



## Academic Engagement Policy

Date	Purpose of Issue/ Description of Change	Equality Impact Assessment Completed
8 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Change to missed sessions for Staged escalation	

Policy Officer	Senior Responsible Officer	Approved By	Date

*This Policy will be reviewed in a year*

# Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy

## 1. Introduction and Remit

Bangor University (BU) is committed to excellence in education, and to supporting progression and achievement of students. We therefore expect all our students to engage with their studies by attending lectures and other teaching events, submitting assessed work, and sitting scheduled exams.

Regular monitoring of student attendance allows BU to identify students who are in need of guidance and/or support and to direct them to the most appropriate department or service within BU. This Procedure sets out how any concerns in relation to these matters will be followed up for those students.

This Policy outlines the processes in place for monitoring the attendance/engagement of all students studying at Bangor. It aims to ensure compliance, where appropriate, with both the Home Office and Student Loan Company regulations (as well as those of other sponsors/funding agencies) and to assist the University in meeting its responsibilities in relation to engagement/attendance. This Policy is in addition to the processes already in place to monitor the attendance of all students.

## 2. Policy Statements

### A. Undergraduate (UG) and Taught Postgraduate (PGT) Students

All UG and PGT students' attendance at lectures will be monitored throughout the academic year. Attendance at a lectures, and contact with the student's tutor and /or supervisor will be seen as a contact point (see Section 4. below) per event. Students must present their Student ID card for checking when asked to do so at a monitored teaching event.

PGT students who have progressed to the final stage of the programme will need to maintain contact with their supervisors on a regular basis, and attendance and progression must be noted on MyBangor by the Supervisor.

Schools are responsible for monitoring attendance in smaller lectures and tutorials and these registers must be uploaded onto MyBangor at the earliest possible opportunity following the event, and in any event within a week. Schools are encouraged to monitor as many teaching events and tutorials as possible so that the Student Administration Team have as full a picture as possible of a student's engagement with their course.

All students are subject to this Engagement Monitoring Policy whilst they are registered with the University.

In order for students to fully comply with the Policy, the University expects students to live within a commutable distance from the University. The University defines 'commutable distance from Bangor University' as a distance from the University of no more than one hour that enables the student to attend the University during core working hours on a daily basis if they are required to do so. The location of where a student chooses to reside cannot, in any circumstance, be considered an adequate reason for non-compliance with this policy.

The Student Administration Team will monitor the attendance/engagement records of all UG and PGT students and will contact Schools where there are causes for concern, in accordance with the monitoring and escalation procedures below.]).

### B. Students on Work Placement / Study Abroad

It is a requirement that all students on placements must also be monitored for engagement.

Absences from Bangor for academic purposes (e.g. fieldwork, conferences, placements, study abroad etc.) must be approved by the students' personal tutor/supervisor *before* submitting a Notice of Absence form via MyBangor.

The University requires the student to ensure that their contact details (e.g. term time address and contact telephone number) are kept up to date on MyBangor for the duration of the absence from Bangor, together with the dates of departure and return. Contact between the University and student during this time must occur at least once per calendar month by using Skype, email or telephone for all UG and PGT students. All PGR students must have contact every 2 weeks either by Skype, email or telephone.

### C. Students on Postgraduate Research Programmes (PGR)

Full-time PGR students are expected to attend at least one formal supervision session each month.

## 3. Monitoring and Escalation

### [a] UG and PGT Students

UG and PGT students included in this Policy are expected to attend **ALL** their lectures, tutorials or seminars and any other timetabled event within any given day of the academic year. For the purposes of attendance monitoring a student at BU triggers an intervention if they miss 3, 4, 5, 8 or eventually 10 consecutive contact points (where one contact point is equal to one day where attendance / engagement has been noted), or where there is demonstrable pattern of non-attendance sufficient to raise concerns.

The Student Administration Team will monitor the attendance of all students and will implement the four stage Escalation Procedure attached as Appendix 1.

**Stage 1** will be triggered following 3 consecutive missed expected contact points.

**Stage 2** will be triggered following 4 consecutive missed expected contact points, or a demonstrable pattern of non-attendance causing concern.

**Stage 3** will be triggered where a student has missed 5 consecutive expected contact points.

**Stage 4** will be triggered where a student has missed 8 consecutive expected contact points

**Stage 5** will be triggered where a student has missed 10 consecutive expected contact points

### [b] Work Placement / Study Abroad / PGR Students

Students who are on work placement, study abroad or are a PGR student are included in this Policy, and are required to ensure they attend at least one formal supervision session each month, or have contact with their School at least once a month. It is the School's responsibility to ensure that these contacts are made, and that they are recorded on MyBangor.

For the purposes of attendance/engagement monitoring a student in this category triggers an intervention if they miss one expected contact point. The School should ensure that they contact the PGR student promptly to discuss any problems they may be experiencing. The School should also inform the Student Administration Coordinator (Attendance) of the situation at the earliest convenience. Where there remains a demonstrable pattern of non-attendance sufficient to raise concerns the matter will be referred to the Head of Student Administration who will follow Stage 4 of the Escalation Procedure.

## 4. Examples of expected contact points

BU will take the following examples as proof of expected contact points.

Attending formal academic or pastoral care activities including:

- A lesson, lecture, tutorial or seminar;
- A test, examination or assessment board;
- A meeting with a supervisor or personal tutor;
- A research-method or research-panel meeting, writing-up seminars or doctoral workshops;
- An oral examination (viva);
- An appointment with a welfare adviser;
- Submitting
  - Assessed or unassessed coursework, or
  - An interim dissertation, coursework or report; and
  - Registration (for enrolment or matriculation).

## 5. Errors in Attendance

Where a student believes there has been an error in their attendance/engagement data, they can evidence their attendance at the timetabled sessions in question, and / or they have evidence of special circumstances which they need to report they should contact [engagement@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:engagement@bangor.ac.uk) as soon as possible to rectify the error.

## 6. Monitoring for Postgraduate Research Students

A research student must have regular contact with the supervisor to assess progress. The supervisor will decide how often to meet the student, taking into account the research topic/area and the needs of the student. Supervisors are expected to meet with their students at least once every two weeks. Where a meeting cannot be arranged, an alternate contact methods must be used in its place. The meetings, and all other alternative contact points, must enable the Supervisor to confirm that the student is committed to his/her programme of study. Each meeting/contact point must be recorded.

## 7. Absences

All absences from study of 7 calendar days or more - whether pre-notified or post-notified - must be recorded in the Attendance Record section of MyBangor, by the student submitting a Notice of Absence.

All students must advise the University of **ALL** absences from study (i.e. 7 calendar days or more) by completing a Notice of Absence form in MyBangor.

All travel outside of the UK by a Student Visa sponsored student *must* be approved by the student's personal tutor / supervisor *before* the student completes a Notice of Absence form in MyBangor. Students must include details of the destination, overseas contact details, dates of departure and return to the United Kingdom and also upload travel details (e.g. flight information). Students may be asked to produce their passport by the Student Administration Monitoring Team on their return to Bangor, in order to gain confirmation of the date of return to the UK.

The University does not encourage absence from study. However, if an absence is unavoidable it remains the student's responsibility to keep up with coursework and meet all deadlines for assignments and tests.

A Student Visa Holder who has requested to defer their studies for up to a maximum of 60 days must be able to complete their course within their existing period of leave. If a student does not resume their studies after 60 days, the University will, under Home Office guidelines, withdraw sponsorship, unless there is an

exceptional circumstance, which will require submission of appropriate evidence to verify those circumstances.

### **Guidance and Support**

The University will make every effort to ensure that a student receives the necessary advice and guidance that they may need in order to comply with the Regulations and the University has an excellent student support system in place.

This Policy and any other processes relating to attendance monitoring are overseen by the UKVI Compliance Group, the composition and terms of reference are attached as Appendix 2.

## APPENDIX 1

### Escalation Procedure: Non-Engagement of Students

Bangor University (BU) is committed to excellence in education, and to supporting progression and achievement of students. We therefore expect all our students to attend lectures and other teaching events.

Regular monitoring of student attendance allows BU to identify students who are in need of guidance or support and to direct them to the most appropriate department or service within BU. This Procedure sets out how any concerns in relation to these matters will be followed up for those students.

#### 1. COMMENCEMENT OF EACH ACADEMIC YEAR

At the start of each academic year the student monitoring procedure will normally commence in week 2 of the first semester.

**STAGE 1** of this Procedure will apply from week 4 of the first semester, and will apply in the following circumstances:

- Grounds for concern with regard to a student's attendance and / or academic engagement and / welfare have been identified. This will be through a variety of methods including concerns raised within the School with regard to academic progression and attendance data inputted into MyBangor.
- 3 contact points or more have been missed, including lectures / tutorials and / or other contact events for undergraduate and graduate taught students. Reports on a student's attendance / contacts / events will normally be run in week 2 of a semester and subsequently every week thereafter.

**STAGE 2** of this Procedure will apply when Stage 1 has been completed and there has been no improvement in attendance / engagement. Stage 2 will be applied in the following circumstances:

- 4 contact points or more have been missed, including lectures / tutorials and / or other contact events for undergraduate and graduate taught students.
- With regards to postgraduate research students 2 instances or more of lack of engagement within a calendar month would trigger a concern which will be followed up.

Where a student's lack of attendance and / or engagement is brought to BU's attention, the [Assistant Monitoring Officer](#) will initially explore the reasons for this, and where there is no obvious cause for the issues an email will be sent inviting the student to view their attendance record to ensure it is up to date, and to check that absences or sickness have been reported (students can add a reason for absence directly on to the MyBangor system), this email will be copied to the Personal Tutor / Supervisor. They will also be told to make an appointment with their Personal Tutor / Supervisor to discuss their attendance and engagement if necessary.

Brief notes of any discussions with the student, including agreements on future attendance levels and engagement must be put into the Notes tab in MyBangor a meeting with a Personal Tutor / Supervisor has been held. This is important, to ensure that should matters escalate further, the Student Administration Team are able to view all the issues which have already been discussed.

#### STAGE 3

Stage 3 will apply in the following situations:

- Where Stage 2 has been completed, and the student's lack of attendance and engagement (at the appropriate contact and percentage level) continues.
- The student will have missed 5 contact points or more.
- Where the situation is sufficiently concerning, that the matter is escalated immediately to Stage 3 (for example where a student's attendance or academic engagement has dropped markedly within An email will be sent by the [Assistant Monitoring Officer](#) to both the student's personal and BU email address. The student will be asked to attend a meeting with the Attendance Monitoring Officer within five working days of receiving the email. The email will be copied to the relevant Senior Tutor and the Head of Student Administration

#### **STAGE 4**

**STAGE 4** applies if there has been no satisfactory improvement in attendance and / or engagement following the Stage 3 implementation, and the student has reached 8 missed consecutive contact points.

An email will be sent by the Student Administration Monitoring Team to both the student's personal and university email address. The student will be asked to attend a meeting with the Head of School or Senior Tutor within five working days of receiving the email. The email will be copied to the Attendance Monitoring Officer and placed on MyBangor.

The email will make it clear that if the student does not attend the meeting with the Head of School / Senior Tutor, and there is no satisfactory improvement in attendance and / or engagement the matter will be referred to the **FINAL** stage 5 process.

#### **STAGE 5**

**STAGE 5** will apply when all other attempts to engage with the student has failed, and the student has now missed 10 contact points. The matter will be referred, by the [Assistant Monitoring Officer](#), to the Head of Student Administration who, will review the matter and will ensure that all appropriate steps have been followed, and advice and guidance have been offered to the student at all stages. In consultation with the Senior Student Data Officer they will come to a decision on the most appropriate course of action, this may include meeting the student, who will be allowed to bring a friend, a member of the Students' Union or a staff member with them.

For Student Visa holders :

- a. Where a decision is made to withdraw sponsorship due to lack of attendance or engagement the matter must be reported to the UK Visa and Immigration Authority, at which point the Confirmation of Acceptance of Study (used to gain an entry visa to the UK) and the student's Student Visa will be withdrawn and the student will be required to return to their home country within a specified period of time (normally 60 days).

Withdrawal of a student's sponsorship will not, however, occur for 5 working days, during which time the student may appeal the decision as outlined below.

- b. Where a decision is made to continue to sponsor the student the Head of Student Administration will inform the student of the decision in an email, and will outline in detail the requirements of being allowed to continue their studies (e.g. the level of attendance and engagement expected). The School's Senior Tutor, the Attendance Monitoring Officer, and the Head of International Student Support, will also be informed of the decision.

In relation to both 4a. and 4b. above the student's sponsor and / or home college / university may also be informed, and where this is relevant, and they will be invited to work with the International Education Centre to support the student to achieve the requirements.

Should the student be unable to keep to the requirements as outlined within the timeframe given by the Head of Student Administration the sponsorship will be withdrawn and the student notified with a copy to the School's Senior Tutor. This means that the Confirmation of Acceptance of Study (CAS) and the student's Student Visa will be withdrawn and they will be required to return to their home country within a specified period of time (normally 60 days). The withdrawal of a student's sponsorship will not occur for 5 working days, during which time the student may appeal the decision as outlined below.

## **2. Appeals Process**

At the conclusion of Stage 5 where a decision has been made to temporarily suspend the student's record (both with the University and with the Student Loan Company) the student is entitled to submit an appeal to the University Secretary within five working days of being informed of the decision.

The University Secretary, having received a report from the Head of Student Administration, will make a decision to either:

- a. Overturn the decision and allow the student to continue their studies at BU, where necessary detailing the conditions that the student must comply with.

Or

- b. Confirm the decision to temporarily suspend the student's studies.

The University Secretary's decision in this matter is final.

## **3. Record-keeping**

The [Student Administration Coordinator \(Attendance\)](#) is responsible for ensuring that all relevant records are kept in relation to a student's attendance at the University, in accordance with the University's Records Retention Schedule.