



Student Attendance and Academic Performance Monitoring Policy

Version 14

Approved by the Board of Governors

Last Amendment: September 2023

The following sets out the School's approach to monitoring student attendance in classes and the steps it will take where it has concerns about a student's non-attendance. It should be read in conjunction with the School's *Personal Academic Tutoring Policy* and *Student Support Policy*.

This policy has been developed with due regard for *England's Regulatory Framework for Higher Education*, and in particular the accompanying guidance on Enabling Student Achievement, and addressing Complaints, Concerns and Appeals.

Equally, this policy has been produced in line with LSST's partner universities' Student Attendance Monitoring and Academic Engagement Policies as shown on their websites (Appendix 6).

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*The document owner is responsible for maintaining and updating the content of this document and ensuring that it reflects current practice at the School.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The London School of Science and Technology (“the School, “LSST”) recognises that, as responsible institution, it has a duty to monitor students’ attendance and to intervene where a student is not on course to successfully complete their study programme. Such interventions will seek to determine the reasons for non-attendance and explore all options for getting students back into their studies in a way that gives them the greatest possible chance of success.
- 1.2. The following is intended to clarify LSST’s procedural approach to recording and monitoring student attendance, and the stages of escalation that will be followed in the event of continued non-attendance. The procedures described are applicable to all students on all programmes delivered by LSST.

2. Our Approach to Attendance Monitoring

- 2.1. LSST’s approach to monitoring and managing students’ attendance and academic performance will be characterised by the following:
 - i. The School will establish systems that accurately and effectively monitor students’ attendance and academic performance in their timetabled classes,
 - ii. Students will have an accessible means of excusing themselves from lessons they cannot attend for any reason, and will be reasonably supported in catching up with their studies,
 - iii. Students will be given sufficient means to explain and excuse instances of non-attendance where prior authorisation was not given, whether for medical, personal or other reasons. The School will ensure that such explanations are appropriately supported by reliable evidence and will investigate them fairly,
 - iv. The School will be proactive in engaging students with deteriorating attendance at an early stage; administrative teams in the Registry will liaise with Personal Academic Tutors and other School support departments, mainly campus academic engagement officers to provide a coordinated approach to supporting a student in difficulty with their attendance,
 - v. Agreed support arrangements will be monitored by campus academic engagement teams until the School is satisfied that a student is no longer at academic risk,
 - vi. The School will make every effort to support students who have valid reasons for prolonged periods of absence, normally four consecutive weeks of scheduled classes, which may, for example be due to medical issues or other personal crises; in such instances the School will consult with the student and campus engagement

teams and support teams to establish more information to consider all possible alternatives to avoid a scenario of withdrawal from the programme. Where necessary, LSST may choose to consult the awarding body on more complex cases, to achieve the best outcome for the student.

- vii. The School will take prompt and decisive action where continued non-attendance requires the suspension or withdrawal of a student,
- viii. Students will be informed of their right to appeal any formal decision made by the School which affects their academic status, including a decision to withdraw a student on the basis of insufficient attendance, academic performance or their finance status,
- ix. Students will be made aware of any implications that persistent non-attendance or poor academic performance may have on their eligibility to receive financial support, and any potential liability to repay maintenance payments in the event of withdrawal from studies following a suspension,
- x. The School will use information from attendance & academic performance monitoring procedures as a key indicator by which it will benchmark the quality of its provision.

3. Expectations

- 3.1. Students are expected to attend all lectures, tutorials, seminars, projects, assessments and all other scheduled activities according to their timetable for their course of study.
- 3.2. Students are expected to submit all their required assessment on time according to the submission deadline set at the beginning of each semester.
- 3.3. Students are required to arrive for their classes on time and remain for the duration of the teaching session.
- 3.4. Where a student cannot attend a lesson or other scheduled activity, they should contact the attendance officer on attendance@lsst.ac with evidence to excuse themselves before the class is scheduled to take place. They should also contact their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) and make arrangements to catch up on any lesson content missed.
- 3.5. Where a student misses a lesson or other scheduled activity due to unforeseen circumstances, they should use the correct procedures for authorising periods of absence (see Appendix).

- 3.6. Students are expected to pay their tuition fee on time to the School. If the students are paying through Student Finance England (SFE) loan then it is the student's responsibility to have the agreement in place so the fee is paid to the School on time.

4. Recording Attendance

- 4.1. The following convention will be used by the School's Registry in recording students' attendance for the purposes of applying this policy:

- Students arriving up to 15 minutes after the start of the lesson will be marked 'in attendance',
- Students arriving between 15 and 45 minutes after the start of the lesson will be marked 'late'; attendance will still be recorded for the purposes of claiming student finance, however persistent lateness may result in a review of a student's academic performance by the School – see Section 5 below),
- Students arriving 45 minutes or more after the start of the lesson will be recorded as 'absent' for that lesson, but may enter the lesson at the discretion of the lecturer (students will be permitted entry to a lesson at any time where their lateness is owing to genuine extenuating circumstances),
- Students who depart the lesson before it is scheduled to end are recorded as 'early leavers'

NB: Attendance monitoring procedures will predicate on actual attendance in class, as opposed to other 'contact points' (for example: inductions, exams, PAT sessions or any personal appointments with support services). Engagement with other contact points may however be considered as contextual information by the Appeals or Student Attendance Panel when reviewing a case of non-attendance.

5. Addressing Poor Punctuality

- 5.1. Students who arrive late (between 15 and 45 minutes after the start of the lesson) or leave early will be expected to make personal study commitments to make up for the missed lesson content. For the first and second instance of lateness, the lecturer will usually challenge the student directly on the matter.

- 5.2. The Student Attendance Panel will consider a referred student's pattern of attendance since their registration, along with any other contextual information and will agree an appropriate course of action, which may include , suspension from studies or, as a last resort, withdrawal from the programme.
- 5.3. A student may use the School's Appeals Policy to challenge the decision of the Student Attendance Panel, where they have grounds to do so; the notification of the Student Attendance Panel's outcome will inform them of this recourse.

6. Addressing Non-attendance

- 6.1. Attendance reminders and warnings are triggered by successive instances of absence at timetabled classes or arrival 45 minutes or more after the start of a lesson or by a pattern of irregular attendance or lateness which effectively constitutes an inability to constructively engage with the course.
- 6.2. In tandem with this standard point, LSST has implemented the **Student Academic Performance Review system (SAPR)** (see Appendix). This proactive tripartite system RAG rates students based on percentage of attendance 4 weeks after the start of the semester and alerts specified services to take action and reach out to students with attendance below 30%.
- 6.3. Students will automatically be sent an Attendance Reminder from the Registry for unsatisfactory attendance **from the commencement of the semester on a regular basis** urging them to contact Student Support or their Personal Academic Tutor to discuss their attendance.
- 6.4. **Following the second week of unsatisfactory attendance**, students will be sent an Amber Warning notification..
- 6.5. Red warning is issued if no satisfactory communication is received from the student and no attendance improvement is evident.
- 6.6. Student will be served with a Notification of Suspension (Final Warning) if no supporting evidence is provided to support absences or no satisfactory attendance is recorded.
- 6.7. At this stage the student will be considered Suspended (A); the Registry liaise with the awarding body to suspend any further maintenance payments from the Student Loans Company (by submitting a Change of Circumstances notification to Student Loans Company to temporarily cease their payments).

NB: Students on suspension will normally be restricted from accessing the School's classes and learning resources until a decision has been reached about their continuance on the programme.

The School will, at its discretion, be flexible in lifting the suspension whilst the suspension period is ongoing where the student provides satisfactory evidence and justification for their nonattendance, and genuinely commits to attending their scheduled lessons. If attendance and engagement requirements are not met following the lifting on suspension, then the suspension will be re-imposed, and students' maintenance funding will once again cease. Student support services will be available to all students following their return to class.

Students should note that during any resumption of studies after a suspension they will still be considered Suspended (A) whilst their appeal is being considered, and that such a resumption does not guarantee a successful appeal outcome. A demonstrable commitment to study will however be considered favourably by the Appeal panel in reaching a decision about the student's continuance.

- 6.8. The School will specify appropriate actions to reintegrate the student within the course, in such a way that gives them the best chance of success (this may include deferral to a new intake). A set of learning objectives, which include attendance requirements, will be included within the student's PDP and SAPR with the understanding that these must be achieved for the student to continue on the programme.
- 6.9. Should a student fail to communicate with LSST during their suspension period the School will proceed with the next stage and withdraw the student,
- 6.10. Once the decision to withdraw the student is ratified by the Panel, the Registry will terminate the student's registration with the awarding body and move to withdraw any further financial support from the Student Loans Company (by submitting a Change of Circumstances notification to the Student Loans Company to withdraw financial support).
- 6.11. A final Notification of Withdrawal will be sent to the student, which will indicate any liability to repay student finance maintenance paid to them by the Student Loans Company from their last recorded attendance in class, up until the start of their suspension.
- 6.12. Students will be given the opportunity to appeal the withdrawal within 10 working days of the date of the Notification of Withdrawal using the School's Appeals procedure.
- 6.13. No refund will be available to students whose registration is terminated for poor attendance, or who withdraw after receiving a suspension for unauthorised absence.
- 6.14. Where applicable, a transcript detailing the student's achievements on the programme will be claimed from the awarding body and sent to the address the student has provided.

7. The Student Attendance and Academic Performance Panel

The Student Attendance and Academic Performance Panel convenes on a monthly basis to review students whose academic status is considered 'at risk' owing to poor attendance/punctuality, assignment submission or.

- 7.1. The Panel is additionally responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, as well as compliance with any external reporting protocol or service standards (such those of awarding bodies or the Student Loans Company).

8. Responsibilities

- 8.1. It is the responsibility of the lecturer/tutor to ensure that the School's electronic card system is working at the start of their lesson or that some form of paper register is taken and promptly submitted to Student Support after the lesson.

- 8.2. The Tutor or Lecturer will additionally be expected to:

- Start and finish classes on time and inform the students and Registry staff promptly of any changes (i.e. classroom move);
- Advise students of the School's Attendance & Academic Performance Monitoring Policy and Procedure;
- Accurately mark attendance, absence, lateness and early leavers if keeping a paper register, or ensure students use their card to clock-in when joining the lesson;
- Assist administration staff to make spot checks on attendance;
- Discuss punctuality with students if they are late for the first two occasions and refer the matter to the student's Personal Academic Tutor on the third occasion;
- Allow administration staff to carry out spot checks on SMS and attendance;
- Discuss non-submission of their work during SAPR;
- Conduct SAPR with the student at least once a semester and accurately record this on SMS.

- 8.3. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure they have registered their attendance using their student ID cards or by signing a paper register on their arrival at that lesson.

The Registry will be responsible for the completeness and accuracy of student attendance records, monitoring instances of lateness and sending warnings and reminders to students,

- 8.4. The Exams Department will be responsible for accurately providing information to the Registry Department regarding student academic performance.

- 8.5. The Student Finance Department will be responsible for accurately providing information to the Registry Department regarding any outstanding balances students have on their account due to non-payment of tuition fee.

9. Storage of Attendance Records

- 9.1. The hard copy of manual attendance register will be retained for 6 months. All manual registers will be transferred to electronic attendance. After the manual registers will be safely destroyed and electronic record will remain.
- 9.2. The detailed day-by-day record of student attendance will remain electronically on the student monitoring system for the duration of the course year. After the detailed record will be archived, the only overall percentage attendance will be visible.
- 9.3. Electronic records of students' attendance, and minutes of the Student Attendance Panel's meetings will be retained within the Registry for a period of six years.
- 9.4. Any evidence of extenuating personal or medical circumstances submitted to authorise a period of absence will be held securely within the Registry in accordance with the School's *Data Protection Policy*.

10. Review of this Policy

- 10.1. This policy will be reviewed annually or as required by changes in external regulations. Changes to it will be reviewed by the School's Executive Committee and ratified by the Board of Governors.

Appendix: Procedures for Authorising Periods of Absence

1. Self-Certification for absences of up to 5 days:

- 1.1. For illness-related absences of up to 5 days, no supporting evidence is required. Students should complete a Self-Certification Form on LSST Connect E-forms or submit it to their campus student support team, or to Registry using the following email address: attendance@lsst.ac
- 1.2. Self-Certification can be used during any one term. Further absences will need to be requested through the Leave of Absence procedure (see below).

2. Requesting a Leave of Absence for absences of over 5 days or multiple absences in a term:

- 2.1. A Leave of Absence covers both medical and non-medical circumstances. For non-medical Leave of Absence requests, students are required to state the type of leave they are applying for. Students should complete a Leave of Absence Form on LSST Connect E-forms or submit it to their campus student support team, or to Registry using the following email address: attendance@lsst.ac if a request is submitted without the form or the supporting evidence, the absence will be rejected.
- 2.2. Suitable medical documentary evidence includes:
 - A medical certificate,
 - A medical report,
 - A note from a hospital,
 - A formal notification of a hospital or clinic appointment
- 2.3. In case of illness, the note from the GP or a Hospital should also state the period during which the student will not be able to attend classes.
- 2.4. Other acceptable documentary evidence for excusing absence includes but not limited to:
 - A court letter,
 - A police crime report,
 - A death certificate or order of service (absence due to a funeral),
 - A death certificate in case of bereavement (only grandparents, parents, siblings, offspring or long-term partners will be included as a close member of family and not aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces or friends),
- 2.5. Statements from family, friends or a landlord will not be acceptable as the sole supporting evidence.

- 2.6. All evidence must be in English, or accompanied by an English translation from an accredited translator. The School cannot seek evidence on a student's behalf from a third party.
- 2.7. Where the absence falls at a time of assessment (assignment submissions, presentation deadlines or examinations) and the student wishes to request mitigating circumstances, the 'Mitigating Circumstances Request Form' should be used. Please refer to the School's *Mitigating Circumstances Policy* for more information.
- 2.8. The maximum length of leave which can be authorised by the attendance team is four weeks. However, leave requests for a greater duration than four weeks will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Academic Dean, Head of Student Life-Cycle, the Principal and Head of Registry.
- 2.9. Students will be expected to liaise with their Personal Academic Tutor to make arrangements to catch up with any work missed during their absence.
- 2.10. In certain cases, where this is considered to be in the best interest of the student (e.g. long-term illness preventing the student from attending the classes), the School reserves the right to withdraw the student from the course or transfer them to a different mode of study until their circumstances allow them to return to studies.

3. Maternity-related Absence

- 3.1. Students are advised to inform the Registry of the date they wish to start their maternity-related absence before the baby is due. This will allow sufficient time for the School to liaise with the student and make any necessary arrangements.
- 3.2. In line with the *Equality Challenge Unit's* recommendation, students are required to take at least two weeks compulsory maternity-related absence.
- 3.3. Students are allowed to decide when they start their maternity-related absence in agreement with the School. If students wish to, they will not be prevented from studying up to their due date.
- 3.4. The maximum length of maternity-related absence is four weeks. In exceptional circumstances, students may need to extend the length of maternity leave that they take beyond the standard time allowed, for example in cases of postnatal depression, serious illness or loss of a baby. The extended mattering-related leave would be processed as the Leave of Absence procedure described above.

4. Paternity-related Absence



- 4.1. If a student wants to take paternity-related absence, they are required to inform the Registry of their partner's pregnancy before the baby is due.
- 4.2. Students are allowed to take a maximum of two weeks paternity-related absence.

5. Validating Partners Attendance Monitoring procedures

Buckinghamshire New University - https://www.bucks.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/attendance_and_engagement_policy.pdf

University of West London - <https://www.uwl.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-regulations/student-attendance-and-engagement-monitoring>

De Montfort University - <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/dmu-students/academic-support-office/2021-22-student-regs/2-chapter-1-annexes.pdf>



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Head of Registry
Quality Unit

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Registrar

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Version 13.5

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Version 13.6

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Head of Registry

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Head of Registry

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