



## OFS06 – Higher Education (HE) Attendance & Engagement Policy

<b>Policy Author:</b>	Head of HE	<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Vice Principal Curriculum
<b>Approval Date:</b>	March 2021	<b>Review Date:</b>	March 2023
<b>Purpose of the Policy</b> <p>This Policy has been developed as part of the College’s commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables all Higher Education (HE) students who have chosen to study with the College to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>The College recognises the investment that students and their sponsors make when a student enrolls on a course and considers that it has responsibility to act on non-attendance, so that students can be supported to complete their programmes of study successfully.</p>			



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## **1. Policy Statement**

- 1.1.** Attendance is a key component in student retention, progression, achievement and employability. Regular attendance and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who actively participate in their learning by attending and participating in classes and other scheduled activities regularly are more likely to enjoy a rewarding experience in which their knowledge, skills and abilities are developed, and successfully complete their course, and achieve better results.
- 1.2.** The College has a duty of care to its students, and has a responsibility to ensure their wellbeing. Patterns of attendance which may indicate causes for concern will always be investigated in line with this policy. It should also be noted that overseas students who require a Tier 4 Visa to study in the UK may be required to leave the country if they do not meet attendance requirements.
- 1.3.** The College monitors the attendance of its students and where appropriate, will report absence to the appropriate authorities.
- 1.4.** The College requires that students organise their personal arrangements to enable the level of attendance and engagement required by their programme of study.
- 1.5.** In cases where non-attendance and engagement are related to student health and safety. The College may choose to manage this through its Study and Wellbeing Review Policy.

## **2. Policy Objectives**

- 2.1.** To clarify, in conjunction with the College HE Charter, the rights, responsibilities and expectations of students in respect of student attendance, engagement and punctuality.
- 2.2.** To outline and explain the College's position in respect of attendance.
- 2.3.** To outline and explain the College's procedures for monitoring attendance.
- 2.4.** To outline and explain the College's procedures for dealing with unacceptable levels of attendance.
- 2.5.** To ultimately improve success rates and enable positive progression of all HE students.

### 3. Policy

HE students will be informed of the College expectations regarding attendance during the College induction period with consideration to individual need and circumstance.

The College expects students to attend all learning and teaching sessions associated with the programme on which they are enrolled. The learning and teaching methods for each programme and component module/unit are set out in the Programme Handbook. Examples of learning and teaching sessions include (but are not confined to) lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, laboratory and practical sessions, professional placements, field trips and industrial visits. They also include compulsory information sessions e.g. induction events, health and safety briefings.

Students should arrive on time for classes and remain for the duration of the teaching session. Late arrival at, and early departure from, teaching sessions is disruptive, discourteous, unprofessional and unfair to other class members and tutors.

#### 3.1 Remote Learning

Students are expected to engage with remote learning sessions as set up by their lecturing staff. They should be on time when dialling in for remote sessions or meetings.

#### 3.2 Good behaviour within your remote learning environments

Sometimes referred to as 'netiquette', this can encompass both interactive live lectures or sessions, forums or chats where you respond in your own time. It can even include emails. While being online can sometimes feel more informal or relaxed, communicating online with fellow students and colleagues requires the same level of respect, engagement and professional behaviour. This ensures successful, meaningful and considerate interactions among peers. Primarily it is about treating others as you would hope to be treated yourself. Whether you're taking part in remote teaching sessions, posting messages in forums or chat groups it is important to treat each other with the same respect and politeness as we would in a face-to-face physical setting.

Many of the principles and core values of behaviour are reflected from face-to-face communications to digital interactions, but there are subtle differences to consider, therefore it is worthwhile exploring best practice tips for communicating responsibly online with others.

#### ***Where a student has notified absence:***

- 3.3 All students are expected to notify the College of their absence the first day of their absence before their lesson commences. A student who is aware of their absence from College for any period of time should make this known to their Programme Leader/Tutor in order to discuss any programme/module/unit requirements related to such absence.
- 3.4 The Programme Leader/Tutor and student should discuss the length of any likely absence and the effect on any programme/module/unit obligations and requirements. Programme Leaders/Tutors should show flexibility in responding to the needs of individual students.
- 3.5 If the absence is for a period considered to be of significance in terms meeting of programme/module/unit obligations and outcomes. The Head of School may require the student to interrupt/suspend their studies and return at a specified time in the



future. Heads of School may also choose to manage extended absence, if appropriate, using the College's Study and Wellbeing Review policy, seeking advice from Student Support as necessary.

***Non-notified absence:***

- 3.6** If a student is not attending the requisite teaching sessions and not undertaking required assessment activities, the Programme Leader should inform their Head of School. The Head of School should then determine the level of absence and non-engagement through dialogue with appropriate colleagues, and then take appropriate action, normally including an interview with the student, to determine the reason for non-engagement. If the Head of School does not receive a satisfactory explanation for absence or non-completion of module/unit/programme obligations, the Head of School should send a written warning to the student, including a statement of the course of action if attendance and engagement does not improve in future.
- 3.7** The Head of School should ask the Programme Leader/Tutor to report on the outcomes of the warning letter. If non-attendance or non-engagement continues, the Head of School may follow the procedure outlined in paragraph 3.3 above and interrupt/suspend a student's studies until a future specified date (usually the beginning of the next academic year).

**Total Absence**

- 3.8** If reports to the College indicate a total absence from teaching sessions, supervisions and programme/module/unit activities and the student does not provide an explanation when asked to do so, the matter should be referred to the Head of School. The student will then be contacted by email/letter stating that they will be deemed to have withdrawn from the College unless a reply to the contrary is received within a specified time period. If a student is deemed to have withdrawn, their registration as a student will be discontinued and Student Finance will be notified\*.

*\*it should be noted that there is an obligation for the College to notify Student Finance of the last date of attendance and that a Student with a Maintenance Loan (or other additional funding) may then be liable to pay back part or all of a loan paid to them after this date.*

- 3.9** Where a student does provide the Head of School an explanation for their absence, the Head of School must determine whether the explanation provides good cause for the absence and non-engagement. If the explanation offered does not establish good cause, then the student should be dealt with using the protocol described in 3.6 (above).

**4. Responsibility**

**4.1. Heads of School**



<b>Definitions</b>	None.	<b>Who Needs to Know?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Heads of School</li><li>• All College staff teaching on HE courses</li><li>• HE Students</li></ul>
<b>Related Policies and Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HE Student Charter</li><li>• HE Study &amp; Wellbeing Review Policy</li></ul>	<b>Approval Date:</b>	March 2021
<b>This policy was approved and adopted by:</b>  <i>Julia Howe</i>  <b>Julia Howe</b> <b>Interim Principal</b>			