

Student Engagement and Attendance Policy 2026/27

Responsibility of	Teaching Committee
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Approval Date	17th September 2026
Review Date	2027/28 Academic Session
Approved by	Chair of Teaching Committee

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1. **Aims of the policy**

- 1.1 This policy sets out the regulations and processes employed by the University of Westminster to monitor student engagement and attendance on all pre-sessional, apprenticeship, foundation, degree and research programmes, including programmes of study with a placement. It needs to be read within the context of the University's efforts to enhance student success and continuation, and the strategic initiatives deployed across the whole breadth of the student experience, both within and outside of the curriculum. Further information can be found on the [Student Engagement and Attendance](#) page on the web. The [Apprenticeships Change of Circumstances Policy](#) provides further information on how attendance is managed for apprentices.
- 1.2 Engagement and attendance monitoring is valued for its potential to indicate those students at risk of leaving their course early and/or failing their programme of study and to help students understand the importance of regular engagement and attendance.
- 1.3 The University aims to improve the engagement and attendance of all students. Our goal is to enable students from every background to develop into resilient, skilled graduates and lifelong learners, who succeed and contribute to society in ways they value.
- 1.4 While there are additional requirements relating to attendance for the [UK Visas and Immigration Department](#) (UKVI) sponsored visa students as set out in the [Student Visa Attendance Policy](#) and apprenticeship students as set out in the [Apprenticeships Change of Circumstances Policy](#), this policy is applicable to the student body as a whole.¹
- 1.5 This policy applies only to students enrolled on courses run at the University of Westminster premises and would not therefore apply to students studying at collaborative partner locations. Students studying on franchise courses with one of our international partners, and students who spend a semester or year overseas as part of a global exchange or study abroad programme, are expected to adhere to the attendance policies of the Institution they are attending.

2. **Engagement and Attendance Requirements**

- 2.1 Students are expected to attend every element of the programme of study. This refers to lectures, seminars, workshops, practical sessions and any form of summative or formative

¹ The University is required to report all sponsored visa students, who fail to meet the UKVI's minimum attendance requirements and have no satisfactory explanation for the absence, to the UKVI with the consequence that their sponsorship may be withdrawn, and they will be withdrawn from the University.

assessment. Students are expected to attend and engage with all sessions as per the delivery method outlined in the timetable.

- 2.2 The University offers students a vibrant on-campus learning experience with some content delivered virtually. As per government guidance (OfS and UKVI) 'attendance' means that the student is required to be at a provider location, or other specified location (such as a partner provider, or defined workplace) to undertake periods of study, tuition, learning in the workplace, or sandwich work placement. Therefore, when classes are scheduled to take place on-campus students are expected to attend them on-campus. For sponsored visa students where on-campus delivery is optional students should attend on-campus, this includes for optional classes and when classes are delivered as hybrid (both on-campus and online).
- 2.3 Engagement and attendance requirements are inclusive of all sessions whether completed as a large group in lectures, small group for tutorials, or one-to-one sessions (such as dissertation supervision or work placements).
- 2.4 Students should refer to their timetable in the [CMIS timetabling system](#). For information on classes and events with expected attendance students should check their course and module handbooks and [Blackboard](#).
- 2.5 Students undertaking a year or period of time in industry or practice or study at another Higher Education Provider are also expected to attend that placement/period of study away from the University of Westminster.
- 2.6 Students' engagement and attendance will be monitored and recorded by the University, which will act on data as appropriate.
- 2.7 Attendance of sponsored visa students is subject to additional controls due to the requirements of the UKVI. Sponsored visa students will be informed of these requirements before enrolment. These controls may be subject to change to respond to developments in UKVI policy. Students will be notified by the University of any changes. Non-compliance with UKVI regulations regarding attendance can result in the University withdrawing its sponsorship of the visa and reporting the change to the UKVI who will curtail the visa, which may affect a student's immigration status and ability to make future visa applications.
- 2.8 The University has a range of [support services](#) that students may find helpful in managing their studies. If students are experiencing problems engaging with and attending their programme of study due to personal circumstances, they should seek guidance and advice via the [Student Centre](#) or direct from Academic [Personal Tutors](#).

3. Recording engagement and attendance

- 3.1 Students are active participants in their learning experience and are expected to take responsibility for achieving their potential through engaging fully with those experiences and with the requirements of their chosen course of study.
- 3.2 To alert colleagues to students who may be experiencing difficulties, all students will have their engagement and attendance monitored. Students are expected to register their attendance at all classes as per the information on the [SEA webpage](#).
- 3.3 Information about engagement and attendance will be gathered as follows:

- ID Card swipe: At enrolment students are issued their official student ID card. To access any University of Westminster property, students must swipe their card creating an electronic record of their entry/exit.
 - Students also need to swipe their ID Card at readers in required contact points (lectures, seminars, tutorials, studio events) to register attendance and these records are matched against the student's expected contact points in the timetable.
 - Student engagement will additionally be monitored through the analysis of assessment submission and performance, assessment offences, Mitigating Circumstances (MC) submissions, missing credits, numbers of modules with clashes, use of Blackboard and other elements of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
 - Attendance data for online classes will be obtained through records of logins to activities accessed through module Blackboard sites and matched against the student's expected online class events in their timetable.
- 3.4 This data will be used to collate information on students' engagement and attendance and will help to identify students who may be at risk of not completing their studies. It will also aid the University to develop student continuation strategies.
- 3.5 Students studying in the UK on a student visa should be aware that attendance at formal teaching sessions is a condition of their visa.
- 3.6 Information is recorded and stored on a secure third-party system ([SEA](#)) and internal system for the Learner Analytics Dashboard ([LAD](#)). (Information on how the data is processed can be found via the privacy notices in the previous links). Reports from the system will be analysed and monitored by Academic Personal Tutors, Course Leaders, the Student Engagement and Attendance Team (SEA Team) and other authorised colleagues. This will enable the University to monitor engagement and contact students who are having difficulty engaging and attending their course. Academic Personal Tutors will provide the primary interface with students on issues of continuation and will have a particular responsibility to identify students at risk of non-continuation and make appropriate interventions as required.
- 3.7 Students will have access to their daily attendance record through the [SEA system](#) which can be accessed via mobile devices, laptops, and desktop computers.
- 3.8 Academic colleagues will have access to reports on attendance for the modules for which they have responsibility.
- 3.9 The Graduate School monitors the engagement and attendance of doctoral researchers to ensure they are receiving sufficient supervisory support and are on track to meet key academic stages in a timely fashion. A key part of this monitoring is for regular meetings to take place between them and their Director of Studies and other members of their supervisory team, as appropriate (see Research Degree Academic Regulation B3 on Supervision). It is the doctoral researcher's responsibility to ensure these meetings are scheduled and documented in the [Virtual Research Environment](#) (Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of the [Research Degree Handbook](#)).
- 3.10 Students on a visa and participating in work placements should be in regular contact with their university supervisors and/or the work placement team. This contact will be recorded as an

engagement activity and shared with the Visa Compliance Team.² Home students should remain in contact with their academic supervisors and/or the work placement team and keep them informed as to any changes to the placement (e.g., end date, location of work) or issues arising on placement.

- 3.11 If it is identified that a student has swiped into class but was not in attendance, their record will be amended, and the absence recorded. Where a student is found to have continually swiped into class but was not in attendance then disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the [Student Disciplinary Regulations](#).

4. Absence

- 4.1 Short-term absences of up to two weeks do not need to be authorised, but students must inform their Academic Personal Tutor if they will be absent for two weeks or more to discuss any support measures needed and what options are available depending on the individual's circumstances.
- 4.2 Where classes are missed, it is the student's responsibility to catch up on any work they may have missed and liaise with their class tutors as needed.
- 4.3 Students should add an absence note to their attendance record when they miss a class, providing a reason for their absence, via the [SEA system](#).
- 4.4 Where illness or other unforeseen circumstances affect an assessment, students may wish to submit a [Mitigating Circumstances claim](#) where appropriate.
- 4.5 Students are permitted to apply to [interrupt their programme of study](#) if they are going through a difficult period with their studies. Guidance and advice on these processes can be found via the [Student Centre](#) or directly from [Academic Personal Tutors](#).
- 4.6 The University of Westminster is required to maintain attendance records for all sponsored visa students and to report absence to the UKVI. This monitoring will comply with the requirements of the UKVI, and students will receive information on this process and the implications of any absence as part of their enrolment at the University.
- 4.7 Students studying on a student visa may request an authorised absence from the University Visa Compliance Team as outlined in the [Student Visa Attendance Policy](#). An absence may only be approved if it is unavoidable and will not adversely affect academic progress.

5. Procedure for non-attendance

- 5.1 Continued absence from scheduled activities will trigger a process of communication and support, which will encourage students to re-engage with their studies and consider the options available to them depending on their circumstances. Academic Personal Tutors will contact students when there are concerns about attendance and engagement and may refer the case to the SEA Team or UKVI Compliance Team. Students who are contacted by the SEA Team (non-sponsored visa students) or by the UKVI Compliance Team (sponsored visa students) will

² This data does not appear in the attendance monitoring systems but is shared with the Visa Compliance Team

receive several emails providing opportunities to raise circumstances impacting on their attendance and offering support. One potential outcome of this process for non-sponsored visa students may be withdrawal due to non-attendance. The outcome for sponsored visa students is outlined in the [Student Visa Attendance Policy](#). The process and outcome for Apprenticeship students is outlined in the [Apprenticeship Change of Circumstances Policy](#).

- 5.2 In accordance with the [Academic Regulations](#) (outlined in section 5.3 below), students who are no longer attending may be deemed to have withdrawn and have their enrolment terminated.
- 5.3 Any student who is absent from their studies without authorisation or good reason for a period of at least two weeks (10 consecutive working course days or more), including non-attendance of timetabled on-site classes, may be deemed to have withdrawn from their course and, at the discretion of the Deputy Registrar (Student Administration), or nominee may, provided that notice and an opportunity for the student to make representations has been given, have their enrolment terminated. ([Sections 17 and 18 of the academic regulations Framework for Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses](#))
- 5.4 Non-sponsored students who are withdrawn due to non-attendance may appeal the decision as advised in the notification of withdrawal email sent by the SEA Team. Students should submit a statement and supporting evidence to the SEA Team who process the documentation and send it to the Head of College or Nominee as per the regulations. A student whose enrolment is terminated may only be re-instated upon appeal to and at the discretion of the relevant Head of College, or nominee. The SEA Team will communicate the outcome of the appeal decision to the student. There shall be no further right of appeal. ([Sections 17 and 18 of the academic regulations Framework for Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses](#)). If a student thinks there has been an error in the appeal process, they are eligible to submit a Student Complaint.