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## UCFB/GIS

# Attendance and Engagement Policy

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## **1. Purpose**

1.1 This document sets out UCFB/GIS's approach to monitoring student attendance and engagement

### **1.2 Definitions**

1.2.1 *Attendance* means the act of being present at the opportunities scheduled as necessary for students to successfully achieve the learning outcomes of a module/course eg, lectures, seminars, practicals, whether these are delivered face-to-face or online.

1.2.2 *Engagement* means the act of committing to, and participating in, different aspects of the learning experience.. This includes attendance at, and participation in, scheduled and extra-curricular activities; borrowing texts from physical and on-line libraries; engaging with learning resources, including resources available on digital learning platforms, and communicating with peers and academics in relation to the course. Ongoing engagement, across various modes of delivery, synchronous and asynchronous content, and level of study, supports positive student outcomes.

## **2. Scope**

2.1 This policy applies to all students studying at any UCFB campus, or remotely, including part-time and/or distance learning students as well as full-time students. Attendance and engagement expectations may differ across different modes of delivery, eg where material is delivered face-to-face, synchronously online or asynchronously online.

## **3. Equality Impact**

3.1 This policy is neutral in terms of equality-related issues.

## **4. Introduction**

4.1 UCFB/GIS expects all students to attend all scheduled sessions, including lectures, seminars, group work and tutorials. Students are also expected to be punctual, to be respectful of others' time.

4.2 In terms of engagement with their studies, UCFB/GIS expects all students to make their best efforts to participate whilst present, to put in time to study

between classes, to prepare for taught sessions and to be active participants in both group work and their own learning experience.

## **5. Reasons for monitoring attendance and engagement**

- 5.1 UCFB/GIS has a duty of care towards its students and wants to ensure that they get the most out of their academic and professional experience at UCFB/GIS. Poor attendance and/or engagement will affect not only an individual student's outcomes but also may damage those of students who are learning alongside them on a module or course.
- 5.2 UCFB/GIS also has a statutory responsibility to report non-attendance and changes in enrolment status to funding bodies. In the case of international students on a UK Study Visa, UCFB/GIS are also required to inform UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) of any changes to a student's status.

## **6. Expectations**

- 6.1 UCFB/GIS expects students to be committed to their studies and to demonstrate this through good attendance, good participation and a strong level of engagement.
- 6.2 Students are expected to attend and participate in all taught sessions and engage in all the activities that are scheduled as necessary to achieve the learning outcomes of their programmes, as outlined in course and module handbooks.
- 6.3 Punctual attendance is required, for both the benefit of the students and out of respect for teaching staff and other students. This means students are expected to turn up in good time. Once in the class students should stay for the entirety of a taught session and participate fully. Lateness or leaving early may be marked as absences. Students are required to catch up on any work that is missed due to absences or lateness.
- 6.4 For distance-learning students, attendance and engagement will be assessed through the recording of log-in activity. Students are expected to join in online sessions where required, logging on in good time, staying online for the entirety of a live session, and participating fully.
- 6.5 It is a student's responsibility to regularly check their timetable as, on occasions, room changes or class times may occur for campus-based events, or a face-to-face activity may be changed to remote delivery.
- 6.6 Where students experience difficulties with attending taught sessions, turning up on time, staying to the end of classes or engaging with any other aspect of their studies, they should raise this straight away with their Module Leader or Course Leader.

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## **7. Student Loan Funding Implications**

- 7.1 If students are in receipt of tuition fee loans and/or or maintenance loans via the Student Loans Company (SLC), UCFB/GIS has an obligation to report attendance during the academic year and to notify the SLC of any changes in enrolment status.
- 7.2 Maintenance loan funding is provided to support students with the costs of studying full-time. If a student ceases to engage full-time with a programme, including consistent attendance at scheduled activities, then entitlement to this funding will be lost.
- 7.3 In the event that a student is suspended or withdrawn from their programme, UCFB/GIS will notify the SLC and will provide the last date of engagement. A student may be required to immediately pay back any monies received from the SLC after this date. The UCFB/GIS Fees Policy has further information. The Student Services team can also provide information, advice and guidance on student funding and finance.

## **8. Student visa Implications**

- 8.1 UCFB/GIS has statutory obligations to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) to ensure all enrolled international students in the UK are attending the institution regularly, as required by the conditions of their visa. Where an international student's attendance and/or engagement raises concerns, Student Services will review the situation, in collaboration with academic staff, to try to ensure a student remains compliant with the terms of their visa.
- 8.2 UCFB/GIS will report the details to UKVI of any international student on a Student Route Visa who is withdrawn from their programme for not complying with the Attendance and Engagement Policy. This is in line with compliance responsibilities as a Student Visa sponsor. Reporting a withdrawal to UKVI will normally result in the curtailment of student's visa.

## **9. Support for Attendance Difficulties**

- 9.1 UCFB/GIS recognises that students will have other commitments outside their academic programme of study, for example the need to undertake part-time employment, childcare or caring responsibilities. Wherever possible, students must fit these commitments around scheduled sessions in order to fully engage in their programme of study.

- 9.2 If students experience difficulties with attending taught sessions, turning up on time, staying to the end of classes or engaging with any other aspect of their studies, they should raise this straight away with their Module or Course Leader. Where digital access or technical difficulties impinge upon a distance learning student's ability to engage fully, the student should make the Course Leader aware as soon as possible.
- 9.3 If a student feels that they require an extended period of absence from their studies, or are unable to continue with their existing timetable, they should speak to their Course Leader, or contact Student Services, who will direct them to the right advice and support. Regulations allow for the possibility of taking a break from studies, and re-commencing when a student may be in a better position to successfully participate.
- 9.4 If a student cannot attend academic sessions, they should contact the following (as appropriate):  
[absencewembley@ucfb.com](mailto:absencewembley@ucfb.com)  
[absenceetihad@ucfb.com](mailto:absenceetihad@ucfb.com)  
[onlineadminteam@ucfb.com](mailto:onlineadminteam@ucfb.com)
- 9.5 Students should also contact their Course Leader as soon as possible.

## 10. **Authorised absence**

- 10.1 Students are eligible to have either 2 instances of absence, or 1 instance of up to 3 days, authorised without evidence per semester. Any further absences will only be authorised providing acceptable evidence is submitted within 3 working days of the initial notification e-mail. Acceptable evidence can include doctor's notes, evidence of appointments, police reference numbers etc.
- 10.2 Student services will update the academic team with any welfare issues that may affect student's attendances.

## 11. **Assessment deadlines**

- 11.1 All assessment deadlines are published in advance and students are required to be available for all scheduled exams and other assessed work. Being sick or away from studies **does not** exempt students from assignment deadlines or examinations unless they have been granted extenuating circumstances (in accordance with the procedures set out in the UCFB/GIS Extenuating Circumstances Policy). If a student feels that they may not be able to meet one or more of their assessment deadlines due to a serious and unplanned event, they should discuss this with their Course Leader.

## **12. Consequences of unsatisfactory attendance and engagement**

- 12.1 UCFB/GIS will monitor student attendance and engagement on a rolling basis throughout the academic year, for example by checking class registers, swipe card data, and engagement with online resources. If it is identified that a student has repeatedly missed classes or has poor engagement, they will be contacted by Student Services.
- 12.2 If a student's attendance drops below 80%, UCFB/GIS will contact them by email to offer assistance and guidance. If there is no response to the email this will be followed up by a letter to be sent to the student's home address with the same content.
- 12.3 Lack of engagement with scheduled sessions and online resources or repeated non-attendance may lead to a student being withdrawn from their programme of study. Students who have failed to re-engage after a 20-working day period are referred to the Withdrawal Process. Student Services will initiate Stage 1 and attempt a final contact. If the final contact is unsuccessful the withdrawal form will be passed to the appropriate Registry team for processing. Any student has five days to challenge the withdrawal if they wish to continue their studies at UCFB.
- 12.4 At various points of the year students may also be invited formally to discuss their attendance and marks to date with the UCFB/GIS At Risk team.

## **13. Withdrawing from UCFB**

- 13.1 Students are advised that, before they make any decisions to discontinue their studies, they speak to both their Course Leader and Student Services. Both may be able to offer support and guidance regarding any difficulties being faced by the student. Contact should be made at the earliest opportunity.

## **14. Difficulties with access to UCFB campuses**

- 14.1 It is always a student's responsibility to have their access card with them when they are on campus. Cards must not be shared with third parties. If access cards are damaged or lost, students should contact Student Services.