

Student Attendance and Engagement Policy 2025/26

I Home students



Contents

Introduction	3
.....	
Purpose	3
.....	
Definitions	4
.....	
Scope	5
.....	
Principles	5
.....	
Safeguarding and wellbeing	6
.....	
How the University will monitor attendance and engagement	7
.....	
Monitoring process	9
.....	
Authorised absence	10
.....	
Withdrawal from course	10
.....	
Appeals process	11
.....	
Document control statement	13

1. Introduction

- 1.1. There is clear evidence to show that students who attend their scheduled learning sessions and engage with the learning resources available to them tend to achieve better outcomes. Adopting a campus-first approach to its teaching, the University will play an active role in enabling and empowering students to gain the most from their studies and allow each student to reach their full potential. It is, however, expected that students also take an active role in and responsibility for attending and engaging with their studies.
- 1.2. Low levels of attendance and engagement can be an early indicator that a student may be experiencing challenges which may lead to underachievement, inability to continue with their studies, or withdrawal from their course. Early identification of any such challenges will enable the University to put in place appropriate interventions and support mechanisms to enable students to re-engage with their studies. Our University community will support students to overcome any barriers that may impede their ability to succeed. Therefore, monitoring attendance and engagement, which specifically targets non-attendance as the first trigger for intervention is a key focus for the University.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. Explain to all students the University's expectations with respect to their attendance at scheduled learning sessions (on campus and online), and engagement with all learning resources and activities available during their studies.
- b. Support students so that they are better equipped and prepared to be part of the future workforce.
- c. Explain actions that will be taken when attendance expectations are not met, making clear the potential implications of a continued lack of attendance and/ or engagement.
- d. Set out how the University will monitor student attendance and engagement.
- e. Ensure that the University supports students to re-engage with their course where possible, and that options available are considered where appropriate, before a decision is taken to withdraw a student from their course.
- f. Ensure that the University remains compliant with obligations pertaining to attendance requirements as set out by external agencies and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). This may include, but is not limited to: Student Finance England (SFE), and UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).
- g. Increase the proportion of our students who:
 - continue on their course of study
 - progress to the next stage/year of study
 - successfully complete their course
 - attain good degree outcomes

3. Definitions

- 3.1.** 'We', 'Our' and the 'University' refers to Birmingham City University.
- 3.2.** A 'working day' is classed as a day within the week from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, not including any public holidays or days when the University is closed.
- 3.3.** A Break in Study is a formal process to temporarily pause a student's study. A student will be on a break in studies for an agreed period of up to one academic year. During this time the student will not have access to teaching, online learning resources or University facilities. For further information and guidance on Breaks in Study please see the [Change of Circumstances policy](#).
- 3.4.** A Withdrawal is a formal process for a student to leave their course and the university. Access to BCU resources, teaching, systems and buildings will cease when a student is withdrawn from their course. for further information and guidance on Withdrawal please see the [Change of Circumstances policy](#).
- 3.5.** Attendance is defined as the presence of the student for the entirety of a scheduled learning session on-campus and/or online. Sessions include but are not limited to:
- Lectures, seminars and tutorials, practical sessions (for example studio, demonstrations, lab sessions and workshops).
 - Project/dissertation supervision meetings.
 - Presentations and performances.
 - External visits and/or fieldwork which are a mandatory part of the curriculum.
 - Clinical, work experience and work-based placement sessions.
- 3.6.** Engagement is defined as active participation by the student to enhance their learning demonstrated by engaging with learning activities and resources, as well as engaging with summative and formative assessments. This includes but is not limited to:
- Attendance at – and engagement with – personal or group tutorials.
 - Submission of formative and summative assessments.
 - Attendance at examinations or time-constrained assessment activities.
 - Engagement with the University's Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle).
 - Responding in a timely manner to communications from the University.
 - Regular engagement with Course Team and/or Personal Tutor.
 - Engagement with University support services including (but not limited to) Mental Health and Wellbeing.
 - Active participation on placements.
- 3.7.** Formative assessment refers to a range of both formal and informal assessment procedures conducted during the learning process. They enable and support modification to both teaching and learning activities and to improve student attainment.¹
- 3.8.** Summative assessment refers to the measure of achievement or failure in respect of a student's performance in relation to the intended learning outcomes of the course of study.

¹ Crooks, T. (2001). The Validity of Formative Assessment. In British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, University of Leeds (pp. 13-15).

4. Scope

- 4.1. The policy applies to all BCU students, who are required to attend scheduled learning sessions at a BCU campus and/or online in the UK. This includes:
- a. Undergraduate (UG) students.
 - b. Postgraduate taught (PGT) students.
 - c. Postgraduate research (PGR) students who are required to attend formal supervision sessions.
 - d. Students on a Study Abroad programme, studying at the University or overseas at a host institution.
- 4.2. The policy does not apply to:
- a. Student Route Visa Holders please see further details in the Student Route Visa Holder Policy **Student Attendance and Engagement Policy: International Students - Student Route Visa Holders**
 - b. Apprentices on apprenticeship programmes who should abide by the **Apprenticeship Attendance and Engagement Policy.**
 - c. Students studying on a distance learning course.
 - d. Students studying on a Continued Professional Development short course.

5. Principles

- 5.1. **The University expects students to attend all scheduled learning sessions (on campus and/or online) and to engage with all learning activities, resources and assessments during their studies. Students should be proactive in seeking support if they face any challenges preventing them from engaging with their studies to the expected level.**
- 5.2. **This policy is underpinned by the Student Attendance and Engagement Operational Guidance.** The University community and our students all have responsibilities in relation to attendance and engagement as detailed in section 8 of this document.
- 5.3. Attendance at some scheduled learning sessions (for example: laboratory sessions, studio sessions, workshops) may be mandatory due to PSRB requirements. The student course handbook will make clear where there are any enhanced attendance requirements and any consequences of non-attendance.
- 5.4. Students are expected to reside in a location that enables them to comply fully with the requirements of attendance and engagement as outlined in this policy.
- 5.5. Attendance and engagement monitoring aims to be supportive. This means that the University will contact students to offer support to improve their attendance and/ or engagement where expectations have not been met. Wherever possible, these interventions will aim to enable a student to continue with their studies (as outlined in section 6.3. of this policy).

- 5.6. Attendance patterns at scheduled learning sessions will be the first trigger to identify a student who is at risk of disengaging with their studies. Where the University identifies attendance and/or engagement patterns that are inhibiting a student's ability to successfully complete their year of study, formal monitoring will be undertaken as outlined in section 6 of this policy.
- 5.7. The University will provide information and/or refer students to appropriate support services to help them to overcome any barriers that might be preventing them from attending and/or engaging with their studies. All decisions taken will be made in line with this policy to ensure that:
- Students are offered appropriate support, and
 - The University complies with its statutory and regulatory obligations, and
 - Where possible, that the full profile of a student's attendance and engagement has been considered when assessing the ability of the student to remain studying on their course.
- 5.8. Where supportive action and formal intervention does not lead to a student meeting the University's attendance and/or engagement requirements, a student may be withdrawn from their course.
- 5.9. The University will treat any deliberate attempt by a student to circumvent this policy – for example, by asking another student to register attendance on their behalf – extremely seriously. Any such attempt will lead to disciplinary action being taken under in the **Student Disciplinary Procedure**.
- 5.10. Attendance and engagement data will be captured using a range of systems, the details of which are set out in the **Student Attendance and Engagement Operational Guidance**. All data will be held and processed in accordance with the **University's Data Protection policy and the University's privacy notices**.

6. Safeguarding and wellbeing

- 6.1. The University takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of any member of the University community. In line with the University's **Safeguarding Policy** and procedures, we will work together with other agencies to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to identify, assess, and support any member of its community who may be suffering from abuse, harm and/or neglect. Where a student is identified through attendance and engagement monitoring activities as being at risk, or potentially at risk, a report should be made via Report and Support to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team. Where a student is identified as being at immediate risk of harm, staff should take the appropriate actions in line with the **Safeguarding Policy** section 5.1. A **Report and Support** report should then be submitted. Staff can seek further advice from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team (0121 331 5188) or Security Services (0121 331 6969).
- 6.2. Where a student would benefit from support from the University's **Mental Health and Wellbeing**, University staff will provide details of how to access relevant support services directly to the student.

7. How the University will monitor attendance and engagement

- 7.1.** There will be a range of informal and formal interventions throughout the academic year. Where attendance and/or engagement is flagged as a concern, the University will contact a student and seek to support them re-engage with their studies and support them to resolve any issues that are driving low/non-attendance and/or engagement.
- 7.2.** The purpose of attendance and engagement monitoring is to identify students at risk of low achievement through non-engagement with their studies. Once identified, students should be supported to resolve their issues and improve their engagement to help them achieve their potential. This is intended to improve the wellbeing of our student body, foster their identity as a BCU student, and increase assessment submission and first-time pass rates.
- 7.3.** The University will use three principles to identify students at risk of low/non-attendance and/or engagement:
- a. Principle 1:** Attendance and engagement should be 50% and above across all scheduled learning sessions and digital resources for Home students.
 - b. Principle 2:** No student should have more than two consecutive weeks of unapproved absence or non-engagement.
 - c. Principle 3:** Students must demonstrate regular academic engagement, including coursework submissions, participation in group activities, and interaction with University resources.
- 7.4.** Interaction with University resources may include, but is not limited to:
- 7.4.1** Primary engagement measures are direct engagement with course and curriculum related activities.
 - a.** Attendance
 - b.** Formative assessment submission as defined in section 3.6 of this policy.
 - c.** Summative assessment submission as defined in section 3.7 of this policy.
 - d.** Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) – Moodle engagement.
 - e.** Interaction with academic staff including course teams, course leads, personal tutors and tutoring sessions.
 - 7.4.2** Secondary engagement measures are engagement with other course-related activities that demonstrate commitment to a student's studies. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a.** Academic Skills and Enhancement services
 - b.** Employability Services and Careers
 - c.** Library and Learning Resources
 - d.** Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - e.** Money and Childcare Advice
 - f.** Student Inclusion Team (disability support)
 - g.** Responding to surveys and evaluations
 - h.** Submission of extenuating circumstances claim

- i.** Submission of a change in circumstances request
 - j.** Registration for graduation
 - k.** Completion of online module selection
 - l.** Loaned BCU equipment including laptops
 - m.** Access to University campus buildings
 - n.** University IT network login
- 7.5.** To support students who have been identified through attendance and engagement monitoring as being at risk of non-completion, the University will implement one or a combination of the following supportive interventions:
- a.** Formal check-in communications.
 - b.** Formal attendance and engagement warning notices.
 - c.** Disability and specialist support: Addressing personal concerns affecting engagement.
 - d.** Early intervention meetings: Identifying and resolving barriers to attendance.
 - e.** Peer mentoring programmes: Pairing disengaged students with experienced peers for academic and social support.
 - f.** Academic skills workshops: Targeted support on time management, study skills, and independent learning.
 - g.** Financial and wellbeing support: Addressing personal or financial concerns affecting engagement.
 - h.** Reintegration plans: Individualised study action plans for returning students after prolonged absence which includes but not limited to.
 - i.** Academic advice
 - ii.** Wellbeing advice
 - iii.** Financial issues
 - iv.** Pastoral support
 - v.** Break in Study
- 7.6.** For all PGT students who have completed all taught elements of their course and are completing their dissertation, attendance and engagement will be monitored via regular meetings with their dissertation supervisor. A formal record of the engagement will be recorded via monthly contact points. Non-engagement indicates there may be arising challenges requiring support. For Student Route Visa holders, the majority of these meetings should be held in-person.
- 7.7.** For all Postgraduate Research (PGR) students, attendance and engagement will be monitored via monthly supervisor meetings and routinely monitored by the Research Degrees and Environment Committee (FRDEC). For Student Route Visa holders, the majority of these meetings should be held in-person.
- 7.8.** For all students undertaking a professional placement or a Study Abroad programme at a host institution, attendance will be monitored via monthly contact points.

- 7.9.** If a student is studying a course where placement activity is mandatory, for example nursing, midwifery, social work, teaching or allied health professions, their attendance on placement will be monitored to ensure they meet the requirements of the course and the PSRB. For such courses, there will be a set requirement regarding the quantity of placement activity that has to be undertaken as part of the course. Placement requirements and attendance monitoring arrangements will be detailed in the student course handbook.

8. Monitoring process

- 8.1.** Throughout the academic year, the University will monitor a student's attendance and engagement to determine whether to make contact to offer support. The University will normally begin contact through a procedural engagement check-in to support students in re-engaging with their studies.
- 8.2.** If there is no response or engagement from a student to the University's attempts to contact them to offer support, such cases will be escalated and receive formal attendance and engagement notifications.
- 8.3.** A student's record of engagement activities (as detailed in section 3.5. of this policy) will enable the University to understand the broader attendance and engagement commitment of an individual and will be considered when progressing a student through the formal stages of attendance monitoring. Additionally, the record will be utilised to inform interventions to support a student to re-engage with their studies, and it may be considered when reviewing cases that trigger a Withdrawal Notice email.
- 8.4.** The procedural check-in will be supportive and present helpful options for the student that they may be unaware of. The focus will be on re-engagement, encouraging the student to attend regularly, and engage fully with their course. The check-in will highlight to the student the potential consequences of continued low/non-attendance, but their purpose is to resolve issues and re-engage students. The level of attendance and engagement for each monitoring period will determine the level of procedural check-in (as detailed in paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2 of this policy) to be issued. There are two levels of procedural check-in:
- 8.4.1** Check-in A Minor concern (Less than 50% attendance and engagement). Check-in A will be introduced for students that attend less than 50% of their scheduled teaching per monitoring period.
- 8.4.2** Check-in B: Serious concern (0% attendance and engagement). Check-in B will be issued for students with 0% attendance scheduled teaching per monitoring period.
- 8.5.** Students with 0% cumulative attendance over two consecutive monitoring periods (monitoring weeks are as follows: 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-11 of each semester) will be escalated to formal attendance and engagement notifications. The warning notices will include reminders to make every effort to attend and engage if they wish to remain enrolled on their course. It will also provide information about a break in study as an alternative to withdrawal, encouraging students to initiate a break in study request if this is their best option.
- 8.6.** Formal attendance notifications will be issued where a student's attendance at scheduled learning sessions (as outlined in section 3.5 of this policy) and engagement with their course (as outlined in section 3.6. of this policy) has not improved following procedural

check-in support. This shall also apply where a student does not respond to or engage with the procedural check-in support.

- 8.7.** There are two stages to the formal attendance and engagement notifications: see **Student Attendance and Engagement Operational Guidance** section 3 for further details outlining each stage:
- a.** Warning Notice
 - b.** Withdrawal Notice
- 8.8.** Formal attendance and engagement notifications are designed to encourage students to re-engage with their studies. Check-ins and attendance notifications will be sent to BCU and personal email addresses held on a student's record. Attendance and engagement notifications will clearly outline the steps the student must take and who to contact to discuss any issues that are affecting their attendance and/or engagement.
- 8.9.** The University will take appropriate action where a student does not engage with the escalation process and whose attendance at scheduled learning sessions does not improve. The University will contact the student to discuss the issues affecting attendance and, where required, a meeting will be arranged to provide necessary support and advice.
- 8.10.** Where a student has 0% attendance three or more consecutive monitoring periods, the University reserves the right to escalate and issue a withdrawal notice.

9. Authorised absence

- 9.1.** The University recognises that some students will have reasonable adjustments in place that may affect their ability to attend scheduled learning on campus. This is usually through personalised learning agreements or other formal arrangements that consider personal circumstances. Absences at such sessions on campus will be considered when monitoring attendance for these students.
- 9.2.** It is the student's responsibility to log a short-term absence using mySRS, and to keep up with their studies as defined in sections 3.5 and 3.6 of this policy.
- 9.3.** Frequent and/or patterns of absence may be an indicator of underlying barrier/serious issue affecting a student's attendance and engagement. In these cases, the University will contact the student under section 11 of this policy.
- 9.4.** For full details regarding absences, please refer to section 10 in the **Student Attendance and Engagement Operational Guidance**.

10. Withdrawal from course

- 10.1.** If the student engagement procedure outlined in section 7 of this policy:
- Fails to successfully re-engage a student (or lead to a student-initiated break in study or withdrawal) *and*,
 - The University is satisfied it has exhausted engagement attempts and,
 - The student has no recorded attendance or engagement,

The University will proceed to issue a notice of withdrawal. These notices will only be issued when complete non-engagement is confirmed over consecutive monitoring periods.

- 10.2. The University will support students to re-engage with their studies, but a student is expected to make every effort to re-engage with their course. The University will support a student to consider other opportunities (where appropriate and where available) prior to withdrawal from their course. However, once non-engagement is confirmed and/or no appropriate intervention identified, students will be issued a withdrawal notification to remain compliant with the University statutory and regulatory requirements.
- 10.3. The University has a legal requirement to notify certain external bodies when a student has been withdrawn from their course. The withdrawal will be reported to Student Finance England (SFE) or equivalent funding body, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), their employer or sponsor, and/or their Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB).

11. Appeals process

- 11.1. Students will have the right to appeal/contest their notice of withdrawal and will have five working days from the date of issue of the withdrawal notice to submit their case to remain enrolled. Evidence of engagement and commitment to a re-engagement plan are required.
- 11.2. There are two possible outcomes to an appeal described in section 10.1 of this policy:
 - a. **Case upheld:** If the appeal is approved then the student will not be withdrawn after consideration of the case, the student will remain on a re-engagement plan. Please see section 6.5 of this policy
 - b. **Case not upheld:** If the withdrawal is approved, students can pursue a formal appeal under the University's [Academic Appeals Procedure](#). Students will have the right to appeal the 'Withdrawal Notice within five working days of receiving the notification email.
- 11.3. All appeals should be submitted in writing to attendanceappeals@bcu.ac.uk and must be accompanied by appropriate evidence which could include:
 - a. Medical certificates
 - b. Evidence of attendance at timetabled sessions
 - c. Evidence of engagement with their studies
 - d. Actions being taken to overcome barriers to study
 - e. Detail of how a student will improve attendance and engagement moving forward including how they will catch up with missed learning and, where relevant, assessments.
 - f. Photographs of injuries, accidents, or anything of a graphic nature should not be submitted.
- 11.4. An appeal may be rejected where insufficient and/or unsatisfactory evidence is provided. Where a student reaches a Withdrawal Notice on more than one occasion during the academic year, an appeal will only be considered where new evidence is provided by the student.
- 11.5. An appeal may require a meeting to discuss reasons for the disengagement and discuss any options which may be available to the student to support them to continue with their

studies. Where appropriate, the student's academic profile will be discussed to determine whether a support plan can be put in place for in-year continuation or whether a Break in Study could be an option.

- 11.6.** The final decision of a student appeal resides with the Academic Registrar and Director of Student and Academic Services or their nominee. All evidence including attendance and engagement data will be reviewed as part of the appeal. Further consultation may be required with other relevant teams and/or the relevant PSRB in order to fully assess the ability of the student to succeed academically.
- 11.7.** If the student does not appeal or their appeal to review their Withdrawal Notice is unsuccessful, the student will be withdrawn from their course in the student record system and actions will be taken as outlined in section 9 of this policy. The student's withdrawal date is confirmed as that of the date the Withdrawal Notice is issued. For further details please see the [Change of Circumstances Policy](#).
- 11.8.** Any student who has received a Withdrawal Notice, and has made an unsuccessful appeal, can pursue a formal appeal under the University's Academic Appeals Procedure. Any such appeal would need to demonstrate that:
 - a.** A procedural irregularity had occurred in the withdrawal process, *and/or*
 - b.** that the withdrawal decision was unreasonable in light of all the available evidence, *and/or*
 - c.** New evidence can be provided, which could not reasonably have been provided sooner and which would have had a material effect on the previous decision(s).
- 11.9.** Formal appeals should be submitted within 15 working days of the Withdrawal Notice appeal decision being issued
- 11.10.** Where a student has not made use of the appeal process set out in sections 10.1 – 10.3 of this policy, any formal appeal submitted under the Academic Appeals Procedure is likely to be deemed ineligible.
- 11.11.** Where a student has been withdrawn and a formal appeal submitted, the withdrawal decision will take effect and will continue to stand unless the formal appeal decision means the withdrawal should be set aside. Student Route Visa holders who submit a formal appeal will still be reported to the Home Office at the point of withdrawal in line with section 9.3 of this policy and will still be required to make arrangements to leave the UK.

12. Document control statement

Document type	Student Attendance and Engagement Policy: Home Students		
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Amendments since approval	Detail of revision	Date	Approved by
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	Clarification of Safeguarding and Wellbeing procedures (paragraphs 6.1-6.2). Section moved from 11 to 6	31/07/2025	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Quality Committee