meeting with the Immigration Compliance Team to discuss their poor engagement.

A written summary of the meeting will be agreed by all parties and attached to the student record within SITS

Stage 4: After 8 consecutive weeks of attending less than 40% of their scheduled classes (online and in-person) the Immigration Compliance Team will conduct an in-depth assessment of the students engagement with the University taking into consideration the following factors:

- Previous levels of engagement on the course
- Course leader/module tutors feedback on student's engagement
- Assignments submitted
- Engagement meeting attendance
- Engagement with the Immigration Compliance Team
- Any other relevant factors relating to the student's engagement

## Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

At stage 4, the student will be notified that we are conducting the further assessment and the possible consequences of this.

Following this assessment, if it has been concluded by the Immigration Compliance Team that the student has not been **actively and consistently** engaging with their course of study, sponsorship will be withdrawn and the student will not be permitted to continue studying at Bath Spa University.

Possible outcomes of Stage 4:

**Outcome 1:** Following a positive outcome of the assessment, the student will be notified that the University will not be withdrawing sponsorship of their visa. Intervention will return to stage 1 in this situation and move through the stages again.

**Outcome 2:** Following a negative outcome of the assessment, the student will be notified that the University will be withdrawing sponsorship of their visa.

Students who are deemed to be not engaging with their studies will have the right to appeal the decision by contacting the Student Complaints Team.

### **UKVI Band 2 - Study at RQF Level 8 - Research Postgraduate degrees**

As there is no requirement for research degree students to attend taught sessions, academic engagement is monitored by establishing a programme of contact points with their research supervisor.

Academic engagement for PGR students is managed by the Graduate School. Non-engagement is escalated to the Immigration Compliance Team.

Sponsorship will be withdrawn from those students who have not demonstrated active and consistent engagement over a consecutive 3 month period.

All students who are deemed to be not engaging with their studies will have the right to appeal the decision by contacting the Student Complaints Team

### **Work Placements - Sponsored students**

There is a requirement for sponsored students on work placements to be actively and consistently engaging whilst on work placements that are integral and assessed part of their degree programme.

Students failing to engage with their work placement will be subject to a similar level of checking to those students who are undertaking the taught element of their course.

It is the duty of the Professional Placements Team to notify the Immigration Compliance Team of the following:

- Sponsored students who are due to go on a work placement
- Location of the work placement, including full address and postcode,
- Duration of the work placement, including early completion,
- Changes to the work placement,
- When a student is not engaging with the work placement.

### **PGCE Work Placements**



## Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

It is the responsibility of the School of Education to notify the Immigration Compliance Team of the following:

- Sponsored students who are due to go on a PGCE placement
- Location of the placement, including full address and postcode,
- Duration of the placement, including early completion,
- Changes to the placement,
- When a student is not engaging with the placement.

### **Study Abroad (Outward mobility)**

Continued sponsorship of sponsored students who study on a Study Abroad programme will be permissible, providing that:

- The host institution accepts the responsibility to inform Bath Spa University where a student is not engaging with the Study Abroad programme.
- An agreement is signed between the host institution and Bath Spa University for each student on the Study Abroad programme. The agreement is to be shared with the Immigration Compliance Team for audit purposes.

### **Covid-19 and academic engagement (Sponsored students)**

Absences related to Covid-19 will not be considered as non-engagement if the absence is authorised by the University.

Due to the on-going Covid-19 situation, some sponsored students have been permitted to study online, in line with the UKVI Covid-19 Concessions.

Sponsored students who are studying online only, must adhere to the rules set out by the UKVI at all times.

Online attendance must be at least 40% of their expected attendance over a 2 consecutive week period. Engagement below this threshold will be followed up by the Immigration Compliance Team via email.

In line with the current UKVI guidance (as of December 2021), sponsorship will be withdrawn after 30 days of continued non-engagement.