

Birmingham City University Student Engagement Policy – Effective from 2017/18

This policy is applicable to all students, including Home/EU and International students.

The University is keen to ensure that all students gain the maximum benefit from their programme of studies. We believe in working in partnership with all students to ensure you are supported in your learning and are able to get the most from what is on offer here at Birmingham City University. Therefore although this policy details the potential of the withdrawal of students who are considered to be not engaging with their studies, we will take every step to contact you to offer support before such action is taken.

As part of our learning community, we expect you to take responsibility for your attendance and participation. Learning is a shared experience and the University's approach to learning places high value on the active engagement of students with their peers, lecturers and other experts who may contribute to the programme. The University recognises that a high level of attendance contributes significantly both to your individual success and to the enhancement of the learning experience for all students. You are also able to more effectively develop skills such as teamwork and professional communication and show reliability and respect for others, which will enhance your future employability. As a practice-led institution, we want to fully prepare you for the expectations of graduate employment.

Attendance and participation at scheduled learning sessions and meetings is essential to:

- Ensure you gain the maximum benefit from the learning activities on your programme;
- Enhance your own learning experience and those of any groups you may be working with;
- Help you to prepare for and understand the requirements of assessments;
- Receive information about your programme;
- Allow opportunities for you to seek advice and assistance where necessary;
- Prepare you for the expectations of a graduate workplace;

As a minimum we expect you to:

- Attend punctually all scheduled and timetabled learning and teaching activities unless unable to do so for reasons of illness or other extenuating circumstances;
- Attend all placements you are required to complete as part of your programme;
- Engage with and participate fully in all learning activities;
- Complete and submit all assessments by scheduled hand-in dates and attend all examinations;
- Undertake independent learning in support of your studies as directed by academic staff;
- Attend all scheduled meetings with university staff;
- Inform us if you are unable to attend your timetabled learning and teaching activities (including placements).

It is also very important that you use your University email account to send and receive communications. We may use it, for example, to tell you about changes to your timetable. The University will monitor engagement in terms of your attendance and participation and will undertake to contact students whose failure to engage gives cause for concern. Taught sessions can include lectures, tutorials, seminars, labs, workshop or studio based sessions or occasional sessions where visiting speakers are invited to present.

If it is the professional judgement of a member of BCU staff that your engagement is giving cause for concern – ie you are not meeting the minimum expectations as set out above - you will be invited to a “cause for concern” meeting with your Personal Tutor or a Graduate Student Success Adviser. Examples might include missing taught sessions for a module, either consecutively or intermittently, failing to submit assessments, or failing to meet the specific attendance requirements described in the module and programme details provided to you. The reason for the meeting will be for us to discuss with you the reason for your absence and offer relevant support to help you continue your studies. It is extremely important that you attend this meeting so that we can do our best to get you back on track as quickly as possible.

Students who fail to respond appropriately to a cause for concern meeting request or who persistently fail to attend without explanation may have their registration terminated which will result in withdrawal from the programme. Students may appeal this decision via the [Academic Queries and Appeals Process](#).

Some programmes may have specific attendance requirements because of Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body and/or other statutory or contractual requirements and these will be specified in relevant programme documentation. Failure to attend can potentially lead to ‘fitness for practice’ issues on these programmes.

Please be aware that prolonged absences may affect the continuation of your student loan and any contribution towards your tuition fees. The Student Loan Company may reclaim monies paid to students absent without good cause. The University may also pursue fee debts incurred where students have failed to properly withdraw from a programme they no longer wish to continue on.

Unavoidable absence

The University recognises that there are circumstances that may lead to unavoidable absence. These may include:

- Illness requiring you to remain at home and recover
- Family emergency
- Bereavement
- Serious personal problems
- Circumstances beyond your control such as transport strike, extreme weather conditions

If you are unable to attend then we expect you to inform your Programme Leader, Personal Tutor or the School or Faculty Office as soon as is reasonably possible and at the latest within 7 days, informing us when you anticipate you will return to classes. Contact details will be given to you in your programme handbook.

It is important that absence is kept to a minimum and you should see your Lecturers on your return to ensure that you can catch up with missed work.

It is vitally important that you inform us if your absence is likely to affect your assessments. You may need to submit an [Extenuating Circumstances](#) request.

It is also important that you inform us if you feel that there are circumstances that may impact on your performance more generally. This might include health issues, personal issues or general difficulty with your programme. You may discuss any worries you have with your Personal Tutor or with a Graduate Student Success Adviser at any point during your studies. The Students’ Union and University Student Services Department are also there to provide advice and support.

The University is keen to ensure that we offer suitable support to students and early notification of problems is extremely helpful to both you and us in such circumstances.

Should your absence become extended for reason of illness or other longer term circumstances, then it may be advisable for you to interrupt your studies formally for a period. Advice on this process is available [here](#).

Punctuality and respect for others

Please remember that we expect you to attend on time for your classes. Late arrival causes disruption to other class members and to your lecturer.

Our reasonable expectation is that you will conduct yourself professionally and show respect to others by arriving on time.

Students sponsored by employers

If you are a sponsored student there may be additional attendance requirements imposed by your employer and you may be required to report absences to work as well as to the University. The University will not routinely report to your employer, but in some cases this is required as a condition of the sponsorship of your course and we will provide this information where such an arrangement is formally in place.

Tier 4 Students

The Student Engagement Policy is applicable to all Tier 4 students. However, due to the conditions of the Tier 4 visa, you will also be required to attend the UKVI Contact Points as organised by the University. At enrolment you will be provided with a list of the UKVI Contact Points for the coming academic year. Reminders of these dates will also be sent to you by your faculty. Failure to attend these Contact Points will result in you being invited to a "cause for concern" meeting. It is imperative that you attend such meetings as failure to do so will result in you being withdrawn from your studies. Withdrawal from studies will have major implications on your Tier 4 visa as the University will have to report you to the Home Office and as a result you will have to return home. In addition, it may result in problems obtaining a visa to return to the UK at a future point.