



FURTHER EDUCATION STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Good attendance and punctuality is key to a student's success and achievement. Regular and consistent attendance enables students to take full advantage of the learning and teaching opportunities available to them and to get the most from their course. As such, students at Leeds Arts University are expected to attend all timetabled sessions, including inductions, lectures, seminars, group and individual tutorials, learning support sessions, workshops and demonstrations.
- 1.2 Poor attendance can be a sign that a student is struggling or disengaged with their course of study. Recording, monitoring and reviewing attendance is a crucial mechanism in identifying students that might require additional support with their studies. Having a robust attendance policy and procedure enables early identification of students who might be experiencing challenges or difficulties, and allows for early intervention to support these students.
- 1.3 Poor attendance and punctuality not only affect the individual but also others who may rely on them in group projects and for peer learning. It can be disruptive for the tutor as well as other students if students are absent or late to timetabled sessions, and in some cases it can mean that planned activities are unable to take place.
- 1.4 The University is required to monitor attendance and report, as appropriate, to the Local Education Authority, Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Student Finance England.
- 1.5 Additionally, the University is required to monitor the attendance of Student Route students and report as appropriate to the UK Visa and Immigration Agency (UKVI). A "Student Route student" refers to a student who requires a visa in order to study and that visa has been sponsored by Leeds Arts University.

2. Policy

- 2.1 The Further Education Student Attendance Policy and Procedure has been developed as part of the University's commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables students to achieve their full potential. It is intended to be supportive rather than punitive and seeks to enable the University to effectively support students' wellbeing, academic progress, achievement and next-step progression.
- 2.2 The policy aims to:
 - make clear to students the University's expectations and responsibilities of them in regards to attendance and punctuality;
 - set out the expectations and process for reporting any absences to the University;
 - outline and explain the University's procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality;
 - outline the support and/or sanctions, which may be applied as a result of declining or unacceptable levels of attendance and/or punctuality;
 - assist all students to take responsibility for their full and prompt attendance which will enhance their learning experience, develop their personal skills and promote retention, achievement and progression;
 - meet the University's regulatory responsibilities in monitoring attendance.
- 2.3 This policy applies to all students enrolled on a Further Education course of study at Leeds Arts University.

3. Student Responsibilities

- 3.1 High expectations around attendance help prepare students well for further study and future

employment. Attendance, retention and achievement are strongly linked.

3.2 As a student at the University, you are expected to:

- attend all timetabled sessions as required by the course on which you are enrolled. This includes lectures, group sessions, workshops, tutorials and mandatory educational visits;
- arrive on time for sessions. Late arrival causes disruption to other students and is disruptive to the tutor;
- let us know in advance if you know you are going to miss a session, e.g. attending a University open day or interview, by informing your tutor and/or emailing festudentabsence@leeds-art.ac.uk;
- report any unforeseen absence due to illness or other reason to the University by 9.30am on the first and every subsequent day of absence, by emailing festudentabsence@leeds-art.ac.uk;
- avoid taking holiday during term time or making appointments during timetabled hours wherever possible;
- keep in regular contact with us in cases of ongoing absence and, wherever possible, provide evidence to support your absence (e.g. medical notes);
- catch up on any work missed due to absence or late arrival to a session.

4. Procedure

- 4.1 A register is taken at each timetabled session. Attendance, absence and lateness is recorded. The registers are monitored by the FE administration and course teams.
- 4.2 In cases of unauthorised absence, contact is attempted by the University every day that the student is absent. Unauthorised absence is when a student does not attend a timetabled session without informing the University that they will be absent. This includes any undocumented medical, personal or other reasons for absence.
- 4.3 Where a student aged under 18 is absent, their nominated emergency contact (usually parent/guardian/carer) is notified of their absence. This includes instances of absence where the student has notified us of the reason.
- 4.4 Individual students' attendance is monitored to enable members of staff to take positive actions towards absenteeism.
- 4.5 All students are made aware of their attendance record at regular points during the academic year.
- 4.6 Attendance is discussed at tutorials, addressing any emerging concerns and support requirements. This includes for those students whose absence has been explained but where that absence may be having an impact on their study.
- 4.7 Student Route students are subject to the monitoring processes detailed above but are also required to have further checks to ensure compliance with UKVI. This is detailed in section 6 Student Route Attendance Monitoring.
- 4.8 Addressing Attendance and/or Punctuality Concerns

Where there are attendance and/or punctuality concerns, the following three stage procedure will be initiated:

4.8.1 Stage 1

Where there are emerging concerns about a student's attendance and/or punctuality, their tutor will arrange to meet with them as soon as possible to discuss the reasons

why and identify any support requirements.

4.8.2 Stage 2

If there is no improvement or a further decline in the student's attendance and/or punctuality, the student will be requested to attend a meeting with the Pathway Leader who may invite a member of the Student Welfare team to attend.

The reasons for poor attendance/punctuality will be discussed, any support requirements identified and actions to aid an improvement formally agreed and recorded. A record of the meeting and agreed actions will be put in the student's file.

4.8.3 Stage 3

If the student's attendance and/or punctuality does not improve or they fail to adhere to the actions agreed at stage 2, the student will be requested to attend a meeting with the relevant Director of FE who may invite a member of the Student Welfare team to attend. At this stage it may be discussed whether it is appropriate for the student to continue on the course.

4.9 In cases where students fail to attend a stage 2 or stage 3 meeting, a letter will be sent to them. If no communications are then received from the student, they could be withdrawn from the course.

4.10 A poor attendance and/or punctuality record could result in the following:

- bursary payments being withheld (if applicable);
- for Student Route students, the University will inform the UKVI who may then withdraw their visa;
- the University informing Student Finance England or other funding body where applicable, who may then withdraw the student's funding;
- the student being withdrawn from the University.

4.11 Where there is a long-term explained absence, a review will take place by the relevant Director of FE and the Academic Registrar within 4 weeks of the student's last date of attendance. The review will consider the period of study that has been missed and the potential workload on the student during the remainder of the academic year, together with any funding and finance implications for the student. Each circumstance will be considered carefully in order to ensure the most appropriate decision is made, which may include that the student should withdraw with a view to returning in the next academic year.

4.12 If a student is absent without contacting the University for a period of 3 weeks, a letter will be sent informing them that if they do not contact the University within 7 days of the letter being sent to them, they will be withdrawn from the University.

4.13 In line with ESFA funding regulations, where a student has not attended sessions for 4 continuous weeks (excluding holidays) they will be withdrawn from the University, unless there is auditable evidence of an intention to return.

5. Student Route Attendance Monitoring

5.1 Student Route students demonstrating low levels of attendance, or non-attendance are subject to the reporting processes detailed above but are also required to have further checks to ensure compliance with UKVI. This is dictated by the UKVI regulations overseeing all sponsors. Continued non-attendance could result in withdrawal of sponsorship. The University is obliged to report the withdrawal of visa sponsorship to the UKVI, and the student will subsequently be obliged to leave the UK. This monitoring and reporting is a

legal requirement for all sponsors.

- 5.2 A Student Route student will be provided with a start date. If the student does not attend within 2 weeks of the enrolment period or start date, their non-attendance will be reported to the UKVI, and their sponsorship may be withdrawn unless reasonable notice of a late start date has been given and agreed.
- 5.3 Student Route students must also ensure that they attend for required enrolment, induction and re-induction sessions, these are compulsory.
- 5.4 All students are expected to attend all scheduled academic activities and to progress through their course in line with the [Further Education Regulations](#).
- 5.5 Student attendance is monitored by the Further Education administration team through registers completed for each session by the tutors. If a student's attendance falls below 85% in any given month, the administration team will review the reason for the student's absence and the student profile will be annotated with the reason for the non-attendance. A meeting with the student will take place and the steps that must be taken to improve attendance will be outlined.
- 5.6 If a student's attendance falls below 70% for three consecutive months, the University will withdraw sponsorship due to lack of academic engagement unless there are exceptional and evidenced reasons for the non-attendance (e.g. illness or a family bereavement).
- 5.7 At this stage, the student will be withdrawn from the University. They will have the right of review as outlined in section 7. Following this period, sponsorship for their studies will be revoked by the University.
- 5.8 A Student Route student's withdrawal will be reported to the UKVI who will curtail the student's visa. The student must then return to their home country.

6. Support for Students

- 6.1 If a student is having difficulties attending classes because of personal, financial or academic problems they should talk at an early stage to the relevant staff: their tutor, Student Welfare or the Academic Support team. This helps to ensure that early support or intervention can be put in place and, if appropriate, referrals can be made to additional services, either internal or external to the University. A list of support and external organisations who may offer support is available [on the Portal](#).
- 6.2 Where a student believes that they have needs which may impact on their ability to participate effectively in this procedure, it is their responsibility to raise this with either their tutor, Student Welfare or Academic Support. In such cases the University will consider providing reasonable adjustment.
- 6.3 If a student recognises (or exceptionally the University may decide if the student is unable or unwilling to co-operate) that there are ongoing issues which may result in absence other options may be considered as set out in this section.

6.3.1 Fitness to Study

The circumstances that may give rise to concerns regarding a student's fitness to study related to absence include where a student is affected by medical conditions that require periods of absence and treatment. In these cases the Head of Student Support will assess, in conjunction with the Director of FE, whether the Fitness to Study Policy should be used rather than the Student Attendance Policy. The Fitness to Study Policy can be found on the [regulations section of the Portal](#).

6.3.2 Suspension of Studies

If it is identified that a student will be absent for substantial amounts of time the option to suspend may be appropriate. Suspension can be considered for the following reasons:

- academic;
- employment;
- financial;
- ill health;
- disability;
- personal reasons.

The Request for Suspension of Studies Form can be found on the [regulations page of the Portal](#). If a student decides that they wish to suspend, they are required to complete the form and ensure that they have had all meetings required as documented on the form.

7. Review

- 7.1 Where a student's absence or persistent poor punctuality lead to them being withdrawn from a course, they will receive a written outcome letter detailing how to request a review of the decision.
- 7.2 The request for a review must be received by the University within 7 days of the written outcome letter being sent and must be on one of the following grounds:
 - there has been a procedural irregularity;
 - availability of further evidence which could not reasonably have been expected to have been submitted previously for consideration.
- 7.3 Any request for a review must set out the grounds and must be submitted in writing to the Quality and Standards Office. A meeting will be arranged usually within 12 days and the panel will comprise: FE Director, a member of Academic Registry and a note-taker.
- 7.4 During the formal review the student may be accompanied by a companion. This may be a students' union representative, parent, guardian, carer, friend or fellow student. Students may not be represented by an external organisation. The student will be notified of this right within the letter inviting them to the formal review meeting. The student should inform the person calling the meeting if they will be accompanied and by whom.
- 7.5 At the meeting the student or companion will explain their case and any special circumstances which may exist.
- 7.6 The student's companion will be able to address the meeting in order to put the student's case forward, sum up the case, respond on the student's behalf to any view expressed and confer with the student. The representative should not usually answer questions on behalf of the student, but may provide clarification with the agreement of the Chair.
- 7.7 Every effort should be made by all participants to attend meetings as arranged. Where a student fails to attend on one occasion the University may decide to rearrange the meeting. If the student does not attend, a decision may be made in their absence on the evidence available at the second scheduled meeting.
- 7.8 The panel will review the case, taking into account the original decision and the student's representations.
- 7.9 Written confirmation of the decision will be sent to the student usually within 7 days.

- 7.10 There is no further process of review within Leeds Arts University.
- 7.11 Time limits are indicated in calendar days and are included in order to ensure that matters are dealt with promptly and without undue delay. Neither the University nor students should unreasonably delay meetings, decisions or confirmation of those decisions. However, Academic Registry may in some circumstances decide that it may be appropriate to extend time limits provided in the Procedure.

8. Parent/Guardian/Carer Contact for Students Aged Under 18

- 8.1 The University has a responsibility to ensure students wellbeing. The student's nominated emergency contact (usually parent/guardian/carers) will be notified in all instances when a student aged under 18 is absent.
- 8.2 Where a student is aged under 18, a parent, guardian or carer will be informed of proceedings at Stage 3 and the review, they may accompany a student to both meetings. Where a student is under 18 at the start of the proceedings and turns 18 during them, written consent will be sought from the student to continue informing their parent, guardian or carer of the proceedings. Where written consent is not given by the student, the University will not be able to continue to inform parents, guardians or carers of the proceedings.