

Attendance & Engagement Policy

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
2	Purpose	3
3	Scope	3
4	Aim and Objectives.....	4
5	Informing Students	5
6	Scholarship Bursary and Hardship Fund	5
7	Student Engagement	5
8	Student Risk Register	6
9	Punctuality	7
10	Authorised Absence	7
11	Mitigating Circumstances	8
12	Consequences of Unauthorised Absence	9
13	Monitoring and Support Process.....	10
14	Re-Engagement Process	12

1 Introduction

Oxford Business College (“The College”) recognizes the strong correlation between attendance, achievement, and successful student outcomes. Our priority is to support students who encounter difficulties with attendance, rather than penalize them. Therefore, the College is committed not to monitoring student attendance, but instead to identifying opportunities to support and engage students who do not meet attendance expectations.

The College expects students to exercise reasonable diligence in attending classes and provides support to help them succeed. Consistent and predictable attendance aids tutors in the planning and delivery of effective teaching and learning. Academic managers, tutors, and support staff should emphasise the importance of attendance, engagement, and punctuality to all students, starting from induction. Students should be made aware that failing to maintain good attendance and engagement may impact their academic success.

2 Purpose

This policy sets out the College’s approach to ensuring student attendance and engagement on all courses is maintained. The policy explains how students are encouraged to attend, how their attendance and engagement is monitored and reported on and what steps the College takes when students do not attend or engage. The policy also provides students and staff with clear information on what to do when they cannot attend due to mitigating circumstances, including the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence.

3 Scope

This attendance policy applies to all students enrolled in any of the College’s programmes.

3.1 Attendance

Attendance is defined as the student’s presence throughout the entire scheduled teaching or learning session, including remote attendance for online, live sessions.

Scheduled teaching and learning activity include:

- 3.1.1 Lectures, seminars, and tutorials
- 3.1.2 Project and dissertation supervision meetings
- 3.1.3 Practical classes, demonstrations, and workshops
- 3.1.4 Presentations and performances
- 3.1.5 External visits
- 3.1.6 Distance learning activities

3.2 Engagement

3.3 Engagement refers to the student's active participation in their studies and utilization of resources to support their learning, including:

- 3.3.1 Attendance of scheduled learning and teaching sessions and activities
- 3.3.2 Active contribution to personal and group tutorials, lectures, and seminars
- 3.3.3 Use of library facilities and other learning resources, including virtual learning resources (VLE)
- 3.3.4 Engagement with and submission of assessment tasks set
- 3.3.5 Attendance at examinations or time-constrained assessment activities
- 3.3.6 Responding in a timely manner to formal communications from the College, such as letters, emails, text messages and telephone calls.

4 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this policy and its procedures is to ensure that students and all relevant stakeholders understand the importance of supporting student attendance and engagement, as well as the actions required to maintain the expected levels of attendance and engagement.

4.1 This aim is achieved through key objectives

- 4.1.1 All stakeholders know their role in ensuring that all students attend sessions and/or engage with their course Tutors and materials on the VLE and submit their assignments.
- 4.1.2 Ensuring all stakeholders understand their roles in supporting students' attendance and engagement. Encouraging students to attend scheduled sessions, actively engage with course tutors and materials on VLE, and submit assignments punctually.
- 4.1.3 All students are fully and regularly informed and encouraged to attend their classes and engage with their course tutors, materials on the VLE and submit their assignments.
- 4.1.4 All student attendance is accurately recorded by tutors, checked, and monitored by the relevant Student Support Officers, Attendance Officer, or Registry Officer daily.
- 4.1.5 Providing regular updates on student attendance and engagement to the Programme Leader and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), including weekly reports on overall attendance and engagement within individual programs.
- 4.1.6 Tutors and Student Support or Attendance Officers can monitor the daily attendance and engagement of individual students.
- 4.1.7 Students receive regular reminders and subsequent warnings by email and/or text for unauthorised absences.
- 4.1.8 A risk register of all students is maintained so that students who are considered

substantial risk are contacted by relevant staff to motivate and support them to attend their scheduled classes and to engage with course Tutors, materials on the course VLE and to submit their assignments by the deadlines.

- 4.1.9 All students understand the potential consequences of failing to attend their scheduled classes, to engage with the course tutors, materials on the VLE or to submit their assignments.
- 4.1.10 All students understand what constitutes mitigating circumstances and know how to apply for authorised absences when they have genuine mitigating circumstances.
- 4.1.11 The College's attendance and engagement policy and procedures are transparent and in line with the expectations of the College's franchise partners and awarding organisations as well as the UK Quality Code.

5 Informing Students

Any attendance and engagement requirements for a course are outlined in the course information provided to students during the application and interview process, including documents such as the Course Outline or Student Handbook. The Programme Leader should ensure that students are familiar with these requirements during the induction process. Tutors and support staff should also consistently remind students of the importance of attendance and engagement throughout the course.

Individual student attendance, engagement, and punctuality patterns should be monitored by Tutors, the Student Support team, the Attendance Team, and the Programme Leader as part of regular risk assessments within the student support system. Tutors should inform students that poor attendance is likely to impact their academic performance and may lead to failure in assessments or examinations if they do not attend.

6. Scholarship Bursary and Hardship Fund

Meeting the attendance requirement for a course is a condition for any assistance a student receives from the Scholarship, Bursary, or Hardship Fund. Failure to maintain good attendance may result in the withdrawal of these benefits. Students who fail to attend classes may be required to repay any Hardship Funds they have received.

7 Student Engagement

When students are unable to attend classes for authorised reasons, their engagement will be monitored through various alternative engagement indicators. These indicators include access to online study materials provided via the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), such as

Blackboard or OBC Moodle, along with the utilization of library resources and engagement in assessment activities, including the submission of summative assignments.

7.1 Monitoring Engagement by Programme

The table below provides an overview of methods by which student engagement can be tracked for each program (this list is not exhaustive).

Please note that, based on the attendance and engagement policies of our partner universities, methods for monitoring engagement indicators may vary. Refer to the following links for specific engagement policies from each partner institution:

7.1.1 [UWL Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy and Procedure](#)

7.1.2 [BNU Attendance and Engagement Policy](#)

7.1.3 [NCD Student Engagement in Learning Policy](#)

7.1.4 [RUL General Academic Regulations. Academic Progress and Engagement Monitoring](#)

HEI Partner University/College	Attendance	VLE or Library Activity	Assessment Activity
University of West London (UWL)	◆	◆	◆
Buckinghamshire New University (BNU)	◆	◆	◆
Ravensbourne University London (RUL)	◆	◆	◆
New College Durham (NCD)	◆	◆	◆

8 Student Risk Register

Student attendance, engagement with the College, interaction with learning resources, combined with assignment submissions, are systematically compiled into a Student Risk Register.

This register serves multiple purposes:

8.1 Early Identification of At-Risk Students: It enables the identification of students who may be at risk of underperforming or failing and who may require additional support to succeed in their studies.

8.2 Promotion of Effective Study Behaviours: The register helps to highlight successful study patterns and behaviours associated with strong academic performance, providing valuable insights to support student success.

8.3 Compliance Monitoring: Attendance and engagement data from the Student Risk Register is also used to verify that students are meeting the attendance criteria required by the College, HEI Partner University and Student Loans Company (SLC).

If a student does not meet the required standards of attendance or engagement, they may be subject to withdrawal from their course. This may also result in the termination of Student Loans Company (SLC) funding, as outlined in the section titled *Consequences of Unauthorised Absence*.

In cases where students are not attending, engaging with online learning resources, or submitting assignments, Student Support Officers will contact them to encourage their re-engagement and provide additional support, as necessary. This process is detailed further in *the Monitoring and Support Process section*.

Staff responsible for monitoring student attendance and engagement will ensure that the Student Risk Register is updated regularly to reflect each student's status. Students may request temporary leave or an Interruption of Studies (IoS) for personal or medical reasons; guidance on these processes varies according to the policies of each Partner University. For specific advice, students should consult their Programme Leader or the Registry. For information on these processes, please refer to the OBC Interruption, Withdrawal & Study Break Policy, which should be read in conjunction with the relevant HEI Partner University policies.

The College reserves the right to withdraw students from their program if they fail to meet attendance, engagement, and assessment submission requirements. Such actions may have implications for their student loan funding liability. For further details, please refer to the section *Consequences of Unauthorised Absence*.

9 Punctuality

Punctual attendance is essential for students, both to support their own learning and to avoid disrupting the learning experience of others. In cases where students arrive late to practical sessions, they may be unable to join if health and safety considerations are involved.

For students studying on BNU Programmes, these regulations consider a student late after 15 minutes of the scheduled start time of the lesson. Students who are more than 30 minutes late will be marked as authorised absent for that scheduled teaching session.

10 Authorised Absence

- 10.1** Short-term absences of up to one week due to illness or other good reasons do not require formal authorisation. However, students are encouraged to inform their Tutor, Student Support Officer, or Attendance Officer if they are unable to attend scheduled sessions or prearranged individual meetings. Students may apply for an Interruption of Studies in accordance with the policies of the relevant HEI Partner University.
- 10.2** Authorised absence may be granted to a student who provides a valid and sufficient reason for being unable to attend scheduled classes for more than one week. If a student fails to attend without receiving authorised absence, their attendance record will be impacted. The College closely monitors all applications for authorised absence based on mitigating circumstances and ensures that the Student Risk Register is updated accordingly to reflect any changes in the student's status.
- 10.3** If a student expects to be absent for more than one week or has been unexpectedly absent for more than one week—such as in the case of illness—they must notify their Student Support or Attendance Officer as soon as possible. The Attendance Office is responsible for maintaining accurate records of student attendance, including authorised absences.
- 10.4** When notifying the Student Support or Attendance Officer via email or text, students must provide an apparent reason for their absence. This information will be recorded in the student's records as mitigating circumstances. For further details on examples of mitigating circumstances, please refer to the section below. Students may be required to submit supporting evidence of their mitigating circumstances.
- 10.5** For absences exceeding two weeks, the Student Support or Attendance Officer must obtain approval for the authorised absence from one of the senior staff members listed below or discuss Interruption of Studies (IoS) option with Programme Leader.

10.6 Programme Leader or Designated Person

If a senior member of staff is not satisfied with the reasons or evidence provided for a student's absence, the absence will be considered unauthorised, and this will be reflected in the student's attendance record. This procedure is clearly communicated to all students during their induction.

As part of the induction process, every student is provided with the following essential information: the contact details of Student Support or Attendance Officers, the contact hours for their respective campus, and the contact details of all other relevant staff members.

11 Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating circumstances refer to circumstances that significantly impact a student's ability to

attend scheduled lessons, engage with college materials, or submit assignments by the required deadlines. The following is a guide for staff and students on what may be considered valid mitigating circumstances for authorising student absences:

11.1 Acceptable mitigating circumstances may include:

11.2 Medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside college hours

11.3 Attendance at a funeral

11.4 Attendance at the wedding of a close family member (limited to one day; students should not schedule their own wedding during term time)

11.5 A driving test

11.6 A meeting with a solicitor

11.7 Genuine family emergencies

11.8 Religious holidays

11.9 Illness (supported by a medical certificate)

11.10 The following are considered unacceptable reasons for authorising absence:

11.11 Holidays during term time

11.12 Work-related activities

11.13 Leisure activities

11.14 Birthdays or family celebrations

11.15 Babysitting responsibilities

12 Driving lessons

This list is not exhaustive. Each request for authorised absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and the decision will be made by the Programme Leader, Attendance Lead, Registrar, or other designated staff members.

13 Consequences of Unauthorised Absence

Students are responsible for maintaining satisfactory attendance and engagement throughout their course. Attendance and engagement data are used to assess whether students meet the attendance requirements set by the College, HEI Partner University or College, or Student Loans Company (SLC). Failure to attend and engage in their studies, which includes submitting assignments, may result in withdrawal from the course.

If a student is not attending or engaging at the time of a census, they may be withdrawn, and

this will be reported to the SLC, leading to the cessation of any associated payments. It is important for students to remain actively engaged with their studies to avoid any disruption to their academic progression and funding.

If a student is withdrawn from their course, they may become liable for the repayment of any student loan they have received. This includes potential liability for maintenance payments and any fees paid to their university or college, regardless of whether they complete their course or obtain a qualification.

Fees for tuition are paid to the university or college in the following instalments:

13.1 At the start of term 1: 25% of Tuition fee

13.2 At the start of term 2: 25% of Tuition fee

13.3 At the start of term 3: 50% of Tuition fee

In accordance with government regulations, the Student Loans Company (SLC) has a legal obligation to recover any loan overpayments. In cases where a student has been withdrawn, overpayments may be recovered from any future student funding the individual may receive. These overpayments are not subject to the standard repayment terms and conditions.

14 Monitoring and Support Process

14.1 Students are required to attend all scheduled classes. Attendance is recorded daily by the Tutor via the College's student management system, Tribal EBS. In the event of mitigating circumstances, students may be granted authorised absence. Please refer to the relevant sections on authorised absence and mitigating circumstances for further guidance.

In accordance with the attendance and engagement policies of our partner universities, the methods for monitoring student engagement may vary. Please refer to the following links for the specific engagement policies from each partner institution:

14.2 [UWL Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy and Procedure](#)

14.3 [NCD Student Engagement in Learning Policy](#)

14.4 [RUL General Academic Regulations. Academic Progress and Engagement Monitoring](#)

14.5 [BNU Attendance and Engagement Policy](#)

The attendance monitoring procedure as approved and agreed with the HEI Partner University BNU, as outlined below will apply for students enrolled in **BNU programmes**. If a student consistently fails to attend scheduled sessions without an authorised absence or valid mitigating circumstances.

14.6 Step 1: Two Consecutive Weeks of Non-Attendance – Initial Outreach and Support

If a student fails to attend their scheduled classes for two consecutive weeks without an

authorised absence, a Student Support Officer will contact the student via a follow-up phone call and SMS. The communication will remind the student of the importance of attending classes. If the student is experiencing difficulties with engagement, the Student Support Officer may refer them to the appropriate support services or the College Counsellor for further assistance. The Student Support Officer will also document all attempts to contact the student in the central Registry records, specifically within the Student Risk Register.

14.7 Step 2 Three Consecutive Weeks of Non-Attendance – Issuance of First Warning Letter

The Student Support will repeat the process monitoring for improvements in attendance to scheduled teaching. If the student fails to attend for **three consecutive weeks** without being granted authorised absence, the Student Support Officer will instruct the Attendance Lead or Registry Officer to issue the **first warning letter** via email.

14.8 Step 3 Four Consecutive Weeks of Non-Attendance – Issuance of Second Warning Letter

If a student fails to attend scheduled teaching for four consecutive weeks without an authorised absence, the Student Support Officer will liaise with the Programme Coordinator to assess whether the student is engaging with the course through alternative means as outlined in section 3.

14.9 If the student is still engaging with the course, a re-engagement confirmation letter should be sent, emphasising the importance of attending scheduled teaching.

14.10 If the student is not engaging with the programme, the Student Support Officer will contact the student by phone to assess the support they may need. If the student fails to respond or provide an acceptable explanation, the Student Support Officer will request the Attendance Lead or Registry Officer to issue a second warning letter to the student. The Student Support Officer will also update the Student Risk Register and inform the Programme Leader (or designated person) of the student's failure to attend four consecutive weeks of classes and engagement opportunities.

14.11 Step 4 Five Consecutive Weeks of Non-Attendance – Final Warning and One Week for Response.

The Student Support Officer will continue to contact the student to follow up on their attendance. If there is no attendance and no mitigating circumstances granted by the fifth consecutive week, the Student Support Officer will instruct the Attendance Lead or Registry Officer to issue a third and final warning letter. This letter will provide the student with an opportunity to respond within ten days, advising them that withdrawal from the programme will be recommended if they do not make contact within this time limit. Copies of the letter will be sent to the Programme Coordinator and Programme Leader. The Student Support Officer

will also update the Student Risk Register accordingly.

14.12 Step 5 Seventh Consecutive Week – Withdrawal Process Initiation

If the student fails to respond to the final warning or does not re-engage by the seventh consecutive week, the Registry Officer will initiate the withdrawal process.

The Registry Officer will liaise with the Programme Leader to make a final decision regarding the student's withdrawal. Once the decision is approved by the Programme Leader, the relevant withdrawal form will be completed and submitted to the HEI Partner for approval. Upon receiving approval from the HEI Partner, the student's record will be updated by the Registry Officer, and a **formal withdrawal confirmation email** will be sent to the student.

15 Re-Engagement Process

If a student attends and engages or re-engages, as outlined in Section 3, at any stage during the monitoring process, the monitoring and support process will be reset, and the student will return to the initial stage of the process.

By following these steps, Oxford Business College aims to provide a structured and supportive approach to managing attendance and engagement issues. Our goal is to help students overcome challenges and succeed in their academic journey. We are here to provide the necessary support and resources every step of the way.