

# Student Attendance and Engagement Policy and Procedure

---

Document Title: Student Attendance and Engagement Policy			
Version No.	2.0	Policy Owner	Student Learning & Academic Registry
Superseded Version	1.3	Author Role Title	Academic Registrar
Approval Date	22.11.2021	Approved By	Academic Board
Effective Date	22.11.2021	Review Date	By 16.09.22

<b>STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Purpose of the Policy.....	1
3. Scope.....	2
4 Policy Statement.....	2
4.1 All Students .....	2
4.2 Taught Students (Undergraduate and Postgraduate).....	3
4.3 Research Students .....	4
4.4 Online Learning Students .....	5
4.5 Students on Placement.....	5
5. Roles & Responsibilities .....	6
6 Extraordinary Circumstances.....	6
7. Policy Implementation .....	7
8. Related Documents .....	8
9. Other .....	8
10. Dissemination .....	8
<b>STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE .....</b>	<b>9</b>
1. Structure of the Procedure .....	9
2. Stages of the Procedure.....	9
3. Stage 1: Informal Guidance and Support.....	9
4. Stage 2: Formal Warning.....	10
5. Stage 3: Formal Review.....	10
6. Appeal Process.....	11
<b>APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PRINCIPLES .....</b>	<b>14</b>
1 Advice and Guidance .....	14
2. Documentation/Data Protection .....	14
3. Monitoring and Evaluation.....	15
4. Communication.....	15
5. Students with Health Conditions.....	15
6. Fair Treatment.....	15
7. Attendance at Meetings.....	15
8. Recording of Proceedings .....	16
9. Location of Meetings .....	16
10. External Review .....	16
<b>APPENDIX 2: ‘PRESUMED WITHDRAWN’ STUDENTS.....</b>	<b>17</b>

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Policy and associated Procedure provide an institutional framework for monitoring student attendance and engagement, and outlines the expectations which the University has of all students, in alignment with the Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Regulations.
- 1.2 Teesside University students are expected to be independent learners and as such are active participants in their own learning and must take responsibility for achieving their learning outcomes and potential. However, there is normally a correlation between attendance and assessment performance, retention and progression. Monitoring student attendance and engagement enables the University to provide support and guidance to those students who are identified as struggling, so that we can support student progression, attainment and wellbeing.
- 1.3 This Policy recognises that the monitoring of attendance and engagement and subsequent interventions are a holistic University activity, and require the expertise of Schools, Collaborative Partners and central Departments.
- 1.4 This Policy and associated Procedure is aligned with the Teesside 2025 vision through supporting the delivery of an outstanding student and learning experience.
- 1.5 This Policy applies to all undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students, to support student success and also to ensure effective reporting requirements to external bodies and agencies, e.g., government funding organisations such as the Student Finance England, third party sponsors, Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

### **2. Purpose of the Policy**

- 2.1 The aim of this Policy and associated Procedure, is to provide a consistent institutional approach and framework to the monitoring of attendance and engagement, which ensures that the University is compliant with external regulatory requirements and supports student wellbeing and the learning experience.
- 2.2 Robust attendance and engagement monitoring will support timely interventions to provide effective student support and maximise the potential for individual students to succeed.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1 This Policy and associated Procedure apply to all students studying on Teesside University courses, including postgraduate research students. Students undertaking a University affiliated course at another institution (Collaborative Partner) may be subject to the attendance monitoring process applicable at that institution. In such cases, any student who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Collaborative Partner has the right to submit an appeal to the University. Alternatively, where it has been determined that a Collaborative Partner is following this Policy and Procedure, the relevant students will be informed in their Course Handbook and at induction.
- 3.2 This Policy recognises that some courses may have different attendance requirements due to, for example, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) Regulations. Where variations have been agreed, these will be included within relevant Course Handbooks and communicated to students during induction.
- 3.3 Concerns relating to the operation of this process must be considered in accordance with the Appeal process. Concerns which fall under the remit of this process cannot be investigated using the University's Complaints Policy and Procedure.
- 3.4 Reference to a particular University role may include reference to an equivalent Collaborative Partner role.
- 3.5 The University will, wherever possible, seek to adhere to the time limits outlined in the accompanying Procedure. In cases where there are circumstances which require deviation from the specified time limits, students will be advised of the reasons for this by a relevant member of staff. Reference to timescales in the accompanying Procedure relate to calendar days, excluding the Christmas closure period of the University and statutory bank holidays.
- 3.6 Processes outlined in this Policy and associated Procedure describe the University's internal processes. Whilst seeking to ensure consistency of approach and application, the University reserves the right to vary the precise details of the procedure applied to the circumstances of a particular case, for example to comply with requests for reasonable adjustments for those students who have a disability and/or learning difficulty.

## **4 Policy Statement**

### **4.1 All Students**

- 4.1.1 Students are expected to attend all scheduled learning and teaching or placement activities, unless they have valid mitigating reasons for not doing so. Learning and teaching activities may take a variety of forms, including lectures, seminars, workshops and laboratory sessions.

- 4.1.2 Students must engage with the attendance registration mechanisms in place within their location of study. Students must not register attendance on behalf of another student.
- 4.1.3 Students must comply with any course specific attendance standards where specified by professional statutory and regulatory bodies.
- 4.1.4 The University recognises that there may be a range of circumstances which impact upon the ability of a student to attend including, but not limited to, disability, illness, bereavement and adverse family circumstances. Students are responsible for reporting instances of non-attendance through the appropriate mechanisms in a timely manner. These mechanisms will be communicated to students through their Course Handbook and online via the VLE platform.
- 4.1.5 Students must make their own arrangements to catch-up with classes and learning activities missed by any absences.
- 4.1.6 Where non-attendance due to illness extends over 7 calendar days, a medical note may be requested.
- 4.1.7 The University recognises that students are independent adult learners who may be able to succeed in their course notwithstanding some absence from scheduled learning and teaching or placement activities.
- 4.1.8 The University reserves the right to withdraw a student from their course where the level of attendance and engagement is considered to be detrimental to the student's progression and where students have failed to engage in the support and guidance offered.

## **4.2 Taught Students (Undergraduate and Postgraduate)**

- 4.2.1 Attendance will be monitored on an ongoing basis, with particular emphasis placed on key review points, as outlined in paragraph 4.2.5.
- 4.2.2 Students studying their dissertation or an internal project on an AP course do not have a formally defined timetable of learning and teaching sessions. These students, whether full or part time must participate in at least one supervisory interaction per month. Students will be regularly monitored by the University/Collaborative Partner in accordance with expectations outlined by their supervisor. Students are expected to attend all scheduled commitments as agreed with their supervisor and engage with, and submit, any associated work in accordance with agreed deadlines.
- 4.2.3 Where a student misses all teaching activities within a week without explanation, the University may use alternative methods to ascertain levels of engagement, e.g. VLE logins, Library loans etc. If attendance and engagement is considered to be unsatisfactory the student will be

contacted in accordance with the associated Procedure to clarify the situation and where necessary offered advice and support.

- 4.2.4 In cases where poor attendance and engagement persists, Stage 1 of the associated Procedure will be initiated and an informal intervention involving the relevant School/Collaborative Partner, with support from Student and Library Services as necessary will be put in place. The purpose of the intervention will be to ensure that the student receives the appropriate support and guidance to enable them to succeed in their studies.
- 4.2.5 Formal reviews will be undertaken by a School/Collaborative Partner in Weeks 3, 5, and 8 of each semester to monitor attendance on an ongoing basis.
- 4.2.6 Attendance patterns of between 79% and 50% at each review point will trigger a review by the University/Collaborative Partner, usually by the Personal Tutor or equivalent. This review will have the aim of encouraging students to increase their attendance and to ascertain any barriers to this, signposting to relevant support services as necessary.
- 4.2.7 Attendance patterns of less than 50% at each review point will trigger an intervention by the University/Collaborative Partner. Where appropriate, the intervention may be conducted in partnership with Student and Library Services. This review will have the aim of identifying students who are at particular risk of poor progression, with relevant interventions put in place to proactively support engagement in their studies.
- 4.2.8 When a student does not engage with the University/Collaborative Partner from the start of each Semester, they may be judged to be “presumed withdrawn”. Under these circumstances, the student will be contacted, asking them to contact the University to enable support and guidance to be offered. If the student does not respond an assessment will be made to determine if the students is “presumed withdrawn” (see Appendix 2).
- 4.2.9 In addition, a student may request support in addressing the reasons for non-attendance at any point via, for example, their Personal Tutor, Retention Support Officer or Student and Library Services.

### **4.3 UKVI Sponsored Students (below RQF6)**

- 4.3.1 For sponsored students on courses below RQF6, in addition to the requirements in paragraph 4 above, review will be undertaken monthly. Where attendance patterns are found to be less than 85% of classroom-based study in any given month, an intervention (as per paragraph 4.2.7) is required. The record must be annotated with the reason for the non-attendance and the steps being taken to improve the student’s attendance.

4.3.2 Where a student's attendance falls below 70% for three consecutive months, the University will withdraw sponsorship due to lack of academic engagement unless there are exceptional and evidenced reasons for the non-attendance.

#### **4.4 Research Students**

4.4.1 Research students do not have a formally defined timetable of learning and teaching sessions. Research students, whether full or part time must participate in at least one supervisory interaction per month from which their supervisor is able to confirm their satisfactory engagement and progression.

4.4.2 Records will be used to capture formally structured interactions between students and supervisors. Records will be kept using the student's online E-Vision record. Each interaction between supervisor and students should be captured using an online E-Vision record. E-vision records permit meeting notes to be added to the dated event either in free-text or by uploading documents or scanned paper records.

4.4.3 A central programme of Induction will be provided for all newly enrolled research students in the first year of their enrolment. The Induction programme of generic research training is mandatory. These components, including dates and times of required attendance, are specified at the start of the student's Registration. Failure to complete mandatory training in the first year of enrolment will result in academic progress being found unsatisfactory at Annual Review.

4.4.4 Students admitted to full-time research degree study and, in particular, those on University funded scholarships, are normally expected to live within a reasonable travelling distance of the University campus in order for them to engage fully with supervision and training and to make a contribution to the research culture of the University.

#### **4.5 Online Learning Students**

4.5.1 Students studying solely through online learning may be taught through synchronous and/or asynchronous modes of delivery. Whilst students should attend all scheduled online teaching activities, course engagement will also be monitored through other methods relating to activities on the VLE platform. Students will be advised of how their engagement will be monitored both during their induction and throughout their studies.

#### **4.6 Students on Placement**

4.6.1 Students undertaking placements or related work-based activities will be regularly monitored by the University/Collaborative Partner and placement provider in accordance with expectations outlined by the University and the placement provider. . Students are expected to

respond to all correspondence from the University and placement provider, a schedule of the minimum requirements will be outlined prior to the placement commencing. Students are expected to attend all scheduled commitments as agreed with the placement provider and the University. Students are expected to engage with, and submit, any associated work in accordance with agreed deadlines. Students are expected to report any anticipated or actual absences to both the University/Collaborative Partner and placement provider.

#### 4.6.1 Students' Union Sabbatical Officer

A UKVI Sponsored Student is permitted to undertake a full time salaried elected executive union position. The student is required to academically interrupt their studies for the duration of the post. During the period of interruption, the student is not studying academically, therefore not subject to the University's attendance monitoring requirements for their course. The student however, remains sponsored by the University, therefore required to engage with a monthly interaction with LGS UKVI Compliance.

## 5. Roles & Responsibilities

### 5.1 The student is responsible for:

- (a) Checking their University email account regularly, as this is the primary method of communication from the University
- (b) Engaging with their StREAM profile to understand their engagement in learning.
- (c) Attending all learning and teaching activities, unless they have valid mitigating reasons for not doing so.
- (d) Engaging fully with learning and teaching activities, including arriving punctually and remaining for the duration of the session.
- (e) Notifying their School/Collaborative Partner Office, in a timely manner, of absence due to sickness, where possible and practical to do so.
- (f) Notifying their School/Collaborative Partner of other periods of anticipated absence. In some circumstances, this may constitute an interruption of studies.
- (g) Where a student is undertaking a work placement or internship, the student must notify both their School/Collaborative Partner and placement/internship provider in the event of absence.
- (h) If they are unable to attend due to religious observance, the student must liaise with the Module Leader at the earliest opportunity in advance of the religious observance to agree an alternative approach to engagement in the learning experience.
- (i) Familiarising themselves with the content of this Policy and Procedure.

### 5.2 The relevant School/Collaborative Partner is responsible for:

- (a) encouraging a culture of student attendance and engagement, including providing appropriate information and guidance throughout the student journey and encouraging student engagement with appropriate attendance registration and engagement processes.



- (b) monitoring the attendance and engagement of individual students and identifying and implementing interventions, where required
  - (c) implementing procedures for the monitoring of attendance and engagement in compliance with this Policy and associated Procedure.
- 5.3 Responsibilities pertaining to student placement activity for students, Academic supervisors and placement providers will be outlined in advance of the placement commencing within the Student Placement Tripartite Agreement and associated Learning Agreement.

## **6 Extraordinary Circumstances**

- 6.1 In extraordinary circumstances, where it is not possible to record student attendance (e.g. due to part or all of the campus being inaccessible to students), a proxy measure for engagement in online learning will be utilised. The proxy measure will consist of a minimum benchmark of one VLE login per scheduled teaching week. The University/Collaborative Partners will liaise with students who fail to meet this benchmark to identify whether any support should be put in place to ensure that they can achieve success. Alternative monitoring arrangements may be enacted for students on placement.

## **7. Policy Implementation**

- 7.1 Upon enrolment, students accept the University's 'Student Terms and Conditions' for their year of entry. In doing so, students agree to conform to the University's Student Regulations, including the Student Disciplinary Regulations and the Student Code of Conduct.
- 7.2 Section 3.9 of the Student Code of Conduct states: '*Students must attend and fully engage in all learning activities and adhere to all external body requirements (e.g. attendance requirements set by UKVI)*'. (Available at <http://www.tees.ac.uk/studentregulations>)
- 7.3 Sections 3.16 of the Assessment Regulations – Foundation Degree Awards, Assessment Regulations – Undergraduate Degree Awards, and Assessment Regulations – Taught Masters Level Awards state: '*A student can withdraw from their course of study, or, where it is clear that he/she is no longer attending or engaging with their studies, arrangements will be made for their withdrawal from the award and their enrolment with the University terminated. A student must advise the University in writing if they wish to withdraw from their course of study. Students who withdraw from their course of study, or whose enrolment is terminated by the University, will be considered for an intermediate award at the next meeting of the course's Progression and Award Board.*' (Available at <http://www.tees.ac.uk/studentregulations>)
- 7.4 Deliberate misuse of attendance registration and engagement systems and processes with the aim of falsifying attendance and/or engagement records will be treated seriously and may result in disciplinary action, under the University's Student Disciplinary Regulations.
- 7.5 Wherever possible, the University will seek to understand the reasons for non-compliance with this Policy, and ensure appropriate support and guidance is

put in place.

- 7.6 Failure to comply with the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy and associated Procedure may trigger the student being withdrawn due to their failure to comply.
- 7.7 Any relevant third parties, including an employer or the Student Loan Company, may be informed about ongoing unsatisfactory attendance, or of any subsequent withdrawal.
- 7.8 Should a student withdraw partway through this process, prior to any final outcome, the Dean of the relevant School/Collaborative Partner may choose not to proceed with the process outlined in the accompanying Procedure. The University may however place a note on the student's record, which may be referred to in any future engagement. Such information will be retained in line with the University's Record Retention Schedule.

## **8. Related Documents**

- 8.1 The following documents should be read in conjunction with this Policy:
  - a) Teesside University Student Terms and Conditions;
  - b) Student Code of Conduct;
  - c) Student Disciplinary Regulations;
  - d) Religion and Belief: Supporting Inclusion of Staff and Students in Higher Education and Colleges;
  - e) Learner Analytics Code of Practice;
  - f) Placement Policy and Procedure.

## **9. Other**

General principles in relation to this Policy and Procedure can be found at Appendix 1.

## **10. Dissemination**

- 10.1 The Policy will be communicated to staff via University Update. It will also be embedded within appropriate training for Personal Tutors.
- 10.2 Students will be made aware of this Policy through their induction programme and associated communications.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE

### 1. Structure of the Procedure

- 1.1 This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy and sets out the process which will normally be followed in dealing with those cases where a student has been identified as having unsatisfactory attendance and engagement, academic performance and/or progress.
- 1.2 Any variations to this Procedure due to a course having specific attendance requirements for example, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements will be included in the relevant Course Handbook and communicated during induction.

### 2. Stages of the Procedure

Within this procedure, the Stages for dealing with a student identified as making unsatisfactory progress are normally as follows:

- Stage 1: Informal Guidance and Support;
- Stage 2: Formal Warning;
- Stage 3: Formal Review Meeting

- 2.1 The type of guidance and support offered will be determined on an individual basis with reference to the data available to the University, e.g. attendance data, VLE login, Library loans, assignment submission and grades etc.
- 2.2 The University takes a proactive and positive approach to supporting and improving student attendance. However, in the minority of cases where intervention does not result in improved attendance or engagement, or where realistic opportunities for a change of circumstances have not been followed up by the student, the University reserves the right to withdraw students from their course who are no longer engaging in academic study. This is undertaken in accordance with the documents referred to in section 7 of the Policy.

### 3. Stage 1: Informal Guidance and Support

- 3.1 Students failing to make satisfactory progress as judged by attendance or other failure to engage in academic activity will initially receive informal guidance and support in a variety of ways. This can be through Personal Tutors, Course Leaders, Student Life services or other academic and support staff as appropriate.
- 3.2 In cases where it is deemed to be beneficial, students will be invited to an informal meeting with a relevant member of academic or support staff from the University/Collaborative Partner.

#### **4. Stage 2: Formal Warning**

- 4.1 Following informal interventions as detailed in (paragraph 3), where a student's academic progress is still felt, in the judgement of the Dean's nominee (or equivalent), to be unsatisfactory as detailed in the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy, a student should be sent a written communication advising them to improve their academic attendance and/or progress.
- 4.2 The student will be signposted to appropriate support and guidance. Where appropriate, the student will be asked to meet with the relevant Course Leader and/or Personal Tutor to discuss any support they may need. Brief outcome and notes will be recorded on the student record, for example in StREAM.

#### **5. Stage 3: Formal Review**

- 5.1 If the student's academic progress is still felt, in the judgement of the Dean's nominee, to be unsatisfactory as detailed in the Attendance and Engagement Policy, and the student should be considered to be withdrawn from their studies, the student should be invited to a meeting with the Dean's nominee. Normally, 7 calendar days' notice of the meeting should be given and the student will be provided with all relevant documentation to be considered. The purpose of the meeting is to establish why academic attendance, engagement and/or progress has been unsatisfactory, and in light of this, determine what action should be taken. During the proceedings, the student will be given the opportunity to provide a response and present any mitigating circumstances.
- 5.2 The meeting will normally consist of:
- The Dean's nominee
  - The student (and friend, if applicable);
  - (A secretary may be in attendance).
- 5.3 In consideration of the case, the Dean's nominee may reach one of the following outcomes:
- 5.3.1 The student has provided an adequate explanation for their unsatisfactory academic attendance and/or progress, and the case will be dismissed.
- 5.3.2 The student to complete an action plan within a set period of time, setting out actions to be taken with identified completion dates.
- 5.3.3 Refer the case to be considered under another more appropriate procedure or process, e.g. an interruption of studies.
- 5.3.4 Withdraw the student from their studies due to unsatisfactory academic attendance and/or progress.
- 5.4 Within 7 calendar days, all relevant parties shall be informed, in writing, of the

decision reached, including the reason for the finding, and the right to appeal the decision.

- 5.5 If the student declines this invitation or does not respond to the invitation to attend, the meeting will proceed in the student's absence and the School/Collaborative Partner shall take a decision on the basis of the evidence available, provided that they are satisfied that the student has been properly informed about their right to attend or present a case.
- 5.6 Where it has been found that the student should be withdrawn from their studies, the Assessment Board will formally consider the student's profile to recognise any achieved credits.
- 5.7 When it is determined that the student should complete an action plan the School/Collaborative Partner should appoint a Monitoring Officer. At the conclusion of the specified time period, the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Dean's nominee will determine whether:
- 5.7.1 The student has completed the action plan and the case should be closed.
- 5.7.2 Additional time is required for the student to complete their action plan (maximum of three months).
- 5.7.3 The student failed to meet the requirements of the action plan and the student is withdrawn from their studies due to unsatisfactory academic progress.
- 5.8 Where the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Dean's nominee determines that paragraph 5.7.3 should be applied, the Monitoring Officer should inform the student of their decision, the right to appeal, and submit their findings to the relevant Assessment Board for consideration in accordance with paragraph 6.

## **6. Appeal Process**

- 6.1 A student may submit an Appeal in the event they are seeking a review of the decision reached at Stage 3. .
- 6.2 An Appeal must be submitted on a Student Attendance and Engagement Appeal Form available from the Office of Student Complaints, Appeals and Regulations (OSCAR), or the University's website ([www.tees.ac.uk/studentregulations](http://www.tees.ac.uk/studentregulations)). All sections of the Appeal Form must be completed as fully as possible, following the guidance in the Student Attendance and Engagement Appeal Application Pack. The Appeal must be submitted to OSCAR within 7 days of the date of the decision letter. Only in exceptional circumstances will late applications be considered. Late Appeals will normally be rejected as 'out of time'. If a student submits a late Appeal they must enclose, with their Appeal, a separate written explanation for the late submission. The decision of whether to accept a late Appeal will be at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor's nominee. It is not subject to further review and the student will be issued with a 'Completion of

Procedures' letter.

- 6.3 An Appeal may be based on the following grounds:
- 6.3.1 That there was a procedural irregularity in the consideration of the case, which materially affected the outcome.
  - 6.3.2 That information that could not previously be made available and is materially relevant to the outcome has subsequently emerged.
- 6.4 An Appeal must clearly identify the relevant ground(s). If a student applies under the ground of paragraph 6.3.2 they should submit with their Appeal clear and legible documentary evidence. Where the submission of supporting documentary evidence is not possible at the time of submission, due to circumstances outside the student's control, the Appeal should be submitted together with a clear statement that evidence will follow. This should normally take place within 10 days. If no subsequent evidence is received, OSCAR will process the Appeal based on the available documentation. If the Appeal is submitted outside of the timescales cited in paragraph 6.2 above, the student should provide, with their Appeal, a separate written explanation for the late submission supported by evidence (if applicable).
- 6.5 OSCAR will acknowledge receipt of the Appeal and seek clarification from the relevant School/Collaborative Partner on the case.
- 6.6 On receipt of the Appeal, OSCAR reserves the right to request further clarification and/or information from the student prior to referring the Appeal to the Vice-Chancellor's nominee.
- 6.7 OSCAR will liaise with the Vice-Chancellor's nominee if they believe that an Appeal is incomplete, out of time, or the student has failed to show why it was not reasonably practicable for them to submit the Appeal in the stipulated timescales. In such cases, the Vice-Chancellor's nominee will determine whether the Appeal can proceed for consideration. The Vice-Chancellor's nominee shall have the power to dismiss the Appeal and the Appeal will be closed. In such cases, the student will be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures' letter.
- 6.8 Alternatively, if the case is applicable for consideration based on paragraph 6.7, OSCAR will circulate the Appeal to the relevant School/Collaborative Partner for initial consideration. If the relevant School/Collaborative Partner believes that there appears to be a case for the decision to be reviewed they may take Chair's Action and reinstate the student. The Dean's nominee must inform the student, in writing, explaining that Chair's Action has been taken and the decision has been revised. A copy of the decision should be sent to OSCAR. The Dean's nominee must advise the student of the right to continue to pursue their case through the Appeal Stage of the process and to contact OSCAR within 5 days if they remain dissatisfied with the decision.
- 6.9 If the decision is not reviewed, under paragraph 6.8 above, then the relevant School/Collaborative Partner must provide a written report to OSCAR within 10 days of receipt of the Appeal. The report must normally contain:

- A copy of all of the documentation relevant to the case;
  - The communication to the student informing them of the decision at Stage 3;
  - Minutes of the Stage 3 meeting;
  - Any other information/statement, which may assist the Vice-Chancellor's nominee in reaching a decision.
- 6.10 OSCAR will forward all relevant documentation to the Vice-Chancellor's nominee who, after considering the case, believes that grounds permitted for an Appeal have been satisfied, they may:
- 6.10.1 Dismiss the Appeal; or
- 6.10.2 Uphold the Appeal and refer the case back to be reconsidered under paragraph 5 above or reach an alternative conclusion.
- 6.11 The student and the relevant School/Collaborative Partner will normally be informed within 10 days of the decision of the Vice-Chancellor's nominee and, where appropriate, the student will be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures', letter which concludes the internal process of the University.

## APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

### 1 Advice and Guidance

- 1.1 Student and Library Services (SLS) can provide information and guidance to staff in implementing effective intervention. SLS can also offer tailored advice for students in supporting their attendance and engagement. Within SLS, care will be taken to avoid any potential conflict of interest that may arise.
- 1.2 Advisers in the Students' Union can provide students with advice independent of the University. Staff and students can seek advice and support on understanding of the Regulations from Student Learning and Academic Registry.
- 1.3 Students based at Collaborative Partners may contact their own Students' Union or equivalent.
- 1.4 Students who are considered under this process are entitled at any stage to be accompanied to any meeting by one 'friend' who may not act as a representative or attend in any legal capacity unless permitted to do so by the person conducting the proceedings.

### 2. Documentation/Data Protection

- 2.1 Where a student has declared a disability, the University/Collaborative Partner will endeavor to ensure that information is available to students in appropriate formats and, where required, reasonable adjustments, will be made
- 2.2 Any documentation obtained, or produced as part of this process, will be retained in accordance with the University's Classification Scheme and Retention Schedule.
- 2.3 Students are advised to retain a copy of any documentation submitted to the University. Documents supplied as part of this process will not normally be returned. Where photocopies of documents are submitted, the student may be required to provide sight of the original documents in order to verify their authenticity. If evidence is provided in a language other than English, it is the student's responsibility to have it independently translated.
- 2.5 Where a student submits a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) relevant information shall be disclosed to the OIA in order for the review to take place. This will include personal data, including special category data, which has been considered by the University during these proceedings.
- 2.6 The University reserves the right to disclose the outcome of any action taken under this process to external agencies for example, the Students Loan Company, the Home Office UK Visa and Immigration Service, any applicable Professional Standards and Regulatory Body, the Police or an employer if a student is registered on a degree apprenticeship course.



- 2.7 All processing of personal data is undertaken in accordance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, and in accordance with the Data Protection Principles set out in the UK GDPR.

### **3. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 3.1 On an annual basis, Student Learning and Academic Registry shall write a report to relevant University Committees/Boards. The Report shall provide anonymous statistical data, identify any trends or wider issues, and make any observations and/or recommendations which may assist the University to further good practice in the management of this process. The report will analyse formal records retained in accordance with the University's Classification Scheme and Retention Schedule.

### **4. Communication**

For the purpose of this process, written communication with a student can be in paper or electronic format. Students are expected to regularly check their University e-mail account. Written communications may also be sent to the current term-time address (during term-time) or home address (out of term-time) as recorded on the University's student record system. Students are responsible for ensuring that these contact details are kept up to date. Non-receipt of properly addressed and dispatched correspondence will not be accepted as valid grounds for delay or annulment of procedures or outcomes under this process, nor will it be accepted as grounds for Appeal.

### **5. Students with Health Conditions**

Diagnosed health difficulties do not necessarily mitigate the imposition of this process. Where a student is deemed to be in a state of mind or health which is perceived to affect their health and welfare, the University reserves the right to refer the student for consideration under the University's Fitness to Study Policy & Procedure. Any such action will comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

### **6. Fair Treatment**

Where a student has declared a disability, the University/Collaborative Partner will endeavor to ensure that information is available to the student at all stages of the process in appropriate formats, and where necessary reasonable adjustments will be made.

### **7. Attendance at Meetings**

Students will be given the opportunity to attend any meeting in person. In the event that the student declines the invitation or does not attend, the meeting

will proceed in the student's absence and a decision will be reached based on the evidence available.

All participants at meetings are expected to behave in an orderly and non-confrontational manner. If it is felt appropriate, the meeting may be adjourned or halted, if it is felt that the progress of the meeting is being hampered by the participant's behavior.

If a student and/or friend has a disability and requires additional facilities or adjustments, those requirements should be made known to the University/Collaborative Partner prior to the meeting in order that, if possible, appropriate arrangements can be made. Where the student decides to leave any meeting associated with the process the University reserves the right to continue with such a meeting.

Students have the right to request that any Panel member involved in the consideration of a case at Stage 3 will have had no prior involvement with the case.

## **8. Recording of Proceedings**

A written record shall be kept of any meetings held under this process, and may be used as part of proceedings. The audio recording of a meeting held under this process is prohibited subject to such reasonable adjustments as may be agreed by the University where required under the Equality Act 2010.

## **9. Location of Meetings**

Any meeting may be held either on-campus (University's Middlesbrough or Darlington campuses, or at a Collaborative Partner's campus) or through electronic means such as Microsoft Teams or Skype. . Students and staff based in other locations may either attend the relevant campus or participate in the meeting electronically for example, via Microsoft Teams or Skype. Those who wish to do so must inform the School/Collaborative Partner prior to the meeting and the identity of the student may need to be verified at the start of the meeting.

## **10. External Review**

At the conclusion of the University's internal processes, the student shall be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures' letter in the manner prescribed by the OIA. A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome may submit a Complaint to the OIA under the rules of its scheme within 12 months of the issue of the 'Completion of Procedures' letter. Information on the process may be obtained directly from the OIA at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>.

## APPENDIX 2: 'PRESUMED WITHDRAWN' STUDENTS

The University has an obligation to inform various partner organisations about a student's correct enrolment status. Students who remain enrolled when not engaging may be falsely claiming Student Loan Payments, Maintenance Loans, Scholarships and Bursaries and Council Tax benefit. Until a student's status is changed in their record, confirmation of enrolment to Student Finance England is assumed. It is also critical that we provide timely information to UKVI in relation to the status of Sponsored students.

It is recognised that a small subset of students enrol but do not attend or engage at all from the start of each Semester. In such cases, the following case management process will apply. The focus is on providing personalised support so that the student can begin to engage with their studies, maximising attainment and progression. Schools will work collaboratively with colleagues in Student and Library Services (SLS) and Course Leaders/Personal Tutors to resolve barriers to engagement.

### Case Management

1. The student will be contacted normally by email at University and personal email addresses asking them to get in touch with the School/Collaborative Partner. Where appropriate, further telephone contact will be made if written communication is not responded to.
2. If the student responds, they will be signposted to appropriate support (academic and/or pastoral) in line with the Procedure. Support includes but is not limited to:
  - Academic guidance (Course Leader, Module Leader or Personal Tutor);
  - Student Life and wellbeing support (Welfare, Financial, International, Disability and Dyslexia Support, Counselling and Mental Health, Faith and Reflection);
  - Extenuating Circumstances process.
3. If the student does not respond, despite the support as described above, and the following conditions are met, the student will be deemed to be 'presumed withdrawn':
  - Student has missed **three** consecutive weeks of scheduled, monitored activity;
  - Student has not responded to any contact made in a manner that indicates the student wishes to continue with their studies;
  - Student has not initiated an application to transfer, interrupt or withdraw in the current academic year;
  - Student has not submitted an application under the Extenuating Circumstances Regulations (Taught Provision) in the current academic year;
  - Student has not engaged with assessments in the current academic year - Course and Module Leaders will be given the opportunity (1 week) to confirm any recent contact or circumstances;
  - Student is not known to SLS and engaged in support activities, e.g. Counselling, as such that extenuating circumstances could be inferred.

4. The School/Collaborative Partner will process the withdrawal and notify the student by email. In cases where the student then contacts the University and indicates they wish to continue their studies, the School Registrar (or nominee) along with the Course Team will consider if this should be permitted taking into consideration the amount of work the student would need to catch up on.
5. If the decision is that the student may be re-admitted onto the course, support will be provided in line with the Procedure, which could include any one of the Stages outlined in this Policy
6. If the decision is that the student cannot be re-admitted, they will be given the option to interrupt and defer until the next academic year, if this is appropriate for their circumstances. They may appeal the decision as outlined in the Procedure.