

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT MONITORING POLICY

### Introduction

1. This Policy is in the spirit of the University of Suffolk's commitment to be a supportive learning environment which enables all students who have chosen to study at the Institution or one of our partner institutions to achieve their full potential. The University recognises the investment that students and their sponsors make when a student enrolls on a course and believes that it has a duty to monitor engagement, act on non-engagement and support students to complete their programme of study. The policy is set in the context of ongoing research which demonstrates that increased engagement and attendance directly correlates with student performance.
2. This policy sets out the policy and procedure for the monitoring of student engagement and attendance in all University courses, including higher and degree apprenticeships, and while students attend assessed placement.
3. This Policy applies to all enrolled students at the University of Suffolk and partner institutions including those studying overseas.
4. The University is committed to improving engagement and attendance of all students, and therefore will take robust, timely action if either aspect falls below expected levels. Levels of engagement and attendance have the potential to indicate those students and apprentices who are at risk of withdrawal from their course early, and / or failure.
5. This policy includes information on the University's approaches to learner analytics, the gathering of data for each learner.
6. Learning and teaching at the University is usually delivered as blended learning. Blended learning is defined as including both in person, and online learning activities. All activities may be time-specific a

and Regulatory Body (PSRB) regulations or be based on agreed academic practices. Furthermore, it recognises the different attendance and engagement monitoring systems in place at each campus/partner organisation and the range of interventions which may be applied. Details of the specific expectation and arrangements for each course will be approved at Validation and published in the Course Handbook.

8. The institution has statutory duties with regards to reporting poor attendance and/or engagement to a range of stakeholders, including the Student Loans Company and other funding bodies. In its fulfilment of these duties, the University will report non-attendance or engagement in a timely way and/or at the census points set by these third parties.

9. The institution also has a statutory duty to comply with the stipulations of the Home Office under its Student Sponsor licence which requires the accurate tracking of attendance of students subject to visa restrictions, as outlined in paragraphs 35-36.

### **Definitions**

10. The University measures of engagement and attendance include:

- a. Attendance at teaching sessions including all types of timetabled session (lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, and lab-based learning).
- b. Attendance at timetabled activities including those delivered through guest lectures, field trips, Library and Learning Services, Careers Employability and Enterprise.
- c. Attendance at group and individual Personal Academic Coaching sessions or equivalent interactions.
- d. Engagement with online materials and completion of activities which are integral to the course of study.

11. Attendance at timetabled formal and informal learning opportunities that are offered at course, orv-90(t)-40628ai 28aa key c3( )-25(an)T6hce)146(a3(po)3(po)14(r)-28ETQ.026Qst 0 0 1625)T6C50(p

Students and apprentices are expected to attend and participate in all timetabled activities and learning opportunities, whether they are delivered in person or online, unless they have valid and mitigating reasons for not doing so.

13. The University provides students with a range of extra / co-curricular activities designed to further the learning of students and apprentices and provide opportunities to ensure success and progression into further higher study and / or graduate level employment, and includes a students' uptake of these opportunities when considering their overall engagement. These include activities delivered by Student Life, Library and Learning Services, Careers, Employability and Enterprise, or equivalent at partner institutions. Students and apprentices are strongly encouraged to engage with these activities throughout their studies.

### **Policy statement**

14. Students and apprentices **must attend all learning and teaching sessions** unless they have valid mitigating reasons for not doing so. The learning and teaching methods for each course and component modules are set out in the Course Handbook. Examples of learning and teaching sessions (which may be face-to-face or virtual) include, but are not limited to: lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, laboratory and practical sessions, professional placements, field trips and industrial visits, meetings with Personal Academic Coaches (PACs) or equivalent, and in the case of research students, scheduled meetings with supervisors.

15. Students must arrive on time for classes and remain for the duration of the session. Late arrival at, and early departure from, sessions is disruptive, discourteous, unprofessional and unfair to other class members and tutors.

16. Students are part of the University of Suffolk academic community and as such are expected to contribute to their fellow students' learning experience. This is particularly the case when engaging in assessed group work where non-attendance at any stage in the learning process can impact adversely on others' experience. It is unacceptable for a student to fail to engage or attend without valid mitigating reasons when this will have a direct impact on the experience of fellow students.

17. The method/system in place to register attendance at each campus or partner institution will be confirmed in the Course Handbook.

### **Authorised and Unauthorised absences**

18. The University understands that students may face difficulty in attending all sessions, and as such recognises that there will be cases of both planned and unexpected absence from either in-person or virtual classroom teaching, or both, usually as a result of:

- short-term illness, accident or injury, or medical appointments where rearrangement is not possible;
- the death or serious illness of a close family member or dependent (of a nature which, in an employment context, would have led to an absence in accordance with compassionate leave regulations);
- significant adverse personal or family circumstances directly affecting the student;
- interviews or associated opportunities to gain paid or voluntary work where these appointments cannot reasonably be rearranged;
- other significant exceptional factor.

Students should make module leaders and Academic Administrators/Higher Education Administrators aware when they are unable to attend sessions due to the above, giving as much advanced notice of the absence as possible.

### **Placements**

19. The attendance requirements for placements, including the reporting 25(w)5(i)5(t)s0/F1 11.04 Tf1 0 0 1





Boards. Lack of research progress and/or non-attendance at planned supervisor sessions will be investigated by the supervisor.

32. Attendance and engagement records will be considered in the following cases:
- At Assessment Boards when considering the opportunities made available to students to retake failed modules, or when considering a student's eligibility to progress onto a sandwich year;
  - When considering academic appeals, where this information is relevant to the case;
  - When considering applications to the Financial Support Fund (FSF);
  - When calculating exact fee refunds, where these are applicable;
  - When confirming eligibility to receive University of Suffolk bursaries;
  - When assessing whether students are meeting attendance requirements of the Student Loans Company (SLC) or other funding body;
  - During or following study on receipt of an academic reference request.
  - During Postgraduate Research annual progress review Boards.

33. Ongoing unsatisfactory attendance and non-engagement with the above processes will result in the student being removed from their programme of study. Where a student is withdrawn from their course due to unsatisfactory attendance, they will have the right to appeal via the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

34. Deliberate misuse of electronic systems or paper registers with the aim of falsifying attendance records will be treated seriously and will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the [Student Discipline Procedure](#).

### **Students subject to visa restrictions**

35. All parties have additional responsibilities with regards to attendance of visa sponsored students as detailed in the [Admissions Policy](#)

36. In accordance with UK immigration law, if a period of non-attendance or non-engagement by a visa sponsored student reaches 60 days or more, a report will be made to the Home Office. Such reports will result in withdrawal of sponsorship and will cause the Home Office to revoke the student's permission to stay in the UK. A report will also be made to the Home Office if a visa

sponsored student has an unsatisfactory engagement or attendance record despite support from the University.



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT**

As a student or apprentice at the University of Suffolk it is essential that you understand attendance and engagement with your course is required in order for you to succeed academically. Failure to attend or engage with your course, without a valid mitigating reason, can result in:

- The issuing of an Attendance Agreement, which will outline specific actions you

