

# Student Engagement and Attendance Policy 2024-25

## 1. Introduction

1. This policy is part of the University's commitment to supporting our students to enable them to achieve their full potential. We provide this support through a number of strategies, all of which aim to provide our students with a supportive learning environment. This engagement and attendance policy sets out our requirements in relation to engagement and attendance, whilst recognising our responsibilities, and the responsibilities of our students in the implementation of this policy.
2. Where professional bodies or Student Route immigration requirements specify levels of attendance and/or engagement, or the implementation of particular monitoring and reporting processes, these are in addition to the attendance requirements in the Student Engagement and Attendance Policy [this policy].
3. There are specific and additional requirements for those students sponsored under the Student Route of the points-based immigration scheme enabling the University to meet its requirements as a sponsor, which are set out in the Sponsored Student attendance and engagement section of this policy.
4. Programme specific attendance and engagement requirements are in addition to the attendance and engagement requirements in the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy [this policy].
5. For the purpose of this policy 'attendance' refers to attendance at on-campus learning activities and engagement with all timetabled learning activities, including those that take place online.
6. Attendance data is used together with other measures of student engagement to inform decisions about student withdrawal from a programme of study.

## 2. Principles

*The policy will be:*

1. Applied consistently and fairly for all students.
2. Subject to monitoring, evaluation, and review at agreed intervals through the academic board with advice from Academic Registry and in consultation with students where appropriate.
3. Flexible enough to allow for absences due to illness and other circumstances.
4. Facilitate placements, practice learning, volunteering, and other similar opportunities with the agreement of tutors where necessary.

## 3. University Regulations on Attendance

1. University regulation C2.1: Students should attend all scheduled learning sessions or events and undertake assignments as specified in the regulations governing the module to be eligible for formal assessment and/or continuation on their programme of study.
2. University regulation C2.6: Students with 3 weeks consecutive non-attendance may be withdrawn. A student with consistent poor attendance may also be withdrawn at

the discretion of the programme leader (or delegate) in line with guidelines defined in the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy [this policy].

## 4. Operation of the Attendance and Engagement Policy

### 4.1 *Students are responsible for:*

- Checking-in to their scheduled learning on-campus sessions or online sessions or events via MyMDX (or via a browser) using the beacons in classrooms and one time code (OTC) in online sessions.
- Attending scheduled learning sessions or events as identified by their timetable.
- Meeting the requirements as laid out in this policy.

### 4.2 *Programme teams are responsible for:*

- Highlighting the importance of attendance and to outline any programme specific attendance and engagement requirements.
- Monitoring records of attendance and engagement to ensure that students are meeting thresholds.
- Identifying students who are not attending and engaging consistently.
- Identifying students who may benefit from the support of an intervention aimed at helping the student to successfully complete the programme and take action if required.

## 5. Absence

1. An occasional missed scheduled learning session or event due to illness or other circumstance will be identified as an absence with no further action required.
2. An occasional missed check-in to a class will be identified as an absence with no further action required.
3. Planned absence from a scheduled learning session or event requires authorisation from the programme team.
4. There is no automatic authorisation for absence on the basis of religious observance. Where religious observance affects a student's attendance at a scheduled learning session or event, the student should discuss this with their programme team who will give sympathetic consideration to any reasonable adjustments that can be made (e.g., to attend a different timetabled session).
5. Absence from scheduled learning sessions or events due to work commitments is not a sufficient reason for absence.

## 6. Programme level intervention

1. Students with low levels of engagement or attendance in their scheduled learning sessions or events in any consecutive 3-week period will be identified by the programme team as vulnerable to failure and will be supported with interventions aimed at helping the student to successfully complete their studies.

2. Students who are identified as vulnerable to failure who do not improve their attendance following intervention may be withdrawn at the discretion of the programme team.
3. Students with 3 weeks of consecutive non-attendance may be withdrawn.
4. Where a decision is made to withdraw a student from the University, this will be communicated to the student via email. The student will be advised of the effective withdrawal date and be provided with advice and guidance on what to do if they wish to appeal the decision of the programme team.
5. The programme team may also decide that it would be in the best interest of the student to interrupt their studies. This is likely to be in cases where students have missed too much of their programme even with good reason, to have a reasonable chance of catching up and succeeding with their studies.
6. In cases where the programme team agree that an interruption of studies is appropriate, students will be referred to the Progression and Support Team for advice and guidance.

## 7. Sponsored Students Attendance

1. Middlesex University is legally required to monitor all Student Route sponsored students and to maintain attendance records, reporting non-attendance, when necessary, in line with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) regulations as well as the Immigration Rules.
2. It is to be noted that the UKVI Policy in relation to attendance monitoring is continually under review with amendments notified to sponsors. Therefore, this policy is subject to regular changes and reviews in line with the declaration of the UKVI revised regulation.
3. Sponsored students are required to engage with their study through 'expected contacts'. These 'contacts' are not defined by the UKVI but should include participation and attendance in formal academic or pastoral care activities.
4. Students who miss 10 consecutive expected contacts must have sponsorship withdrawn and the UKVI notification submitted.
5. It is the sponsor's responsibility to decide when absences are permitted and therefore not counted as missed expected contacts. Evidence must be retained supporting the decision to allow an absence in case it is queried by Home Office compliance officers.
6. If, as a result of permitted absences, students will not be studying for a period of more than 60 days and are unable to complete their studies in the original time frame they should defer completion of their studies and sponsorship must be withdrawn.
7. Postgraduate research students who are sponsored under the Student Route will be responsible for ensuring that their monthly supervisory sessions are signed by the Director of Studies and, on request, submit a copy of this to the Student Visa Compliance Team.

## 8. Postgraduate research students

1. The Director of Studies for a postgraduate research student is responsible for monitoring progress and recording attendance at expected contact points – including supervisory sessions.

2. Planned absence from a postgraduate research programme requires authorisation from a student's Director of Studies.

## 9. Students on placement

1. The placement provider will monitor attendance of the placement student.
2. A single unauthorised absence should be reported to the Placement Supervisor by the placement provider.
3. The Placement Supervisor will escalate any concerns about Student Route sponsored placement students to the Student Visa Compliance Team.

## 10. Students studying by distance learning

1. For distance learning students, the Programme Leader will be responsible for monitoring student participation and will implement mechanisms to ensure that appropriate contact with the student is maintained.
2. Students will not be sponsored for a Student Route visa for programmes that are wholly or mainly taught by distance/remote learning.

## 11. Right of appeal against a decision to withdraw

1. Where a student disagrees with the programme team's decision to withdraw the student for poor attendance, the option to appeal via the Universities Complaints and Grievance procedure is open to them.

## 12. Monitoring of the Policy

1. The attendance policy will be reviewed by the assurance committee at appropriate intervals and amendments and updates will be made to the policy as required.
2. Each faculty will be required to reflect on attendance and provide a report as part of our Annual Monitoring Enhancement Process.