



HIGHER EDUCATION ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Originator: Higher Education Administration Manager
Date: August 2023
Approved by: SMT
Type: Policy and procedure

Previous version: August 2022

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Engagement Expectations	3
3.	Absence	4
4.	Monitoring and Engagement Intervention Process	4
5.	Potential Consequences of Insufficient Engagement	7
6.	Right to Review	7

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Higher Education Student Engagement Policy and Procedure is set out to:
- a) ensure a shared understanding between students and staff of course engagement expectations;
 - b) to highlight to students the importance of engagement;
 - c) to set out the processes for informing the University of absences;
 - d) to explain the engagement monitoring processes and implications arising from a lack of engagement.

The policy applies to all HE students including Student Route visa holders (Band 2).

1.2 Why we Monitor Engagement

1.2.1 The University wants students to succeed. Academic engagement (participation in learning opportunities, engaging in appropriate workshop sessions, undertaking research or fieldwork, submitting assessments, engaging with the University's virtual learning environment and accessing appropriate support) is critical 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. Monitoring student engagement allows the University to identify students who may be encountering difficulties engaging and may need support, and recognises continued lack of engagement can lead to withdrawal from the course.

1.2.2 The University is required to monitor Student Route visa holders' engagement with their course and report as appropriate to the UK Visas and Immigration agency (UKVI). The University is obliged to ensure that all Student Route visa holders are academically engaging throughout their period of sponsored leave.

1.2.3 The University is required to meet the expectations of funding bodies to confirm attendance, engagement and report on satisfactory academic progression, e.g. the payment of student maintenance from the Student Loan Company is dependent on continued attendance.

1.2.4 The course teams play a central role in identifying and supporting students who are struggling with engagement. They have responsibility for providing pastoral care, helping students through problems affecting them at University, and working with other support areas when necessary.

1.2.5 The University has a range of other support mechanisms and teams to help students engage with their studies where a problem or need is identified, these include:

- Course Administrator;
- Student Welfare, including the University Chaplaincy;
- Academic Support;
- Academic Progression Administrators;
- Students' Union;
- Student Finance;
- Internationalisation Team (for international students).

2. Engagement Expectations

- 2.1 Leeds Arts University offers a creative-driven specialist arts setting, that aims to maximise potential and nurture talent. In order to do this, we expect students to work as partners in their learning, engage with a wide variety of opportunities available and take responsibility

for their own creative and professional development.

- 2.2 As an active student, we expect you to attend course activities regularly and to let us know if you can't attend for any reason.
- 2.3 We expect you to be proactive in letting us know about life events or circumstances that may create barriers to your learning and seek advice/support.
- 2.4 We expect you not to book holidays in term time, or prioritise other work over your studies.
- 2.5 We will be active in our identification of students whose engagement is low and proactive in our contact with you.
- 2.6 We do not monitor academic engagement during University holiday periods, except in circumstances where extenuating circumstances are being applied.

3. Absence

3.1 Notification

3.1.1 If you are unable to attend a scheduled meeting, tutorial, supervision or timetabled session you must notify hestudentabsence@leeds-art.ac.uk and, where possible, the staff member conducting the session.

3.1.2 We acknowledge that there are a range of circumstances that can negatively impact a student's engagement. If you experience any circumstances which become a barrier to your studies you should speak to one of the Academic Progression Administrators as soon as possible for support and advice. They will refer you to the appropriate support, resource or process to assist you. They can be contacted at hestudentabsence@leeds-art.ac.uk.

3.2 Support

The University will support you in your studies by monitoring your engagement with your course and attendance at its activities. If you are not engaging fully with your course and the learning opportunities available, HE Administration will review the information provided and may:

- contact you;
- call an engagement meeting;
- refer the student to the appropriate department or refer/enact the appropriate policy/procedure (e.g. Fitness to Study Policy, Reasonable adjustments, suspension).

4. Monitoring and Engagement Intervention Process

4.1 Monitoring

4.1.1 The University monitors engagement using a combination of core monitoring points, absence notification and other course-specific data and information.

4.1.2 Recording, monitoring and reviewing engagement is an essential tool in identifying students that might be experiencing difficulties in their studies. Monitoring enables the early identification and support of these students.

4.1.3 Core monitoring points: These are designed to meet regulatory requirements, monitor continuation/completion likelihood and create efficient interventions for students who miss key events.

4.1.4 For postgraduate students the points are:

- enrolment or re-enrolment to your level of study (an international student who does not attend within 2 weeks of the start date has to be reported to the UKVI);
- engagement with supervision and formative feedback tutorials;
- attendance at module briefings;
- submission of work to summative deadlines, or approved extension deadlines;
- attendance at timetabled course activity which will be reviewed once a trimester.

4.1.5 For undergraduate students the points are:

- enrolment or re-enrolment to your level of study (an international student who does not attend within 2 weeks of the start date has to be reported to the UKVI);
- return to your course at the start of each term, once enrolled;
- engagement at formative feedback tutorials (carried out for all modules over 20 credits);
- attendance at module briefings;
- submission of work to summative deadlines, or approved extension deadlines;
- spot checks on engagement with the library;
- monthly checks of engagement with eStudio;
- attendance at timetabled course activity which will be reviewed three times a semester.

4.1.6 Absence notification monitoring: this allows us to spot patterns in absences, or start conversations with students who inform us of new/escalating engagement challenges.

4.1.7 Internal engagement queries: in addition, Course Leaders, Module Leaders, Supervisors, the Academic Support Coordinator, Head of Internationalisation, HE Administrators and Academic Progression Administrators can directly raise engagement concerns with the HE Administration Manager that will be reviewed and meetings called if deemed appropriate.

4.1.8 It is important to highlight that core monitoring does not equate to the minimum engagement expectation and that interventions are likely to take place for any student only meeting these points.

4.2 Engagement Intervention Process

4.2.1 As a University that wishes to support its students to achieve the best outcome, we will proactively contact and/or meet with students whose engagement is a potential concern. Engagement with meetings is important, as lack of attendance will increase concerns and may result in action under the Academic Regulations.

4.2.2 Students who do not enrol/re-enrol at their agreed start date, without notification will be proactively contacted by HE Administration or the Internationalisation department. If no contact is established, the University would withdraw the student as outlined in the Academic Regulations.

4.2.3 Where one or two core monitoring points are missed the HE Administration team will conduct a follow up to assess if further action is needed. This may include actions such as reviewing engagement with the course team or contacting the student directly:

- where effective mitigation is found or engagement is assured by the course team, the monitoring point will be considered met.

- where the above assessment does not mitigate the concern, HE Administration will contact the student or an initial engagement concern meeting will be arranged with the student.

4.2.4 Where three or more core monitoring points are missed or a pattern of absence notification is deemed a concern then an Engagement Concern meeting will be held.

4.3 Initial Engagement Concern Meeting

4.3.1 Initial concern meetings will be called to raise the concern, prompt any information from the student, consider appropriate referrals and/or review.

4.3.2 The meeting will be held between the student, a member of the course team, and a member of HE Administration, or their nominee.

4.4 Engagement Concern Meeting

4.4.1 An engagement concern meeting will be held where a student's engagement has been previously discussed, or where the monitoring profile is deemed as more significant.

4.4.2 The meeting will be held between the student, a member of the course team, a member of HE Administration, and if appropriate a member of Student Welfare.

4.4.3 Outcomes from this meeting may include recommending that you consider suspending your studies or withdrawing from your course.

4.5 Study Support Meeting

4.5.1 Where a student is proactive in notifying the University about challenges that they are facing in engaging with their studies and/or wishes to know their study options. A study support meeting will be called to understand the student's circumstances, consider support/referral options and explain key parts of the Academic Regulations, which may be important to their decision-making.

4.5.2 The meeting will comprise of the student, a member of HE Administration, a member of the course team and/or a member of Student Welfare. A member of Internationalisation may also be present where the student is a Student Route Visa holder.

4.5.3 In some cases that include health challenges, a study support meeting may be replaced by a meeting under the Fitness to Study Policy.

4.6 Additional Processes for Student Route Visa Holders

4.6.1 A student holding a Student Route visa to undertake a course of study will be provided with a start date. Any delay to this start date needs to be requested in advance and agreed by the Head of Internationalisation.

4.6.2 If the student does not attend within 2 weeks of the enrolment period or start date, without an agreed late start date, their nonattendance will be reported to the UKVI and their sponsorship may be withdrawn.

4.6.3 Student Route visa holders must also ensure that they attend any required enrolment, induction and/or re-induction sessions, these are compulsory.

- 4.6.4 If a student holding a Student Route visa undertakes a study abroad placement at a partner university the student is expected to maintain the same level of academic engagement with the course as if they were studying in Leeds. The International Team will maintain regular contact with both the student and the partner university to ensure they are engaging.
- 4.6.5 Where Student Route Visa holders miss any key monitoring point, with the exception of enrolment covered above, an email will be sent reminding the individual of the importance of attendance and absence. This will be sent in addition to any further action and irrespective of any mitigation found.
- 4.6.6 Where any formal internal engagement query is received regarding a Student Route Visa holder, an email will be sent reminding the individual of the importance of attendance and absence. This will be sent in addition to any further action.
- 4.6.7 Where an absence notification is received from a Student Route Visa holder, noting an explained absence of 21 days or more, a Study Support Meeting will be held.
- 4.6.8 Withdrawal of sponsorship: the University will notify UKVI and withdraw sponsorship where a student has stopped academically engaging for a period of 60 consecutive days, once the steps outlined above designed to improve academic engagement have been exhausted with no success. The University will report the withdrawal of sponsorship to the UKVI. The UKVI at this point is highly likely to withdraw the student's visa and the student must return to their home country. Further information and guidance on this can be found on the UKVI website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>.

5. Potential Consequences of Insufficient Engagement

- 5.1 Where engagement has ceased or is considered insufficient despite interventions or attempts to intervene, the University may decide to withdraw a student from their studies, as noted in section 3 of the Academic Regulations.
- 5.2 In these circumstances a presumed withdrawn notice will usually be issued. This notice will give the student 5 working days to inform the University if they do not wish to be withdrawn. After this period the student will be withdrawn.
- 5.3 Where a student does respond to a presumed withdrawn notice to inform the University they wish to continue, a study support meeting will be called to clarify ongoing engagement expectations and/or study options available. Non-attendance to this meeting on two occasions will result in withdrawal.
- 5.4 As noted in section 3 of the Academic Regulations, withdrawal may also occur when a student's lack of engagement means the University is unable to confirm their enrolment, attendance or satisfactory academic progress to a funding body to confirm a tuition fee payment.

6. Right to Review

- 6.1 Where a student's engagement level leads to them being withdrawn from their course, they will receive a withdrawal letter which includes details on how to request a review of the decision.

- 6.2 The University must receive the request for a review within 5 working days of the withdrawal 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.
- 6.3 Any request for a review must set out the grounds and must be submitted in writing to the Quality Office (quality@leeds-art.ac.uk).
- 6.4 A meeting will be arranged between the student, a Director of Undergraduate Studies/Head of Postgraduate Studies, a member of the Academic Registry and a note-taker.
- 6.5 During the formal review the student can be accompanied by a companion. This may be a students' union representative, friend or fellow student. The panel should be notified of these companions prior to the meeting.
- 6.6 The panel will review the case, considering the original decision and the student's information.
- 6.7 Written confirmation of the decision will be sent to the student usually within 5 working days.
- 6.8 There is no further process of review within Leeds Arts University. HE Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of the review procedure may take their complaint to the Office of Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) provided that the complaint is eligible under its rules. Should a student decide to make a complaint to the OIA, the OIA Complaint Form must be received by the OIA within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter. Guidance on submitting a complaint to the OIA and the OIA Complaint Form can be found on the OIA's website <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/making-a-complaint-to-the-oia.aspx>. Students may also wish to seek advice from the Students' Union about taking a complaint to the OIA. The OIA will normally only review issues that have been dealt with through the University's internal procedures first.