

**CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY**  
**STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY AND GUIDANCE PROCEDURES**  
**June 2014**

The University's Strategic Plan and the Student Partnership Agreement both promote students as partners in learning. Students are active participants in their learning experiences and must take responsibility for achieving their potential through successful completion of each stage of their studies.

The Student Attendance Policy is intended to support the University in enabling students to achieve their learning potential, recognising the enormous investment that students make, both in time and money, in choosing to pursue a programme of Higher Education. As a responsible institution, the University believes it has a duty to follow-up promptly on matters of non-attendance so that students can be supported and given every opportunity to succeed. The University, for its part, will continue to build excellence in academic practice and student engagement across the institution in order to provide a friendly and welcoming learning community.

This policy should be read in combination with the University's Requirements Relating to Student Registration, (which sets out what is necessary to acquire and maintain student status) and the Terms and Conditions for Registration, to which all students must agree upon registering as a student. In addition, the University has a legal duty to report students with Tier 4 visas to the UK immigration authorities should a student miss 10 consecutive expected student learning contacts, (see the University's Compliance Procedures for guidance - Appendix A).

## **A. ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The general expectations regarding Student Attendance are set out in this document, a link to which is provided in Student and Programme Handbooks and on the University's web pages.
- 1.2 This Attendance Policy relates to all University programmes. For those programmes leading to professional awards, where additional attendance requirements are specified by the relevant Professional Statutory Body (PSB) and for those programmes where specific attendance requirements are detailed in the validation documents, such requirements are published separately in Programme Handbooks.
- 1.3 Attendance requirements for students at a partner institution will be set out in writing in an annex to the Memorandum of Agreement with that partner. There is an expectation that the University's Attendance Policy will apply to all students at UK partner institutions. However procedural variation may be allowed if detailed in the annex but must offer a student at that partner institution an experience equivalent to that of University-based students.
- 1.4 Learning is a shared experience and students are expected to play a part in promoting collective understanding. Attendance is necessary to help to:
  - enhance educational development within the area of study;
  - receive information about the programme;

- prepare for all assessments;
- undertake any practical work or group work (including working with others in seminars);
- contribute to the learning of others and to enhancing the community of learners;
- prepare and develop skills for employment.

## 2. Requirements regarding student attendance

- 2.1 Students are expected to take responsibility for organising their studies and ensuring they are aware of their timetable and expectations for attendance at all activities relating to their programme of studies. It is the students' responsibility to check regularly for information that may include important timetabling or room changes (e.g. via email, Blackboard and other communication methodologies).
- 2.2 Students must attend and make themselves available to undertake all activities relating to their programme of studies during the term dates published by the University and re-sit assessment dates as necessary.
- 2.3 'Activities relating to their programme of studies' includes lectures, seminars, tutorials, supervisions, laboratory and other practical classes, company visits and placements (as required) which comprise and are a required part of the programme on which the student is registered. It also includes attendance for the purpose of assessment and examination.
- 2.4 Students should arrive on time for classes, since late arrival causes disruption to other class members.
- 2.5 The University timetable may include classes in the morning, afternoon or evening.
- 2.6 Responsibility for ensuring that an accurate record of student attendance is kept lies with Programme Directors or their nominees.
- 2.7 Departments have a responsibility to remind students of the importance of attendance and especially the clear link between attendance and examination performance. This should be emphasised during induction and at initial meetings with personal academic tutors and should be reinforced by module/course tutors. Students will be informed at induction the name of whom they should report any absence from classes and this information made available on Blackboard and/or the Programme Handbook.
- 2.8 Departments have a responsibility to inform students of timetabling or room changes in a timely fashion, and by all appropriate means of communication, particularly where exceptional circumstances result in a change at short notice, (Teaching Room Booking Requests: Cancellation and Amendment Policy refers).
- 2.9 Where a student's attendance is deemed unsatisfactory and not enabling full participation in, or successful completion of, their studies, as determined by the academic department, action will be taken as set out in section 5.

- 2.10 The University has a duty to report students with Tier 4 visas to the immigration authorities when the student has missed 10 consecutive expected student learning contacts. Academic departments have a responsibility to remind students with Tier 4 visas of this duty and to make them aware of the implications of being reported to the Home Office. Please see the University's Compliance Procedures for guidance (Appendix A).

## **B. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

### **3. Attendance Monitoring**

The University requires each academic department to maintain accurate and complete student registers, to both ensure appropriate support mechanisms are provided to vulnerable students displaying irregular attendance patterns, as well as to ensure compliance with regulatory funding bodies and government departments, where appropriate. Student attendance monitoring processes should record both student attendance throughout the year and student engagement at specific 'data check' points during the year, as advised by the Registry.

### **4. Absence from classes**

- 4.1 Students have a duty to notify their academic department nominated contact (see 2.6) of any absence from classes.
- 4.2 A student wishing to request a leave of absence from the University during term time, or other period of required attendance, should complete a Student Request for Formal Leave of Absence form and submit this by email to the Programme Director or their nominee normally at least 14 days in advance. It should be noted that such formal leave of absence is normally granted only in cases of emergency or exceptional circumstances, and where supported by appropriate evidence. The absence will be recorded by the academic department on the register.
- 4.3 Where the absence falls at a time of assessment (for example essays, reports, presentation deadlines or examinations) and the student wishes to request extenuating circumstances, the 'Extenuating Circumstances Request Form' should be used. This form is available to download from [http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/registry/Student%20Resources/extenuating-circumstances\\_2.asp](http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/registry/Student%20Resources/extenuating-circumstances_2.asp) and should be submitted, with appropriate evidence (such as medical certificate), to the student's academic department nominated contact.
- 4.4 Programme Directors or their nominees are responsible for ensuring that an accurate record of such agreed absence requests are maintained.

### **5. Action in the event of non-attendance**

- 5.1 For any University programme (whether leading to a professional award or otherwise) where there is evidence of non-attendance which is likely to have a negative impact upon academic progress (or, in the case of Tier 4 students, upon their right to remain in the UK), the student will, in the first instance, be contacted by the relevant Programme Director (or nominated Programme Administrator). Initial contact will be made by email, however in the event of nil response other communication methods will be used e.g. telephone or other appropriate means.

The student will be reminded of attendance expectations and the consequences of non-attendance which can result in withdrawal (or, in the case of Tier 4 students, upon their right to remain in the UK). The student will be invited to discuss with their Personal Academic Tutor, Programme Director or equivalent, any issues they might be experiencing that could be the cause of poor attendance, noting that the early weeks of study are critical to student retention. A response will be sought within seven calendar days of the date of the initial contact.

If no response has been received, a reminder should be sent with a response deadline of two working days, warning that non-compliance will result in referral to the Head of School.

- 5.2 Where students are referred to the Head of School on grounds of poor attendance, the student will be requested by letter/email to attend an appointment to discuss their situation (this meeting should take place within seven calendar days). In this communication, as part of its duty of care, the University will clearly communicate the severity of possible consequences of continued non-attendance to their studies, in particular to student funding sources and the immigration status of Tier 4 students. The letter should be copied to Student Support, Health and Wellbeing ([studentwellbeing@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:studentwellbeing@canterbury.ac.uk)) where it will be logged and an email sent reinforcing the student's attendance obligations and offering support from central student services. Where contact from the student is received this will be processed as appropriate and the department informed.
- 5.3 In the event a student fails to attend the meeting with the Head of School, the Director of Academic Administration (& Academic Registrar) must be notified and the student informed that they are 'assumed to have withdrawn' and their studies terminated under the Requirements Relating to Registration. This communication will include reference to the independent advice available from student support services and the Students' Union, as well as the student's right of Appeal. If, at this stage, the student indicates a firm intention to re-engage with his/her studies and wishes to return, s/he should contact the Programme Director within 10 working days submitting a formal Appeal to the Director of Academic Administration (& Academic Registrar) against the withdrawal.
- 5.4 Departmental support for students throughout the process should include an invitation to discuss with their Personal Academic Tutor, Module Tutor/or Programme Director (equivalent), as appropriate, any problems they might be experiencing that could be the cause of poor attendance. As with any welfare issues the Cause for Care and Concern procedures provide a clear route to support through Student Support, Health and Wellbeing via [studentwellbeing@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:studentwellbeing@canterbury.ac.uk) (see Section 6).
6. **Action in the event of concern for a student's wellbeing (Cause for Care and Concern)**

A number of factors other than poor attendance may contribute to concerns about a student's engagement with the programme. Students may demonstrate symptoms of anxiety, concerns about a personal situation or medical condition, or may be indicating signs of dyslexia or other disability which may require further support or intervention from Student Support, Health and Wellbeing, including the submission of multiple requests for Extenuating Circumstances or a Negotiated Learning Plan. Any or each of these circumstances may warrant referral to Student Support, Health and Wellbeing under the Cause for Care and Concern arrangements set out in Appendix B.