STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

1. The Student Attendance Policy has been developed as part of the University’s commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables all students who have chosen to study with the University to achieve their full potential.

2. The University recognises the investment that students and their sponsors make when a student enrols 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.

3. The University uses a reporting tool called PULSE, which extracts data relating to attendance, engagement with a student’s programme of study and academic performance from various sources of data already in use.

4. This policy applies equally to all enrolled undergraduate, postgraduate (taught) and research students of the University. For those programmes where specific attendance requirements are approved at validation, such requirements are published separately in programme handbooks.

5. The attendance requirements for students at a partner institution will be determined by the partner institution, subject to any programme specific requirements which will be set out in writing in the Memorandum of Agreement with that partner.

6. The University has a legal duty to monitor the attendance of students from non-European Economic Areas (non-EEA) who have Tier 4 visas and to report those who do meet the required number of attendances to United Kingdom Visas and Administration (UKVI).

7. The University is required to report non–EEA students on Tier 4 visas for whom absence is authorised but who have to suspend their studies.

Policy Statement

5. 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.

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1 The Policy does not apply to students who are registered for an award at the University, but are not enrolled as a student at the University
2 For postgraduate research students refer to Research Degree Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors
6. The University 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 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, and in the case of research students, scheduled meetings with supervisors. They also include compulsory information sessions e.g. induction events, health and safety briefings, fire lectures.

7. 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. The tutor has the right to refuse admission to students who arrive late and to refuse early exit from class.

8. Unsatisfactory attendance includes failure to attend learning and teaching sessions on a regular basis without providing a satisfactory reason to tutors for absence. It also includes repeated late arrival at, or early departure from, learning and teaching sessions. ³

9. Authorised absence which significantly affects a student’s understanding and grasp of course material, causes them to miss lectures, tutorials and deadlines should be treated in the same way as unauthorised absence. The student’s non-attendance will automatically populate the PULSE.

10. Students who are unable to attend examinations because of severe sudden illness, because of a flare up of an existing condition or because of exceptional and unforeseen personal difficulties should be referred to the Mitigating Circumstances Procedures ⁴

11. Sanctions in the event of non-attendance

Where a student’s attendance is unsatisfactory, one or more of the following actions may be taken. This list is not exhaustive.

a. Seek an explanation from the student for their unsatisfactory attendance, discuss how their attendance must improve and recommend appropriate support.

b. Issue the student with a formal written warning about their attendance.

c. Require those students who fail to respond to warnings about their attendance to enter into a Formal Attendance Agreement. (Appendix 1)

d. Inform the student that Assessment Boards may take into account a student’s attendance in relation to progression and awards.

e. Advise the student that staff, when writing references, may take a student’s attendance into account.

f. Inform the student that a formal report on the student’s attendance may be made to the student’s sponsor including an employer and the Student Loan Company.

³ See General Regulations Paras. 2 and 3 for definitions of notified (authorised) and unexplained absence (unauthorised) absence

g. Inform an international student holding a Tier 4 visa that the University is required to notify the UKVI of withdrawal resulting from unsatisfactory attendance.

h. Inform an international student on a Tier 4 visa that attendance is taken into account when applying for a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS)

i. Withdraw the student from their programme of study if they fail to respond to warnings or breach the terms of their Attendance Agreement.

12. **Students** are responsible for:

a. Attending all learning and teaching sessions associated with their programme of study

b. Notifying their module tutors/research supervisor in advance that they are expected to be absent from timetabled classes or meetings. This may be done in person, by ‘phone or email.

c. Obtaining prior permission from their programme leader/supervisor for planned absences for two or more days during term time.

d. Notifying the Student Centre of unplanned or unforeseen absences from classes within 24 hours and if requested by their personal tutor/supervisor, providing a medical certificate or other evidence in corroboration, to explain their absence

13. **Module tutors** are responsible for:

a. Reminding students of the importance of regular attendance at learning and teaching sessions

b. Recording student attendance on CELCAT

c. Keeping alert on tutee progress

14. **Personal Tutors and/or Research Supervisors** are responsible for:

a. Checking tutee’s record in PULSE once poor attendance issues have been identified.

b. Carrying out recorded tutorials with tutees to discuss attendance issues.

c. Referring international students to the Immigration and Welfare Officer in Student Services.

d. Referring tutees to other sources of support that may be available to them e.g. Student Liaison Officers, Disability Service staff, counselling, financial advice.

e. Keeping alert on the tutee’s progress once the student is attending again.

f. Referring the tutee to the Programme Leader if the tutee fails to attend

15. **Programme Leaders or Research Co-Ordinators** are responsible for

a. Ensuring that all teaching staff maintain an accurate record of student attendance.

b. Students are informed in writing of the importance of regular attendance at learning and teaching sessions, and through Programme Handbooks of any approved programme or module specific attendance requirements.

c. Following up on attendance concerns identified by Personal Tutors or Research Supervisors.

d. Liaising with the Immigration and Welfare Officers over international student attendance issues.
e. Advising Academic Group Leaders or Directors of Studies or students who need to be withdrawn.

16. **Academic Group Leaders** are responsible for authorising the withdrawal of students who have failed to attend.

17. In the case of postgraduate research students Directors of Studies, Main Supervisors, Research Co-ordinators and the Postgraduate Research Manager should seek either approval of Board of Study for Research Degrees or confirm by Chair’s action, prior to withdrawing a student.

18. **Immigration and Welfare** officers are responsible for notifying the UKVI of withdrawn students in accordance with Tier 4 Regulations current at the time of withdrawal.

**Equality Impact Assessment**

19. The University of Bolton is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy has been screened in relation to the use of plain English, the promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, gender and disability and avoidance of discrimination to other equality groups related to age, sexual orientation, religion or belief or gender reassignment.

**Other Related Policies**

20. Other relevant policies include:

- Student Attendance Policy-Guidance for Students
- General Regulations
- Academic Regulations
- Modular Degree Regulations
- Research Degree Regulations
- Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors

**Monitoring and Review**

21. This Policy will be monitored by the Executive Dean

22. The Policy will be reviewed after twelve months and every three years thereafter by the Education Committee.

**Dissemination of and Access to the Policy**

23. This Policy will be available on the University’s website (Current Students: Policies and Procedures). Reference to the Student Attendance Policy will be included in Programme Handbooks and the Student Diary or its equivalent; and that the importance of regular attendance is included in student induction.
UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON STUDENT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT

STUDENT NAME: _______________________

STUDENT NUMBER: ____________________

PROGRAMME: _________________________

COURSE LEADER/PERSONAL TUTOR: ______________________

DATE: _______________________

1. I have read and understood the University of Bolton’s Student Attendance Policy.

2. I acknowledge that my attendance/punctuality has been unsatisfactory and this is having an adverse impact on my academic progress.

3. I agree that I will attend all scheduled activities, including lectures, seminars, tutorials, etc.

4. I will observe the requirements on the University’s Student Attendance Policy in relation to obtaining prior permission to be absent from scheduled activities and to notify the University of unplanned and unforeseen absences and to supply corroborating evidence to explain such absence.

5. I agree to meet my course leader/personal tutor on a weekly/fortnightly/monthly basis to review my attendance and general academic progress.

6. I understand that if my attendance does not improve the University may inform any sponsor, including the Student Loan Company (SLC), and my employer and the University may terminate my studies on the grounds of poor attendance and/or poor academic progress.

Signed: _________________________

Tutor: ___________________________
Appendix 2

Undergraduate Personal Tutor Intervention Flowchart
(July 2013)

Key roles
- Module Tutor (MT)
- Personal Tutor (PT)
- Programme Leader (PL)
- Student Liaison Officer (SLO)
- Immigration and Welfare Officer (I&WO)
- Academic Group Leader (AGL)

Student absence (A) recorded on CELCAT by
An automatic weekly email summarising recent absences is sent to all students

PT has regular meetings with Tutees to check on progress and check tutees’ PULSE

Tutee is shown ‘at risk’ in PULSE

Tutee is absent for two consecutive weeks

PT contact tutee

Tutee is an international student on a tier 4 VISA

1. If tutee is contacted, a recorded tutorial is agreed & carried out
2. PT contact I&WOs and forward a copy of the tutorial

Student is not found (1 week attempt)

1. PT record actions taken and inform PL
2. PL contact I&WOs (International student on a tier 4 visa) and forward copy of actions taken

PL contact student and/or referral to other internal agency

Yes

Student is withdrawn
1. Academic Group Leader (AGL) authorises withdrawal
2. I&WOs notify the UK Border Visas and Immigration

MT & PT keep alert on tutee progress

A recorded tutorial is carried out with tutee

Issues identified by MT, PT, PL and/or SLO
Appendix 3
International Postgraduate Research Attendance Flowchart
(August 2013 – Version 4)

**Key roles**
- International Research Student (IRS)
- Research Degrees Administrator (RDA)
- Director of Studies (DS) same individual
- Main Supervisor (MS)
- Research Coordinator (RC)
- Postgraduate Research Manager (PGRM)
- Board of Studies for Research Degrees (BSRD)
- Immigration and Welfare Officer (I&WO)
- United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA)

**Flowchart Description**
- RDA monitors weekly attendance of IRS and enters info into CELCAT.
- After four consecutive non-authorised (*) absences, RDA contacts IRS (copied to DS/MS, RC and PGRM) to request explanation and warns about future attendance.
- (*) Authorised absence notification should be received by RDA before day of absence.
- IRS attendance continues to be unsatisfactory (any further unexplained absence).
- RDA informs DS/MS, RC and PGRM any of whom may seek approval from BSRD (**) for IRS withdrawal.
- BSRD / Chair approves
  - Yes
  - Student is withdrawn
  - Withdrawal is notified to IRS, DS/MS, RC, PGRM and I&WO
- DS/MS continue to monitor IRS attendance and keep records of interactions
  - No
- BSRD / Chair approves
  - Yes
  - Student is withdrawn
  - Withdrawal is notified to IRS, DS/MS, RC, PGRM and I&WO
- I&WOs notify the UK Visas and Immigration

(*) Authorised absence notification should be received by RDA before day of absence
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