



## **UCP-ATT001 Higher Education Student Attendance Policy**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Student Attendance Policy has been developed as part of University Centre Peterborough's (UCP's) commitment to provide a supportive learning environment in which encouragement is given to all students to develop a range of skills and approaches to their studies.
- 1.2 UCP has responsibilities to a number of bodies to ensure students attend the programmes on which they are enrolled and to encourage engagement leading to successful outcomes in assessments. Attendance and engagement are key components in student retention, progression, achievement and employability.
- 1.3 The University monitors the attendance and engagement of its students and where required to, will report non-attendance and/or non-engagement to the appropriate bodies.
- 1.4 Attendance at enrolment and any designated sessions such as induction prior to the commencement of scheduled teaching is compulsory.
- 1.5 Students must attend all scheduled teaching sessions, undertake all assessments or exams, and attend meetings and other activities as required by the University.
- 1.6 Students must arrive on time for classes and remain for the duration of the session. Late arrival at, and early departure from, sessions is disruptive, unprofessional, and unfair to other class members and staff.
- 1.7 Where a student arrives later than 15 minutes after the commencement of the sessions, a tutor/lecturer may refuse entry to the session to avoid disruption to the class and the student's attendance will be recorded as absent in this eventuality.
- 1.8 Students are part of an academic community and as such are expected to contribute to their fellow students' learning experience. Non-attendance at any stage in the learning process can impact adversely on others' experiences. This is particularly the case when engaging in assessed group work. It is unacceptable for a student to fail to engage or attend without valid mitigating reasons when this will have a direct impact on the experience of fellow students.
- 1.9 This procedure outlines the procedures for staff who are responsible for monitoring student attendance.

### **2. PURPOSE**

- 2.1 UCP recognises the investment that students and their sponsors make when a student enrolls on a programme. As a responsible institution, UCP has a duty to act on non-attendance or lack of engagement so that students can be supported to successfully complete their programmes of study.
- 2.2 The purpose of this procedure is to have a clear guidance that:
  - a) applies a uniformity and consistency of treatment across UCP;
  - b) provides clear guidance on the process to be followed when a student's attendance is below that expected;

- c) enables up-to-date student information to be available;
- d) serves as a UCP procedure statement to any interested third parties (e.g, a sponsor, employer, Student Finance England);
- e) enables accurate data to be provided for statistical and audit purposes;
- f) provides evidence for the appropriate funding body that students are on programme.

### 3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies exclusively to all Higher Education provision offered by University Centre Peterborough which includes UCP at Stamford. This also applies to sub-contractual and any partner provision.

### 4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

<http://www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/>

- UCP-ASS007 Higher Education Student Intermission of Study Procedure
- IEG-EDI002 special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- UCP-FIT001 Higher Education Fitness to Practise Policy
- Fitness to Study
- UCP-DIS001 Higher Education Student Disciplinary Policy and Code of Conduct
- HE Student Charter
- Terms and Conditions of Admissions and Enrolment
- IEG-GDPR01 Data Protection Policy
- UCP- FIN001 HE Tuition Fee Policy

### 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The following people are responsible for ensuring this procedure is followed.

**UCP Student Support** is responsible for tracking student's attendance and engagement. It is also responsible for engaging with students who are not attending, following the stages and timescales outlined in this procedure.

**Tutors** are responsible for accurately recording on registers student's attendance and engagement in taught sessions. They are also responsible for communicating with students whose attendance is a concern and for referring them to UCP Student Support where required. When requested, they are expected to provide UCP Student Support with the last date of student engagement.

**Students** are responsible for attending all taught sessions, engaging with and participating in guided independent study and doing so regularly and on time. Where they have a valid reason (for example medical appointment) for not attending a taught session they must communicate this to their tutor or Student Support before the session, or as soon as is reasonably possible. It is also the responsibility of the student to understand that there may be fee implications to withdrawing or being withdrawn by UCP. These are outlined in the HE Tuition Fees Policy.

### 6. RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 This policy is required to ensure that student's attendance and engagement is monitored.

#### **Analyse risks of non-adherence to this policy**

- 6.2 Failure to adhere to this policy could lead to academic failure of students, complaints, inaccurate reporting to Student Finance England and non-adherence to UCP's Office for

Students (OfS) conditions of registration.

### **Staff training needed**

- 6.3 All staff involved are required to undertake annual training delivered by the HE Student Support Team to outline the support that is available and the process by which students can be referred for support if they have attendance issues.

## **7. DATA PROTECTION**

- 7.1 UCP complies with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation Data Protection Act, 2018. As such, applicants' and student data are treated as confidential by all staff involved in this process and is not divulged unnecessarily or inappropriately. However, the aforementioned Act requires UCP to release certain information to UK authorities upon request in order to assist those authorities with the prevention and detection of fraud or other crimes. We will release the requested information on receipt of an appropriate request from UK authorities such as (but not limited to) the police, Home Office (for immigration and related matters), local authorities, and the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 7.2 We may use anonymised data collected as part of an individual's attendance record for the purpose of fulfilling statistical and reporting requirements.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **8. Attendance and Engagement Definitions**

- 8.1 Attendance is defined at UCP as the physical presence of the student in the learning environment for the entire scheduled taught session (face-to-face or online depending on course validation) as required by the programme. For example:
- lectures, seminars, lab sessions, tutorials;
  - examinations, on-line tests, in-class tests;
  - video conferencing of live sessions;
  - participation in an online forum.
- 8.2 Attendance is taken by tutors in on-line registers within the UCP'S student records system during each taught session.
- 8.3 Every student's unauthorised absence from a session, is recorded as '0' in online registers.
- 8.4 For courses or modules that are not validated for online learning, students must not attend any lessons online if they are absent, without an approved Leave of Absence or an authorised Individual Learning Plan.
- 8.5 If an inaccurate absence can be shown to have been recorded, the tutor can either make the change or can request that this be rescinded from Management Information Services or the HE Student Support Coordinator.
- 8.6 Engagement is defined at UCP as the activity of engaging with, and participating in, guided independent or group study activities, assessment and feedback, and any other activities required by the module and/or programme. For example:
- Submitting work for formative and/or summative assessment;
  - Accessing and/or interacting with recordings and completing tasks in virtual learning environments;
  - Undertaking placements;
  - Attending Academic Personal Tutorial meetings;

- Attending a compulsory meeting with Student Support and/or the HE Manager.
- 8.7 If a student has extenuating circumstances that requires an absence of up to 3 weeks, they may be able to request a Leave of Absence. See section 10 for details of this process.
- 8.8 If a student is anticipating an absence for an extended period, they may need to suspend their studies, in advance, for up to 12 months. The Higher Education Student Intermission of Study Procedure gives further information about the procedures for this.
- 8.9 If a student is unable to meet a deadline for assessment because of absence, they should refer to the Higher Education Extensions and Extenuating Circumstances Policy.

## 9. Support for Students

- 9.1 It is expected that students attend all taught sessions engaging with, and participating in, guided independent study and do so regularly and on time. Students facing difficulties that are impacting on their ability to attend university (for example, suffering from a health condition, is a care leaver, etc.) are expected to seek support from their Personal Tutor or Student Support.
- 9.2 A student facing difficulties in terms of attendance or completing coursework can find advice via the Student Support Hub page on Canvas or, can make an appointment with a Student Advisor by:
- visiting the UCP Support Centre in person or via the Canvas Hub
  - emailing support@ucp.ac.uk

## 10. UCP Approved Leave of Absence

- 10.1 In extenuating circumstances that impact on a student's ability to attend, students can apply for a Leave of Absence of up to 3 weeks within a semester which should be taken in a single block. If a student requires a break from studies or longer than 3 weeks, they may need to consider an Intermission. See point 8.7 and 8.8.
- 10.2 The circumstances should be current, unanticipated and beyond a student's control rather than disadvantageous conditions experienced throughout their studies (students with serious, long-term/permanent difficulties should contact a Student Advisor).
- 10.3 A Leave of Absence should be applied for as soon as a student is aware of the extenuating circumstances and no later than 5 working days after the first day of absence.
- 10.4 A Leave of Absence that is related to a long-term/permanent condition will only be considered if evidence that demonstrates an exacerbation of the condition at the appropriate time(s) is provided. This can include internal support access. Evidence of the existence of the long-term condition in itself is insufficient for the purposes of the Leave of Absence process.
- 10.5 Students wishing to request consideration of a Leave of Absence must complete a request form. It is advisable for students to also meet with a Student Advisor to discuss their circumstances.
- 10.6 The Student Advisor will liaise with Curriculum Staff concerning the viability of the proposed Leave of Absence and to create an action plan for the student. It is important that a student who is seeking a Leave of Absence is not disadvantaged in the long term.
- 10.7 A Leave of Absence request will not automatically be granted and must be authorised by the Student Support Officer in consultation with the Curriculum team.
- 10.8 Evidence must be provided for a Leave of Absence request. Students will need to provide independent and professional evidence (e.g., a doctor's letter).
- 10.9 During a leave of absence, a student will have access to the systems, can apply to join a session

remotely in certain circumstances, and should be working to the action plan defined in 10.6.

10.10 Applications for Extensions or Extenuating Circumstances must be made separately. See the Higher Education Extensions and Extenuating Circumstance Policy.

10.11 If a Leave of Absence request is rejected and the student does not attend, they will be subject to the attendance process outlined in section 11.

## **11. Distinguishing an absent student: Process, Timescales and Deadlines**

11.1 **STAGE 0:** Student Support run weekly automated reports from the student record system which identify students' attendance data recorded on registers. If a student's attendance drops below 75% for the academic year or Course Leaders inform Student Support of 2 consecutive weeks of absence, the Student Support team will consult the curriculum team where necessary before proceeding to Stage 1.

11.2 **STAGE 1:** The student will receive a correspondence letter (LETTER 1) from Student Support when a student's attendance is reported as being below 75% for the academic year or there is an unauthorised absence for two consecutive weeks (see Section 10). This letter will state a 10-working day deadline in which the student must respond and undertake the mandatory actions outlined in the letter.

11.3 **STAGE 2:** A formal discussion about the attendance is had with the student if contact is made. This includes querying the absence and offering pastoral support. The consequence of continued non-attendance is outlined such as the reported effect it has on student's grade profile.

11.4 If the student completes their mandatory actions, they will remain under the Attendance Monitoring process, receiving any pastoral support, signposting, and check-ins deemed necessary until their attendance rises above 80%. The Student Support team will liaise with and make recommendations to the curriculum team.

11.5 At this stage, if the student has not engaged with any of the staff members listed under section 5 or has not completed the mandatory actions outlined in the letter, then the procedure moves to STAGE 3. Once STAGE 3 is authorised the student will have up to 10 working days (from the date of LETTER 2) to engage with UCP before a formal withdrawal is actioned.

11.6 **STAGE 3:** Student Support sends a correspondence letter (LETTER 2) to the student, querying the absence and offering pastoral support. This letter will state a 10-working day deadline in which the student must respond and undertake the actions outlined in the letter.

11.7 If the student's attendance and/or engagement remains inactive, the HE Manager will authorise Student Support to complete a withdrawal. The student is notified in writing of the withdrawal, giving a 10-working day notice period before the withdrawal is processed. (LETTER 3). The withdrawal is reported to the Exam Board (OU Awards) or Assessment Panel (Pearson Awards) so that any credit and exit award can be confirmed.

## **12. Student engagement in the process**

12.1 Students who engage with the staged process outlined above, but suddenly stop communicating are sent LETTER 2. This is regardless of what stage the student engaged with previously. The letter will encourage the student to disclose any extenuating circumstances to a Student Adviser.

12.2 Students who engage with the staged process outlined above but fail to attend their studies again and do not communicate with Student Support are entered directly into STAGE 3 and

are sent LETTER 2. This is regardless of what stage the student engaged with previously.

### **13. Appeals Procedure**

- 13.1 Students are entitled to appeal a decision made by UCP to withdraw them due to non-attendance and/or failure to respond to communication about attendance. Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days notification of withdrawal (LETTER 3). Appeals must relate to the following grounds: That there has been material significant administrative error, or a procedural irregularity is such that the assessment process, and consideration of any mitigating circumstances were not conducted in accordance with the approved regulations.
- 13.2 Maladministration in broad terms might include failure to adhere to or consider properly policies in decision making or poor administration such as bias, inattention, delay or perversity.
- 13.3 Students must be informed of their right to appeal. They should be directed to the Academic Appeal process is outlined in UCP-ASS005 Higher Education Academic Appeal Policy [www.ucp.ac.uk/policies](http://www.ucp.ac.uk/policies).

