

Student Engagement and Attendance Policy

International Students on a student visa: please note that this Policy applies to you as well as the International Student Engagement & Attendance Policy, so you should be aware of both documents.

Introduction

1. This Policy sets out the College's expectations of enrolled students participating in our learning community. The Student Engagement and Attendance Policy is a key document that is accepted as a condition of enrolment and when agreeing to the College's Terms and Conditions. The Policy relates to all taught undergraduate and postgraduate enrolled students. Where an undergraduate, postgraduate or research student is sponsored for a student visa the International Student Engagement & Attendance Policy also applies.
2. Birkbeck students are often in full or part time employment and may have other commitments such as childcare or caring responsibilities. Nevertheless, the College expects students to manage these commitments around timetabled sessions in order to take part fully in the module or programme.
3. The term 'attendance' is used when a student has to attend physically in-person or online at a scheduled teaching, learning or assessment activity. This might mean attending a lecture, seminar, practical, laboratory or field trip for example. These events will support you working towards your learning objectives. 'Engagement' is a more holistic term which can relate to participating in self-directed learning or directed self-learning. This could encompass undertaking pre-reading, submitting an assessment, watching a pre-recorded video or meeting with a member of staff.
4. The Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that there are appropriate records maintained of student registration, enrolment and attendance. The Academic Registrar (or nominee), having taken advice from the appropriate department, will determine if attendance and engagement is appropriate given the data and contextual circumstances presented.
5. The Academic Registrar will receive reports of student attendance and engagement data from Departments and Professional Services at regular intervals during the academic year and this will be used to support students in their learning.
6. Where attendance reports are used for in-person teaching they must be recorded in College systems within five working days of the teaching event taking place. It is the responsibility of the individual delivering the teaching to ensure the register is updated. This is key to ensuring the student record status is correct.

Why this is important?

7. Consistent and regular student engagement and or attendance in class (or equivalent) promotes and affords student success. Inconsistent and irregular engagement is less likely to result in student success and is consistent with lower module marks and degree classifications being achieved and awarded. The College has a responsibility to third parties such as Student Finance England and the Home Office to monitor and report on engagement and attendance to release financial support and to offer student

visas. A lack of engagement and attendance may indicate that a student is at risk of withdrawing or failing and can also have consequences for receiving government financial support and discretionary bursary support.

8. Poor engagement not only affects you, but also affects others who rely on you in group projects and for peer learning. Where group work and peer learning is central to the subject, poor engagement can lead to the failure of an assessment.

Taught student attendance and engagement expectation

9. Birkbeck, University of London expects taught students to attend consistently all in-person and online timetabled sessions, including lectures, examinations, seminars, group and individual tutorials, learning support sessions, workshops, laboratories, field trips, inductions and demonstrations.

Active Engagement and Attendance

10. Regular engagement means that you can take full advantage of the learning and teaching opportunities available to you and gain the greatest benefit from the course.
11. You are expected to be prepared to commence your learning by the start of the scheduled session, whether in a classroom or online. You are also expected to attend and engage until the end of the scheduled activity.
12. When coming to class, you should be prepared to contribute as directed by your lecturer.
13. Where you have been given reading or activities to undertake in advance of attending a teaching event you are expected to have completed these.
14. If you are undertaking a programme of study remotely you are expected to engage in your studies and with your learning materials and/or tutor with the same diligence as if you were physically attending. Our online teaching sessions have been designed to be as inclusive and accessible as possible to optimise your attendance and engagement with them.
15. Details of specific programme or module engagement requirements e.g. attending field trips, are noted in Moodle or equivalent Module or Programme Handbooks. You should familiarise yourself with specific programme or module level engagement and attendance requirements. If you are in doubt about when you should attend you must contact your Department for advice.
16. Where you are asked to engage with your learning or with student support services, you will make all reasonable endeavours to do so. If you do not engage sufficiently with academic or student support the College retains the right to hold meetings in your absence. This includes meetings concerning your health and wellbeing, or on disciplinary matters. In such circumstances a written record of the meeting will be taken and this will be communicated to you.
17. Where you are attending online there is an expectation that you will turn your camera and or microphone on at the direction of your lecturer. This aids and supports interpersonal communication. Digital backgrounds are available in some of Birkbeck's online resources, if you want to limit access to your study environment, and it is

appropriate to your programme to do so.

18. You are required to follow any guidance provided by the College to maintain health and safety or for the protection of individuals and/or equipment. This includes, for example, protective clothing or the wearing of face masks or indicators of exemption from mask-wearing.
19. There is an expectation that students will engage with and attend all assessments and examinations.

Absence, Non-attendance or Non-engagement

20. If you expect to be absent for more than one week of scheduled learning, you are expected to make contact in writing with the relevant member of staff in your Department i.e. your lecturer and make arrangements to ensure you can catch up on missed work.
21. If you are not either attending your sessions or engaging adequately with the College, the Academic Registrar reserves the right to suspend, withhold, or seek reimbursement, of funding given by or via the College. The same principle applies to student visa sponsorship.
22. The College reserves the right to terminate your registration and withdraw you from your programme if you have consistently low attendance at live timetabled teaching and learning sessions. The date of withdrawal will be communicated to you in writing.
23. If there is insufficient information about you engaging or attending, and you do not respond to communication from the College within a reasonable period, the Academic Registrar (or nominee) reserves the right to inform the relevant funding body or sponsor and where appropriate withdraw your registration and enrolment. The date of withdrawal will be communicated to you in writing.
24. The last day of attendance or engagement for the purposes of withdrawing or suspending study is the date that the College is informed in writing that you are withdrawing. The College reserves the right to determine the date of withdrawal in circumstances when there is a difference between the notified last date of attendance and evidence of the student engaging with their studies after that date. This includes attendance at a lecture, seminar, lab session or examination, a research student attending a one-to-one session with a supervisor, or submission of coursework. If you decide to stop attending, you must follow the Cancellation Procedure and consider the financial implications of withdrawal and/or suspension which are outlined in the Fees Policy.
25. Irregular or intermittent engagement is not sufficient justification for submitting a Mitigating Circumstance request for an upcoming assessment. (See Mitigating Circumstances Policy, Procedure and Guidance). Mitigating Circumstances Panels may take your engagement and attendance record into account when determining your Mitigating Circumstance request.
26. There is an expectation that where you have missed a teaching event you will endeavour to make up or catch up with the learning.

27. While we expect you to make every effort to attend, students who are unwell and/or likely to be contagious should not attend classes where they are likely to pass on infection to others (for example, Covid-19). The College reserves the right to ask you not to attend if you have reported illness or potential infection.

Recording your attendance and engagement

28. All Birkbeck students are issued with student cards. Students are expected to take them to classes and to assessment venues and to present them to a member of staff if requested. This is for the purpose of identifying Birkbeck students.
29. You must use your electronic student card to touch into each learning and teaching session when you are in a Birkbeck-managed facility with a card reader. If the reader is not working you should report this via [ASK](#).
30. You must follow any instructions issued about logging in to online teaching sessions. This is to ensure that you are identified as being present and there is a record that you have engaged with that scheduled session.
31. The College collects student data for the purposes of supporting your engagement with learning and teaching. This includes activity in College computer systems and touching into teaching venues. If you are not actively engaging with your studies, the College may contact you to signpost you to services to help you succeed. All data is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation. You can read more by following this link on [privacy](#).
32. Where you are contacted about your attendance or engagement record you must meaningfully and purposefully liaise with the member of staff.
33. Members of the public are not permitted to engage or participate in Birkbeck learning and teaching without having enrolled and paid their module or programme fees. The College only expects engagement from and provides services to enrolled students who have paid their fees.
34. The College may allow a maximum period of up to 28 days after your programme starts to allow you to complete your admission and enrolment. You need to complete your enrolment to access a student card.
35. Learning or scholarship events that are open to members of the public, do not require enrolment and/or a fee will be identified as such and are not subject to this Attendance and Engagement Policy.
36. Members of the public who are not enrolled students who attend learning and teaching events provided by the College without permission may be asked to leave the teaching venue (including online spaces) by authorised members of staff. There is no right of appeal to this decision as services are only provided to enrolled students who have paid their fees.
37. Intermittent or single instances of engagement or attendance each term can impact your eligibility to receive government backed maintenance and/or bursary support. Equally your attendance and engagement profile can impact your tuition fee liability. Please refer to the Fees Policy for further information.

2021/22

Further Reading

The following policies should be read in conjunction with this policy.

- [Terms and Conditions of Study](#)
- [College Policy on the Termination of Registration](#)
- [International Student Engagement & Attendance Policy](#)

**Academic Board
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