

Pre-Degree Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

Contents

Section	Title	Page
1	Policy and Compliance	2
2	Scope of attendance and engagement	3
3	Expectations of all students	3
4	Expectations of students working outside of the University setting	4
5	Implications of poor or non-attendance	4
6	Maths and English attendance	5
7	Attendance definitions	6
8	International students - University compliance	
9	Complaints / Appeals against withdrawal	7
App 1	Reporting changes to student circumstances	9

1. Policy and Compliance

1.1 This Policy was developed as part of the Arts University Plymouth commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables students to achieve their full potential.

2. Scope of attendance and engagement

2.1 This policy applies to **all pre-degree students** attending Arts University Plymouth.

2.2 **Attendance** generally refers to the presence of the student during the scheduled teaching or learning activity for **an entire session** (including remote attendance for online, live sessions if in place).

2.3 **Engagement generally refers to** active participation by the student with their studies (attendance) and use of resources to support their learning, including:

- attendance of scheduled learning and teaching sessions and activities as detailed above;
- active contribution to personal and group tutorials, lectures, and seminars;
- use of library facilities and other learning resources;
- engagement with and submission of assessment tasks set;
- attendance at time-constrained assessment activities;
- responding in a timely manner to formal communications from the University, such as letters, emails, text messages and telephone calls.

2.4 This policy aims to assist all students to take responsibility for their full and prompt engagement, which will enhance their learning experience, develop their personal skills, and promote retention, achievement and progression to higher education or employment.

2.5 Poor attendance and engagement not only affect the student but also affect others who rely on the student in group projects and for peer learning, when group work and peer learning are central to the subject. Poor attendance can lead to students not reaching their full potential. It is in the interests of every student to attend their scheduled sessions.

2.6 Poor attendance and engagement by students with Student visas can result in sponsorship being withdrawn and the student having to leave the UK.

3. Expectations of students

3.1 Expectations for students when on campus or through online delivery are as follows:

- **Attendance**
- Students should attend **100%** of all sessions with additional consideration given to international students' attendance (see para 8.9).
- Students should arrive on time - late arrival can cause disruption to the lesson and other members of the class. Latecomers will also miss vital information presented to the cohort at the beginning of sessions which may impact success long term. Arriving late will count negatively against a student's attendance percentages meaning the percentage will be reduced to reflect

the number of minutes missed **UNLESS** a student is late because of a medical appointment you have told us of in advance or because public transport is late or cancelled or another reason which we accept is outside the student's control.

- Students must report an Absence via the self-reporting link on the student portal by **8:30 am** on the day of absence and any subsequent day of absence unless you have let us know you will be absent for a number of days. Students should provide enough information to allow a fair assessment of whether the absence is justified.
- All reported absences will be recorded as an explained absence if the reason is on the list of accepted explained absences. See section 8.
- Students should take ownership of the work they have missed via Google Classroom and discuss this with their tutor when appropriate.
- If sessions aren't registered on time and/or tutors are not informed or absence is not self-reported, we are likely to contact the student and parent(s) / guardian(s) to find out the reason for non-attendance.
- Holidays **must not** be booked in term time and will count as unexplained absences except in exceptional circumstances and subject to the approval of the Head or Assistant Head of Pre-Degree.

- **Timekeeping**

- Students are expected to arrive in time for their sessions, fully prepared to learn.
- Any student arriving late is expected to enter the studio quietly and wait for an appropriate moment to make themselves known to the course team, provide explanation and be briefed on the session at hand.
- Arriving late will count negatively against a student's attendance percentages meaning the percentage will be reduced to reflect the number of minutes of a session missed **UNLESS** a student is late because of a medical appointment you have told us of in advance or because public transport is late or cancelled or another reason which we accept is outside the student's control.
- Persistently arriving late will not only reduce a student's attendance percentage but may also lead to a student being asked to attend an intervention meeting.

4. Expectations of students working outside of the University setting

4.1 It is recognised that during the course of your studies you may require time to work off site to complete projects such as photoshoots. In such cases you are required to confirm your location with your subject leader or if they are not available, another course tutor to ensure you are marked as an 'explained absence' on the register and have agreed to any safety precautions that you must undertake and the expected time of your return to session.

4.2 AUP qualifications are not appropriate nor accredited for distance learning, therefore, long-term working off-site or from home is not permitted. However, in exceptional circumstances, reasonable adjustments may be made to facilitate limited working from home, but this must be in agreement with your subject leader.

5. Implications of poor or non-attendance

5.1 The implications of poor or non-attendance are as follows:

- Consistent periods of non attendance may lead to withdrawal from the course through the **intervention process**.
 - any period of non-attendance lasting longer than four weeks will result in automatic withdrawal.
- Long periods of non-attendance can impact on the success of achieving the qualification.
 - it is expected that all students will fully complete the guided learning hours as per the qualification guidelines.
- A student's bursary will be stopped should their attendance fall below 80%.
- Each student is expected to meet the attendance target of 100%. Should any student fall below the expected target, they will be subject to the below actions at each threshold.

98+% Excellent attendance	No action required.
95-98% Very good attendance	No action required.
90-95% Good attendance	No action required.
80-90% Satisfactory attendance	Informal meetings held to discuss attendance and set improvement actions.
Below 80% Poor attendance	Formal intervention meeting, scheduled and actions agreed.
Continued poor attendance** (60%) over 4 consecutive weeks.	An intention of withdrawal letter will be sent home with a follow up meeting scheduled with the Subject Leader, Head or Deputy Head of Pre Degree and parents of students aged under 18*.

6. Maths & English attendance

6.1 AUP does not distinguish Maths and English attendance as any different to your creative qualification, therefore, all attendance is expected to be 100%.

7. Attendance definitions

- **Present**
- Signifies that a student is physically present within the building.
 - This is to ensure we have accurate records of people in the building in cases of emergency.
 - 'Present' is also used for those on educational trips.

- **Explained absence**
 - Is used to mark a student as either absent from the building but still working subject to the provisions set out in the examples below and in section 4 or when a student is absent for the reasons set out below.
 - All explained absences should be reported either via the self-reporting system or via email to course tutors.
 - A student should have no more than **10% of 'explained absence'** in any given academic year. If a student surpasses this their case will be independently reviewed by the Head or Assistant Head of pre-Degree who will decide if intervention action must be undertaken to support the student in improving attendance.
 - Explained absence examples:
 - Working at Tavistock Place provided this has been agreed in advance by a course tutor.
 - Working off site for example to do a film or photo shoot provided this has been agreed in advance by the subject leader or in their absence another course tutor.
 - University visit/interview
 - Hospital Stay
 - Emergency dental appointment
 - Healthcare appointment (such as GP)
 - Agreed Working from home (as an approved reasonable adjustment for a limited period of time)
 - Holidays authorised with prior notice by the Head or Assistant Head of Pre-Degree , with a maximum of one per academic year. Authorisation will only be given in exceptional circumstances.
 - Illness
 - Bereavement
- **Unexplained absence**
- **Is used to mark** a student as absent without communication or clear explanation or for another reason which does not fall within the definition of explained absence. .
 - Unexplained absence examples:
 - Marked absent without a note
 - Driving lesson
 - Employment
 - Unauthorised holidays
 - In tutorials and intervention meetings, a student's attendance will be discussed and reviewed, including Present, Explained, and Unexplained as well as any trends in absence or unusual patterns.

8. International students - University compliance

8.1 The University has a duty to monitor and act on attendance and engagement, or lack of, so students can be supported to complete their programme of study and we can also fulfil our legal obligation to inform relevant external agencies to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Home Office's UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) division as a licensed Student Sponsor¹.

¹ [Register of Student Sponsors at 12 May 2023](#)

8.2 The Home Office (UKVI) provides [a Student Sponsor Guidance web page](#) of which Document 2 '[Sponsorship Duties](#) (29 October 2021)' is the key area of focus for FE and HE providers.

8.3 The Government's Academic Engagement Policy is at Paragraph 7.13 - 7.20 of the [Sponsorship Duties document](#) mentioned above.

All sponsors must ensure that sponsored students are academically engaging throughout the period of leave for which the students are being sponsored - a student is academically engaging if they are actively and consistently following their course of study.

8.4 Students studying at level 3 must be required to attend a minimum of 15 hours of daytime, classroom- based study per week. The UKVI is expected to report a level 3 student who misses ten consecutive expected contact points. A contact point includes any of the following:

- attending formal academic or pastoral care activities including:
 - a lesson, lecture, tutorial or seminar
 - a test, examination or assessment board
 - a meeting with a lecturer or personal tutor
 - a research-method or research panel meeting
 - an appointment with a welfare adviser or other member of staff concerning international students
 - submitting assessed or unassessed coursework

8.5 Failure to comply with this policy and wider Home Office policies, with regards to international students, **could result in sanctions which include the revoking of the Student Sponsor License.** [Home Office Document 3](#) applies.

8.6 The University must be able to produce this policy on request and demonstrate:

- how it is being applied
- that systems are in place to monitor academic engagement
- what information is being recorded to confirm that students are academically engaging
- what actions are expected when a lack of academic engagement is identified
- that we have a robust system in place to identify any student who has a period of non-engagement which exceeds 60 days in duration and the action we will take to support the student to re-engage
- that we have a clear policy on when non-engagement will lead to withdrawal of sponsorship.

8.7 Academic engagement is monitored through the University's student record system, and monitored on a monthly basis by the International Working Group, with action taken where concerns are raised.

8.8 International students who are studying at AUP in Pre Degree are expected to meet the attendance/engagement requirements of their student visa. Changes to a student's circumstances must also be adhered to (see Appendix 1).

8.9 The following statement from the Home Office is vitally important to the international student and to the sponsor (AUP):

Each student in Band 1 must be required to 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 (AUP) 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).

8.10 It is vitally important that good communication is in place and retained during periods when Student Visa holders are outside of the campus setting. A communication plan **must** be agreed beforehand and noted in the Tutorial or Notes section of SoMIS. Any correspondence with students should be retained and be easily referred to. It is important that the student is physically seen by lecturers either in person or digitally (via camera).

8.11 It is important to note that **AUP may be asked to demonstrate how contact with the student is being retained** during these periods.

8.12 The University via the Head of Student Recruitment & Admissions has a duty to also notify UKVI and withdraw sponsorship where a student has deferred their studies for more than 60 days, unless the exceptional circumstances set out in the "Changes to student circumstances table" at Appendix 1 apply:

9. Complaints / Appeals against withdrawal

9.1 Students will have the right to respond to a recommendation to withdraw them from their studies through the Intervention Process (paragraph 5.1) under this Policy.

9.2 Responses as an appeal against withdrawal should be submitted in writing initially to the Head of Compliance & Quality Systems within five working days of the notification to the student and should be accompanied by appropriate evidence. The final decision will reside with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Appendix 1

Reporting changes to student circumstances

From UKVI Sponsorship duties

Section 7 Reporting changes to student circumstances

7.1 Sponsors must report on all Students and Child Students that they are sponsoring, even if they are:

- a. On a course (including a pre-sessional course or a study abroad programme) at a partner institution or at another institution under an exceptional arrangement or teaching partnership; or
- b. Doing a work placement that is part of their course; or
- c. On a study abroad programme overseas that is part of their course, unless the sponsor has decided to end sponsorship during this period.

7.2 You must give us details of any third party, in the UK or another country that helped you to recruit international students. To do this, email EducatorsHelpdesk@homeoffice.gov.uk. We may take action against you if you fail to provide this information or any other information we request about your use of third parties.

7.3 You must retain records about any appeal which a student makes against refusal decisions. If a student's appeal is successful and permission is granted, you must tell us if their start date is delayed and provide us with a new enrolment date. To do this, use the free text field on the sponsor management system. Please refer to the relevant sections in this guidance for more information on the Sponsor Management System, CAS and reporting student activity.

7.4 Sponsors must inform UKVI if anything they have reported through the SMS is incorrect and why it is incorrect.

7.5 The table below titled 'Changes to student circumstances' sets out all of the changes sponsors must report. Unless stated otherwise in the relevant section of the table, all reports should be made using the SMS, and should include the last recorded residential address and contact telephone number that the sponsor holds for the migrant. Sponsors should also include any email address they hold for the student, if they have one.

	(excerpts from Home Office 'Sponsorship Duties para 7.5²)	
a.	If A student withdraws from their course before they travel to the UK.	Then You must: • Report it to us within 10 working days of you knowing about it • Tell us if the student is joining another institution and the name and address of that institution if you know it.
b.	If A student's start date is delayed before they enter the UK but after they have been granted entry clearance.	Then You must: • Agree with the student whether they can still complete the course within the dates given on their visa. If they can, you need not report anything. If they can't, you must: • Assign a new CAS • Advise the student to apply to vary their leave to include a later finish date

² Student Sponsor Guidance (updated by the Home Office on 29 Sep 21)

c.	If A student does not enrol within the enrolment period.	Then You must: • Report it to us within 10 working days of the enrolment period ending, including the reasons for non-enrolment, for example; a) they missed their flight; b) they decided not to come to the UK; c) they delayed their enrolment; d) they are doing a course with a different sponsor; or e) we have refused them permission to come to, or stay in, the UK. If we have refused a student permission to come to, or stay in, the UK, you do not need to report the non-enrolment as soon as you become aware of the refusal. The time-limit is still 10 working days from the date the enrolment period ends.
----	--	--

e.	If You are a sponsor with Student Sponsor status and: • you are a higher education provider and a student stops academically engaging Examples of expected contacts include: • attending formal academic or pastoral care activities including: ○ a lesson, lecture, tutorial or seminar; - ○ a test, examination or assessment board; ○ a meeting with a supervisor or personal tutor; ○ a research-method or research panel meeting, writing-up seminars or doctoral workshops; ○ an oral examination(viva); ○ an appointment with a welfare adviser or international student adviser; ○ submitting; ■ assessed or unassessed coursework; or ■ an interim dissertation, coursework or report; and ■ registration (for enrolment or matriculation).	Then You can either: • Report a tenth missed contact, or the date the student has stopped academically engaging whenever it occurs during the year; or • Set two checkpoints during any rolling 12-month period. You must report any students who have stopped academically engaging or missed 10 consecutive expected contacts, without you reasonably giving them permission leading up to that checkpoint, and you are withdrawing sponsorship of the student.
f.	If A student defers their studies after they have arrived in the UK and is no longer actively studying: You may continue to sponsor a student who has deferred their studies for up to a maximum of 60 days providing you can continue to carry out your sponsorship duties and the student will be able to complete their course within their existing period of permission. If you think the student will not resume their studies after 60 days, you must withdraw sponsorship. In exceptional circumstances, such as serious illness or injury, you may continue to sponsor a student for longer than 60 days, providing the student can still complete their course within their existing period of permission when they resume their studies. It is for you to decide whether you are prepared to continue sponsoring a student during a deferral and, if necessary, provide evidence to verify this decision to our compliance officers	Then You must report that the student has deferred their studies within 10 working days of agreeing the deferral. If you withdraw sponsorship, the student's permission to stay is no longer valid and you must advise them to leave the UK. Once the student is ready to resume their studies, you must assign a new CAS and the student must reapply for a new visa.

g.	If You are withdrawing a student from their course.	Then You must: • Tell us within 10 working days of you knowing about the issue • Tell us why, for example; a) The student has not met your requirements b) The awarding body stops running the course or stops trading. If a student to whom you have issued a CAS intends to request administrative review of a decision to refuse their visa application, and you will continue to sponsor them if the refusal is overturned, do not withdraw sponsorship until the review has been concluded. Report such students as non-enrolments in accordance with row c. of this table (para 7.5), unless you are withdrawing sponsorship for other reasons.
h.	If You stop sponsoring a student because they: • commence a study abroad programme overseas and do not plan to return to the UK or you do not want to continue to be responsible for them while they are out of the UK • move into a different immigration category with a different sponsor; • move into an immigration category that does not need a sponsor; or • complete the course sooner than expected. or • exceed the amount of remote delivery permitted on their course of study	Then You must: • Tell us about it within 10 working days of knowing about the issue.

i.	If There is a significant change in a student's circumstances. These include: • a change in where they study or do their work placement; • a change of course; or • anything that suggests that they are breaking the conditions of their permission to stay in the UK, such as working in breach of their conditions	Then You must: • Report the change to us within 10 working days of you knowing about it.
j.	If You suspect that a student is not a genuine student.	Then You must: • report this by e-mail to the Home Office as soon as possible. https://www.gov.uk/reportimmigration-crime

Document version control	
Document title:	Pre Degree Student Attendance & Engagement Policy & Procedure
Effective Date:	September 2025
Approving body:	VCE / Academic Board
Version:	2
Main amendments this version	Para 3 Student Expectations - attendance, absence, timekeeping and reporting Para 7 Definitions of explained / unexplained absence
Supersedes:	Version 1, Sep 24
Previous review dates:	N/A
Next review date:	May 2026 or change of law / regulation
Related Statutes, Ordinances, & General Regulations	• Student Visa - GOV.UK • Home Office Student Sponsor Guidance
Related policies:	• Admissions Policy
Related procedures	• Disciplinary Procedures for Students (Non-academic) • Health & Wellbeing Support for Study Policy & Procedure
Related information:	• Student Terms & Conditions
Policy owner and Lead contact:	Head of Pre Degree (sforsyth@aup.ac.uk) Assistant Head of Pre Degree (mblyth@aup.ac.uk) PD Quality and Examinations Manager (dkingston@aup.ac.uk)