



Attendance and Engagement Policy

Policy owner:	Assistant Registrar – Student Administration
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Related policies:	Fitness to Study Mitigating Circumstances CAS Policy (International Students)
Related procedures:	Attendance and Engagement Procedure

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Version History

Version	Approved by	Revisions made	Date
1	Senate	New policy	July 2023

1. Purpose

The University of Buckingham is committed to providing the highest quality student experience and a key component of this is promoting and encouraging student engagement and attendance with all aspects of the learner experience.

Student attendance and engagement is monitored for the following reasons:

- To aid student retention, the early identification of students at risk will allow timely academic and personal support interventions.
- To enable notifications of withdrawals/suspensions to be made on time ensuring all stakeholders are informed in a timely manner.
- To meet any requirement to report absences to employers or other sponsors where they are funding/co-funding course fees.

2. Scope

This policy is applicable to students on taught programmes in the Faculty of Computing, Law and Psychology and the Faculty of Business, Humanities and Social Sciences and applies equally to Visa and Non-Visa students of these faculties. Research students and students of other faculties (e.g., FEDU and FMHS) should refer to the relevant handbooks.

3. Legislative context

- To comply with the requirements of the Student Loan Company who require confirmation of attendance on a regular basis for those students who are in receipt of financial support.
- To comply with visa authorisation and undertake any necessary reporting to local immigration authorities (where applicable).

4. Policy statement - Key Principles

Attendance and engagement can apply to both online engagement (normally via Teams and/or Moodle VLE and/or online and Library resources) and attendance at any scheduled face-to-face sessions.

4.1 Expected online engagement (as applicable for the module/programme):

- Undertaking induction module lessons and activities
- Key engagement requirement as per the module/programme specification
- Completing all weekly timetabled sessions
- Completing weekly learning activities
- Completing and submitting assessment.

4.2 Expected attendance (as applicable for the module/programme):

- Attendance at all sessions of on-campus induction
- Attendance at timetabled / classroom sessions
- Attendance for on-campus assessments (presentations, exams etc)

5. Induction Registration

The induction process is designed to prepare students for study and may comprise both an online and on-campus induction.

- Online Registration opens approximately 2- 3 weeks before teaching begins.
- On-campus induction will normally take place during the week prior to teaching and students will be expected to attend.
- Late registrations may be accepted up to the end of week 2 of teaching.
- Students registering late who may have missed all or part of the on-campus induction will be briefed/provided copies of all relevant information separately by their School of Study.

6. Attendance

The University of Buckingham recognises the importance of good attendance and expects all students to attend 100% of all timetabled sessions as far as is possible, for students to maximise the benefits of the University's provision.

- The University's *Learning and Teaching Strategy, 2023–27*, notes in this regard that 'attendance at a majority of all scheduled teaching sessions (50-100%) is considered necessary for the requirements of the University's degree programmes to be fulfilled' (Section 6) hence this policy takes a rounded average of this (80%) as the threshold for flagging an attendance concern. See below.
- Attendance at all timetabled sessions will be recorded and monitored.
- Online engagement will also be monitored and will be taken into consideration when evaluating overall attendance.
- Where it has been identified that a student requires additional sessions in relation to skills development, they will also be expected to attend these sessions.

7. Lateness

- Students are expected to be punctual for all classes.
- A student will be recorded as late if they arrive 10 minutes after the timetabled start time.
- If a student arrives more than 10 minutes after the timetabled start time of a lecture/seminar, they will not be permitted to join the class immediately, but to avoid disruption to the rest of the group, and at the discretion of the tutor/lecturer, they may be permitted to join the class after the next break.
- If a student does not join the class after the break, they will be marked as absent for that session.
- For tutorials/classes with no break, lecturers will exercise discretion as to whether students may join more than 10 minutes after the timetabled start time; group sizes permitting, they may ask latecomers to attend a different session, to minimise disruption and optimise participation.



Students who are consistently late disrupt both their own education and that of others and so a meeting between the student and their Personal Tutor will be convened where persistent lateness gives cause for concern.

8. Absence

The University of Buckingham appreciates that at times absence will be necessary due to unforeseen circumstances, for example illness.

Students should email their School of Study if they are going to be absent.

For the first 7 days of absence, we operate a self-certification process. Any absence over 7 days would require documentary evidence. If students are given staged warnings in accordance with the attendance and engagement procedure at any time over their attendance, then we may require them to provide evidence for all absences.

Extensive or persistent absence affects a student's ability to continue studying and may result in withdrawal from the programme and notification to external authorities.

9. Mitigating Circumstances and Fitness to Study/Suspension of Studies

Where a student is impacted by long term absence the Suspension of Studies process or the Fitness to Study Policy may be applied on a case-by-case basis.

Where a student's ability to study or take assessments is in any way affected in the short term, the Mitigating Circumstances Policy may be applicable.

Details can be found on the website and students may also seek further guidance from their Personal Tutor, Faculty Mentors or the Wellbeing Skills and Diversity Team.

For international students, a Suspension of Studies will normally result in your visa being cancelled and the need to apply for a new visa when you wish to resume your studies.

10 Leave of Absence

Taking a leave of absence during scheduled classes and assessment periods is not normally permitted, except where previously authorized by the Dean.

11 Attendance Monitoring

Student attendance will be monitored to take remedial action where a student's engagement is not at the required level.

- In class, Tutors will record attendance at all sessions.
- Examination attendance (where applicable) will also be monitored.
- Data will be analyzed and monitored by staff. It is expected that academic members of staff will also benefit from this information which will enable them to make positive steps towards absenteeism.

12 Initial Contacts and Minimum Attendance

Within the first 4 weeks of a student's enrolment, The University of Buckingham expects that they will have achieved the following milestones:

- Student has paid or has approved student finance funding in place for study.
- Student is enrolled and registered.
- Student has attended an On-Campus Induction.
- Student has engaged in all timetabled events including lectures, tutorials, seminars and workshops.
- Student attendance at all timetabled sessions is at least 80%.

Failure to achieve the above milestones may result in withdrawal from the programme in accordance with the Attendance and Engagement Procedure. A student who has enrolled and registered but who has not attended Induction or any classes within 14 days of enrolment, with no explanation/communication with the university, will be automatically withdrawn.

13 Ongoing Contacts and Minimum Attendance

The University of Buckingham will initiate contact with a student where:

- The student fails to register/enrol.
- The student has repeated absence resulting in attendance below 80% (over a 3-week period).
- The student fails to complete key engagement indicators within a module.
- The student fails to submit assessment or attend a scheduled examination.
- The student is consistently late (over a 3-week period)

Where poor attendance/inadequate participation is a cause for concern the University will discuss any issues with the student and agree arrangements for adequate participation. Failure to meet the minimum attendance requirements may result in withdrawal from the programme.

14 Visa Students

For those students requiring a Student Visa to study at the university, withdrawal from the programme will result in the university no longer sponsoring them and their visa will be cancelled. This will mean that they will need to leave the UK, and should they wish to resume their studies in the UK they will need to apply for a new visa.

More information on both the university's and students' visa responsibilities can be found in the Student Visa Compliance Policy section of the [Compliance Handbook](#).



15. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the academic faculties and relevant support staff (including registrars, registry officers, the student conduct team etc.) to implement this policy.

16. Relationship with other policies/procedures

- Mitigating Circumstances (short term absence from study)
- Fitness to Study (for longer absences/failure to engage)
- Suspension of Studies process (for longer absences/failure to engage)