

**Student Engagement Policy
Summary Sheet:**

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| Policy Title: | |
| Student Engagement Policy | |
| Purpose of Policy | |
| To support the retention and progression of students by providing a mechanism that identifies and attempts to re-engage students who appear to be disengaged. | |
| Owner and Department: | |
| Academic Registrar | |
| Principal contact: | |
| Academic Registrar | |
| Dissemination and implementation plan: | |
| Via AQSC, SEF, Faculty Forums and Student Forums. | |
| Date of initial committee approval: | |
| Date of Senate approval: | 17th August 2023 |
| Date for implementation and cohorts to which it applies: | September 2023, for new and existing taught students |
| Proposed date of annual update: | June 2024 |
| Date of last annual update: | June 2022 |
| Proposed date of full review: | June 2025 |
| Date of last full review: | June 2023 |
| Version number and date: | 5.0 30 September 2023 |

1.0 About this Policy – Introduction, background, and context.

1.1 Staff at the University of Northampton (UON) design courses to create opportunities for active blended learning (abl). We view students as independent learners who make decisions about how to engage with learning opportunities.

1.2 Students who actively engage with all their learning opportunities:

- a. feel like they ‘belong’ and are part of the university community.
- b. are more likely to better understand their assessments (exams and coursework)
- c. can ask questions of the teaching staff to ensure they understand the topic and what they need to do for their self-directed and independent learning.
- d. and ultimately achieve higher results strengthening career opportunities.

1.3 Monitoring engagement and attendance is important to supporting student retention and achievement and minimising the risk of academic failure or withdrawal. It is also necessary to meet regulatory body requirements (see 4.2).

2.0 Purpose: what does this Policy do?

2.1 This Policy sets out what we expect of students, how we monitor and support engagement and what happens if academic engagement is not where it should be.

2.2 This Policy outlines UON’s approach to identifying students who may need additional help to effectively engage and to students who have chosen not to engage.

3.0 Who is this policy for – scope?

3.1 This Policy applies to you if you are a student enrolled directly on a UON course. It applies to all modes of study (e.g., full-time, part-time, via distance learning, or on an apprenticeship scheme) and all levels of study. It applies to all taught students.

3.2 If you are a Postgraduate Research Student then the [PGR Satisfactory Progress Policy](#) applies to you, and not this Student Engagement Policy

3.3 If you are studying with a UON partner organisation you will be considered under this policy unless the partner has an approved policy in place that is specific to them. Partner organisations may use different datasets for monitoring student engagement so will use a similar approach using the data available to them. Triggers for intervention, re-engagement, and escalation at partner institutions will be similar to this policy.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 As an enrolled student, you are responsible for ensuring appropriate levels of engagement with your studies. Where the University wants to support you in improving your engagement, you are also responsible for taking ownership of any interventions proposed. This includes using other relevant policies (such as Mitigating Circumstances Policy, Study Breaks Policy), and talking to relevant support teams for example, the Counselling and Mental Health team, Student Support and Advice Team.

4.2 Students and the University share responsibilities for meeting the expectations of regulatory bodies.

4.3 Regulatory bodies include:

- a. professional bodies that regulate courses such as the health professions, teacher education or law,
- b. funding bodies, including the Student Loans Company (SLC),
- c. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) if you are a sponsored student with a visa,
- d. Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for apprentices.

4.4 Further detail on responsibilities can be found at Appendix A

5.0 Engagement expectations

5.1 All students are expected to:

- a. attend timetabled sessions, physical and virtual.
- b. use online learning materials and complete online activities.
- c. submit assignments (summative and formative, i.e., assessments that have marks that count towards your module result and assessments that are to help you develop your knowledge and skills, and an opportunity for feedback).
- d. use library resources.
- e. attend Integrated Learner Support sessions.
- f. meet with your Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) at least once every semester.
- g. tell your PAT if something is affecting your engagement or if you are unable to attend timetabled sessions for a good reason, such as illness or a disability.
- h. read the Student Handbook and materials on your course NILE site.

5.2 For examples of 'low engagement' please see Appendix B at the end of this document.

5.3 If you are on a placement, engagement expectations and arrangements for contact and monitoring of students on placements are set out in the Student Handbook, with further detail on course NILE sites.

5.4 If you are a research student, engagement expectations for research degree students, including the definition of contact points for international research students, are set out in the Research Student Handbook.

5.5 If you are an apprentice, engagement expectations for apprentices are set out in apprentice course handbooks.

5.6 Further guidance on how monitoring supports compliance with the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for international students is available from the International Student Support Service (ISSS) Team

5.7 The University supports students to re-engage if a problem is identified.

5.8 Please be aware that a continued lack of engagement by a student will lead to them being withdrawn from the course.

5.9 The University understands that occasionally there will be good reason why you cannot attend a class or engage in your studies. You must contact your Programme team to tell them if you are unable to attend a class or engage in your studies. Depending on the length and reason for your absence, you may be directed towards support services which can help you manage your situation. If you are an international student on a visa, this can result in your absence being recorded as an 'authorised absence'.

6.0 Engagement measures

6.1 The University uses data to support this policy. Data sources include, but are not limited to:

- a. Attendance at timetabled sessions (physical and virtual).
- b. Information about when and for how long students log in to module and other NILE sites.
- c. Outcomes from your summative assessments.
- d. Use of security gates.
- e. MyEngagement, an overarching system that monitors student engagement by combining a range of data from university systems.

7.0 Triggers for intervention, re-engagement, and escalation.

7.1 If you have not completed the enrolment processes by the enrolment deadline publicised on the website, you will not be permitted to commence your studies. For new students your application will be withdrawn and for continuing students you will be withdrawn from your studies.

7.2 If you do complete enrolment or re-enrolment and do not engage with your studies by the end of the fourth week of the semester and/or your engagement is low, we will contact you and may decide to withdraw you.

7.3 A student can be withdrawn at any point in the academic year if there are reasonable grounds to do so, at the discretion of the Academic Registrar.

7.4 If you do not engage across all your assessments with the first semester of your course, you will be terminated for non-engagement

7.4 An International student can be withdrawn at any point in the academic year if their engagement falls below an acceptable level for three consecutive months. In these circumstances, the University of Northampton must withdraw sponsorship unless there are exceptional and evidenced reasons for the non-attendance. (e.g., illness).

7.5 International students, subject to visa controls, are required to comply with UKVI rules for attendance that may impose stricter requirements on them than UON policies. In such cases UKVI rules will take precedence over UON rules. It should also be noted that should UKVI engagement rules change then processes to deal with international student engagement will be changed to ensure they align with UKVI requirements. Any such changes will be communicated to international students at the time.

8.0 Appeal

8.1 You have the right to appeal a decision to withdraw you from your course for lack of engagement. You do this by submitting an appeal form within 10 working days of receiving the notification that you have been withdrawn.

8.2 You can appeal a decision to terminate your studies for non-submission of assessments following using the [Academic Appeals Policy](#). You have 10 working days from the date of your outcome letter to submit an appeal unless there is a specific reason for a late appeal.

8.3 International students should refer to [Appeals Against Termination Policy \(Student Route\)](#) for information about their sponsorship status.

8.4 Once any internal appeal process is exhausted, if you are not satisfied with the outcome, you have the right to request a review of your case by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIAHE).

9.0 Equality Analysis and Policy Monitoring

The University's Equality Impact Assessment procedure was used in the development of this policy. Student needs relating to protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) will be considered as far as possible in the application of this Policy.

10.0 Adjustments for Disabled Students based on student need.

10.1 The University supports disabled students as part of its anticipatory duty under the Equality Act 2010. Under the Act, disabled students are protected against discrimination arising from their disability and any failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments. An Academic Inclusion Report (AIR) is provided to students who register with the ASSIST and/or Mental Health Advisory Service (MHAS). The AIR is designed to support the University in ensuring it is meeting its obligations under the Equality Act to make reasonable adjustments where a student could otherwise experience disadvantage when compared to a nondisabled peer. An AIR is a document that provides information on a student's disability, mental health difficulty, health condition, Specific Learning Difference (e.g., dyslexia) or other additional need, the impact of their condition on their ability to undertake study, and details any proposed reasonable adjustments considered appropriate to supporting a student through their studies at the University.

10.2 You can find more information on ASSIST, AIR's, and Mental Health on this page under 'Student'. <https://www.northampton.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-management/management/university-policies-procedures-and-regulations/>

11.0 Data processing statement

11.1 The personal data that is collected for the purposes of this engagement and attendance monitoring policy will be processed in compliance with the relevant data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018). We believe it is within your interests to collect, use, and store this data, to help students maintain engagement with their course.

11.2 The personal data collected will be stored securely on University systems and will not be shared with any third parties. Students have the right to opt out, see this, or any other personal data, held about them by the University.

12.0 Record keeping and monitoring.

12.1 Records will be kept of the nature and outcome of appeals, as well as the protected characteristics of appellants, so that recurring issues or issues related to equality and diversity are identified and addressed. All records will be managed in line with current data protection legislation.

Appendix A – Responsibilities

| Who | Responsibilities |
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| Students | Students must engage with their programmes of study. Respond to communications sent under this Policy and attend meetings. They must also keep the University informed of any changes in circumstances that are making engagement difficult, including if they wish to withdraw, take a study break, or apply for mitigating circumstances. |
| Professional Services Teams | Working with My Engagement as primary data source, to identify students with low engagement, and to share information with PAT's. |
| Personal Academic Tutors | PATs should maintain regular contact with their students, ensuring any interactions are recorded via My Engagement. PATs should escalate concerns and work with students records and support teams to identify and support students who are not/low engagement. |
| Programme Leaders | PLs manage and oversee the student engagement on the programmes they manage including using relevant data sources for engagement, liaising with the Student Records Team. |
| International Student Support Services | <p>ISSS manages communications and processes related to the “Student Route” students in liaison with Module Leaders, Programme Leaders, and PATs.</p> <p>The team are responsible for reporting incidents where International students fail to adhere to UKVI requirements and Home Office Sponsorship Duties.</p> |
| Professional Services Teams | <p>Each team will support student engagement where confidentiality allows. Some examples might include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) where students have registered with ASSIST and/or Counselling and Mental Health 2) where a student may have withdrawn from university accommodation 3) where a student has applied for financial support 4) where a student may have sought academic advice. |

Appendix B – Examples of Low Engagement

| Example of low engagement | Information |
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| Not attending timetabled sessions (physical and virtual). | Attending your taught sessions is important to ensure you understand your learning, module outcomes and assignments. |
| Not utilising online learning materials provided by your Module Tutors. | Utilising the materials created by your module tutor enhances your learning and consolidates your understanding. |
| Not submitting assignments or submitting assignments late. | Non submission can affect your overall grade and ability to progress to the next part of your course. |
| Not utilising library resources – books, journal articles and other resources. | Utilising the materials provided by your module tutor via the library enhances your learning and consolidates your understanding. |
| Failing to engage with Integrated Learner Support sessions within your taught modules. | Engaging with specialist knowledge from Learning Development Tutors, Academic Librarians and Employability experts enhances your skills and opportunities. |
| Not attending or communicating with your Personal Academic Tutor. | The role of your PAT in your journey through university is essential so that the university can support you and enhance your experience. |