



Attendance & Engagement Policy

Policy no:	5.7	Version number	V02
Version date	May 2024	Next review	May 2025
Produced by	Compliance Committee	Approved by	Academic Board
Related policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions Policy • Academic Appeals Policy • Student Handbook 		
External reference points	<p>UK Quality Code UKSCQA/02 [March 2018] Expectations for Quality Core Practice 5 The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience. Related QAA Advice and Guidance: Theme 6: Monitoring and Evaluation Providers evaluate, analyse, and use the information generated from monitoring to learn and improve.</p>		

Contents

1.	<u>Background and Purpose</u>	3
2.	<u>Aim and Objectives</u>	3
3.	<u>Application</u>	4
4.	<u>Informing Students</u>	4
5.	<u>Student Engagement</u>	5
6.	<u>Monitoring & Support Process</u>	6
7.	<u>Attendance Flow Chart</u>	7
8.	<u>Punctuality</u>	8
9.	<u>Authorised Absence</u>	8
10.	<u>Extenuating Circumstances</u>	9
11.	<u>Consequences for Funded Students of Unauthorised Absence</u>	10
12.	<u>Appendices</u>	11
1.	<u>First warning letter</u>	11
2.	<u>Second Warning Letter</u>	12
3.	<u>Third Warning Letter</u>	13

1. Background and Purpose

Consistent attendance is crucial for effective teaching and learning. Faculty and Support Officers should stress the importance of attending classes, being engaged, and being punctual right from the student's induction at the Academy. Students must be aware that poor attendance and a lack of engagement can hinder their success. However, LCK Academy acknowledges the strong correlation between attendance and achievement and aims to assist students who struggle with attendance instead of penalizing them. The Academy is committed to supporting and engaging students who are not meeting attendance expectations. It expects students to make a reasonable effort to attend classes and offers assistance to ensure they can do so.

This policy outlines how the Academy ensures that students attend classes regularly and actively participate in learning. It describes how students are motivated to attend, how their attendance and participation are monitored and documented, and what actions the Academy takes if students miss classes or are not engaged. Additionally, the policy offers clear guidance to students and staff on how to manage situations where students cannot attend due to valid reasons, distinguishing between authorized and unauthorized absences.

2. Aim and Objectives

This policy and process aims to make sure that every relevant stakeholder is aware of the value of encouraging student attendance and engagement as well as what they can do to maintain the necessary level of engagement and attendance. This aim is achieved with the following objectives:

- Every relevant stakeholder is aware of their responsibility to guarantee that every student participates and engages with their Tutors in the course and/or attends sessions using the VLE's resources and submits their work on time.
- Every student receives comprehensive and consistent information, and they are motivated to participate in their classes, interact with their instructors, use resources on the VLE, and submit their assignments.
- Tutors accurately record every student's attendance, whether in person or online, which is monitored daily by Student Support, and Attendance Officers.
- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Programme Leader receive updates on overall attendance and engagement from the Tutor, who also has access to regular data on student attendance and participation.

- Students who take unauthorised absence are sent emails and/or texts warning them of the consequences if they do not attend classes.
- Every student is aware of the possible repercussions of non-attendance, failing to interact with Tutors, failing to use the VLE's resources, or not submitting assignments on time.
- Every student is aware of what extenuating circumstances are and how to seek permission to miss classes when they have valid reasons.

3. Application

This Attendance and Engagement Policy applies to all students enrolled in any of the Academy's courses. **Attendance** refers to students participating in any scheduled classes provided by LCKA, whether they are conducted online or in person. **Engagement** has a wider scope and includes various interactions such as attending unscheduled sessions, accessing online learning resources and materials on the VLE, and submitting assessments. This policy addresses attendance and student engagement across all Academy courses.

4. Informing Students

The attendance and engagement expectations for each course are outlined in the course information provided to students during the application and interview stages, such as the Student Handbook. During induction, the Head of Higher Education will ensure that students are familiar with these requirements. Throughout the course, Tutors and Student Support Officers should regularly emphasize the importance of attendance and engagement to students. Tutors and Student Support Officers are responsible for monitoring the attendance, engagement, and punctuality of individual students as part of the student support system. Tutors should also make students aware that poor attendance could impact their performance and lead to failure in assessments or exams if they do not attend regularly.

5. Student Engagement

Every student is expected to engage, which includes:

- Participation in in-person or online sessions.
- Interaction with course-related learning materials and online learning resources on the VLE.
- Submitting both formative and summative assessments
- Attending any other workshops or tutorials

Attendance and Student Support Officers will contact students who are not attending classes to re-engage them with the course. If a student is unable to attend due to illness or other circumstances affecting assessments or exams, they should inform their Tutor, or the Programme Leader. Students facing challenges due to illness or other reasons may request extensions for assignment submissions following the guidelines for extensions and extenuating circumstances in the Assessment Policy.

Students have the option to apply for interruption of studies, or to defer their course due to personal or medical reasons. Detailed information and guidance on these processes are available in the Interruption, Withdrawal & Study Break Policy.

Failure to attend, engage, or submit assessments may lead to the Academy withdrawing students from their course. This action could also affect their eligibility for student loan funding. For more details, refer to the section below on Consequences of Unauthorised Absence.

6. Monitoring & Support Process

Attendance in every class is required for all students. The Tutor keeps a record of every student's attendance. A student may be eligible for authorized absence if they can demonstrate that they have valid extenuating circumstances. Refer to the sections on authorized absence and qualifying situations below for more details. If a student is persistently absent without being granted authorized leave due to extenuating circumstances, the subsequent actions will be taken:

1. **Week Two:** Attendance Officer or Student Support Officer sends the student a warning email or text message to remind them to attend classes if they miss two weeks in a row without having authorized absence (see Appendix 1). The Attendance Officer or Student Support Officer calls the student to see what help the student may need and records the interactions. If the student subsequently attends but then fails to attend the following week, they will receive a second warning letter.
2. **Week Three:** If the student continues to miss classes for a third week without authorisation due to extenuating circumstances, the Attendance Officer or Student Support Officer sends a second warning (see Appendix 2) to the student. The Programme Leader is notified. If the student subsequently attends but then fails to attend the following week, they will receive a third warning letter.
3. **Week Four:** If the student continues to miss classes for a fourth week without authorisation due to extenuating circumstances, the Attendance Officer or Student Support Officer sends a third and final warning (see Appendix 2) to the student. The Registry Officer and Head of Higher Education are notified. If the student subsequently attends but then fails to attend the following week, they will be reported the Head of Higher Education and considered for withdrawal.
4. **Week Five:** The Head of Higher Education instructs the Registry officer to begin the process of withdrawing the student.

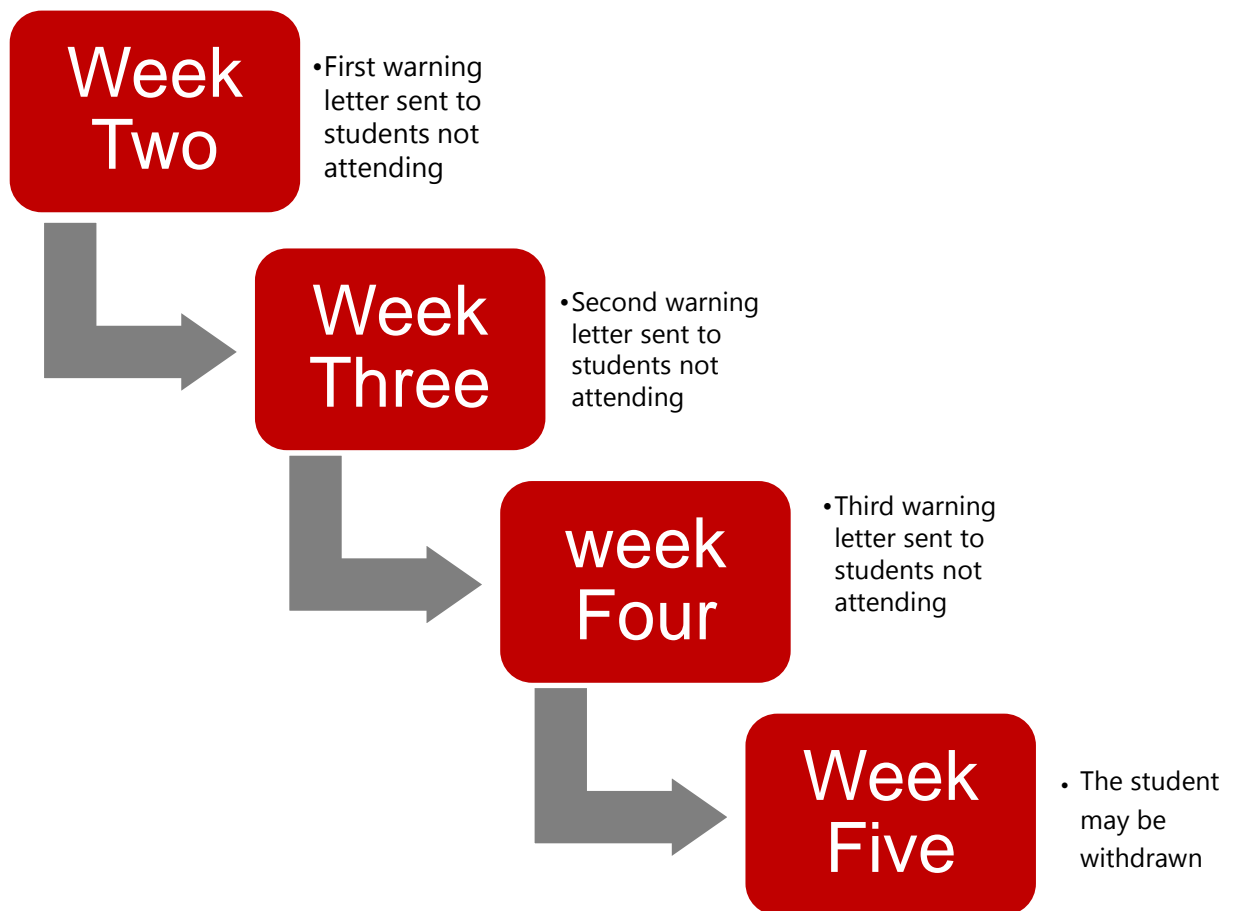
When deciding whether to withdraw a student, the following will be considered:

The amount of student activity on the VLE

The timely submissions of formative and summative assignments

Attendance in any additional workshops or tutorials

7. Attendance Flow Chart



8. Punctuality

Students should be on time for class to avoid interfering with other students' learning as well as their own. If there are health and safety concerns, students who arrive late risk being excluded from the class activities.

9. Authorised Absence

Short-term absences, typically lasting one week due to illness or other reasons, do not require formal authorisation. However, students should inform their Tutor or a Student Support Officer if they are unable to attend scheduled sessions or prearranged meetings.

Students have the option to request an interruption of studies or defer their course due to personal or medical reasons. Detailed guidance on these processes is available in the Interruption, Withdrawal & Study Break Policy.

Authorised absence is granted to students who provide a valid reason (extenuating circumstances) for missing scheduled classes for more than one week. Failure to attend without authorised absence can impact a student's record. The Academy actively evaluates all requests for authorised absence based on extenuating circumstances.

If a student expects to be absent for more than one week or is unexpectedly absent for that duration, such as due to illness, they should inform an Attendance Officer or Student Support Officer. These officers maintain attendance records for students, including records of authorised absences.

When contacting an Attendance Officer or Student Support Officer, students should explain the reason for their absence, which will be recorded in their student file as extenuating circumstances by the officer. Refer to the following section for examples of extenuating circumstances. Students may also be required to provide evidence for their extenuating circumstances, such as a doctor's note.

A senior staff member's dissatisfaction with the student's explanation or supporting documentation for an absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence on the student's attendance record. All new students receive clarification on this procedure during their induction, and it is detailed in both the Student Handbook and the Student Declaration that is signed upon enrolment. Upon induction, each student receives the following:

- Contact details of Student Support Officers
- Contact hours for their campus.
- Out-of-hours contact for their campus.
- Email addresses for all other relevant staff.

10. Extenuating Circumstances

Situations that hinder a student's capacity to participate and engage in Academy materials, attend classes, or submit assignments on time are referred to as extenuating circumstances. Staff and students can use the list below as a guide to what qualifies as an extenuating circumstance and can be used to excuse a student from class. This list is not exhaustive.

- Medical appointments that could not be made outside Academy hours.
- Attendance at a funeral
- Wedding of a close family member (but only for one day and students must not schedule their own wedding during term time)
- Driving test
- A meeting with a solicitor
- Genuine family emergencies
- Religious holidays
- Illness (evidenced by a medical certificate)

The following will normally be considered unacceptable as reasons for authorising absence:

- Holidays during term time
- Work-related activities
- Leisure activities
- Birthdays or family celebrations
- Babysitting
- Driving lessons

The list is not exhaustive and each request for authorised absence will be considered on its own merits by one or more of the following depending upon the circumstances:

- Registry Officer
- Head of Higher Education
- Programme Leader
- Head of Academy Advancement

11. Consequences for Funded Students of Unauthorised Absence

Students are accountable for maintaining satisfactory attendance and engagement throughout their course. Attendance and engagement data are utilized to determine if students in receipt of Student Loan funding meet the attendance requirements stipulated by the Student Loans Company (SLC). Failure to attend or engage meaningfully with studies, including submitting assignments, may lead to withdrawal from the course. Refer to the **Interruption, Withdrawal & Study Break Policy** for comprehensive information. In cases where a student is not attending or engaging, they may face withdrawal, and this action will be reported to the SLC, resulting in the cessation of payments.

Upon withdrawal from the course, a student may become responsible for repaying any student loan they have received. This includes potential liabilities for maintenance payments and tuition fees paid to the Academy or partner organisation, irrespective of course completion or qualification attainment.

Tuition fees are typically paid in instalments to the Academy or partner organization as follows:

- 25% of Tuition fee at the start of term one
- 25% of Tuition fee at the start of term two
- 50% of Tuition fee at the start of term three

The Student Loans Company (SLC) is legally obligated to recover any loan overpayments. In situations where a student has been withdrawn, loan overpayments may be retrieved from future student funding without adhering to standard repayment terms and conditions.

12. Appendices

1. First warning letter

Date

Student ID number:

Dear X

Attendance

Re: First Follow-up Attendance

I am writing to inform you that you have been absent from your classes.

When you join your class late or do not attend, you miss essential instructions and teaching given at the beginning of the lesson and during the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Absences can add up quickly and this in turn may affect your student finance payments.

At LCK Academy, we want to provide you with the best academic support that we can. If you require any ongoing support and assistance, please let me know and our student support team can contact you. If you would like to discuss your attendance and your classes, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please email attendance@lckacademy.org.uk

Yours sincerely,
Student Support/Attendance Officer
LCK Academy

2. Second Warning Letter

Date

Student ID number:

Dear X,

URGENT

RE: Second Warning

This is the second written warning about your attendance and this means that your attendance is now a serious matter. You have not been attending classes at the Academy since XXX. It has now been at least three weeks since you last attended your classes and you do not have authorised absence.

I wrote to you regarding your attendance on XXX asking you to contact me so that we could give you the support you need. However, you have not contacted me or returned any of my phone calls or emails.

Please be warned that failure to contact the Academy and missing your classes may affect your academic progress and your student finance.

If you need any support, we are here to help. We urge you to contact us so that our student support team can assist you as soon as possible.

Please contact me using the email or phone number below as soon as possible to discuss your absence. Please note that at LCK Academy we provide student support should you need it.

Email: attendance@lckacademy.org.uk

Phone:

3. Third Warning Letter

Student ID number:

Student Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Date:

Dear Student Name,

Attendance

RE: Third & Final Warning Letter

This is the third and final warning letter. It follows the second warning letter regarding your lack of engagement with the Academy. It is regrettable that you have not taken the opportunity to attend your classes or communicate with the attendance team to discuss any problems related to your attendance. **There may be serious consequences for your student finance if you do not respond to me by the deadline written below.**

This letter serves as notice that we will withdraw you from your course, and you will no longer be a registered student at LCK Academy if you do not respond to this letter by **Date and Time**. As you have been informed in previous warning letters, it is vital for your success on the course that you attend your classes regularly.

It is unfortunate that you have not been able to attend your classes and that we are now forced to withdraw you from the course. Please do not hesitate to contact me using the details below if you wish to discuss your time at LCK Academy, or the possibility of returning to study with us in the future. If I do not hear from you, I wish you all the best for the future.

Please note that we shall not attempt to contact you again about your attendance and if you do not contact us, we will automatically withdraw you from the course.

Yours truly,

Email: attendance@lckacademy.org.uk