

Tier 4 Student Attendance Monitoring Policy & Procedures

The policy applies only to Tier 4 students sponsored by AECC University College.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Tier 4 Student Attendance Monitoring Policy and procedures are in place to ensure that AECC University College is compliant with its duties as a tier 4 sponsor, according to the UKVI register of sponsors, including providing accurate information to the Home Office.
- 1.2 AECC University College has a responsibility to the Home Office to ensure that students who are studying on a Tier 4 visa abide by the conditions of their visa with respect to attendance and engagement.
- 1.3 The success of this policy's implementation depends on the collaboration of all relevant business units within AECC University College.
- 1.4 If a student fails to comply with this policy and it is deemed that a withdrawal or suspension is necessary, AECC University College has a duty to the Home Office to report this at the earliest opportunity. A withdrawal or suspension can be deemed necessary when a student shows evidence of breaking their conditions for permission to study in the UK.

2. Key Responsibilities

- 2.1 Responsibility for the management and implementation of this policy and procedure lies with the Academic Registrar.
- 2.2 The Admissions Manager acts as the main point of contact with regards to the implementation of this policy.
- 2.3 The relevant Programmes Office collate the weekly academic attendance registers and inform the Admissions Manager of any missed contact points and/or regular non-attendance.
- 2.4 The Registry Administrator collates the weekly Tier 4 attendance register data and inputs this into a Master Attendance Spreadsheet to determine any patterns of non-attendance
- 2.5 The Academic Registrar and The Admissions Manager are responsible for reporting withdrawals and non-attenders to the Home Office through the SMS system.
- 2.6 Under this policy and associated procedures any University College role or officeholder or officer of the Student Union may act through her or his appointed nominee.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Students are expected to comply with the engagement requirements outlined in the policy and procedures.
- 3.2 Aside from the expected attendance, students must attend for all enrolment, induction and re-enrolment sessions. These are compulsory contact points.

- 3.3 As part of its compliance duties, AECC University College has to confirm a minimum of 10 key contact points, where students are monitored. These contact points are listed in the procedures and students are required to engage with The University College when requested of them.
- 3.4 If a student does not attend enrolment within the stipulated time-period, this will account for one missed contact.
- 3.5 When issuing a Confirmation of Acceptance to Study (CAS) to new students, the University College will state the start date of the course. If the student does not enrol within two teaching weeks of this start date, their non-enrolment will be reported to the Home Office, and their sponsorship will be withdrawn.
- 3.6 A weekly sign-in is required by the University College for all Tier 4 students. The weekly sign-in sessions will be conducted in Registry, where students must advise the University College of any changes to their UK address, e-mail address and mobile telephone number. These are also to be confirmed at enrolments, re-enrolments and at any other time that the University College requests the information.
- 3.7 Apart from the above mentioned contact points, students' attendance will also be monitored through the analysis of assignment submissions, exam attendance, and registers taken in practicals/tutorials/clinics. Further information about designated contact points can be found in our procedures.
- 3.8 If staff have any concerns about a Tier 4 students' attendance they should contact Registry as a matter of urgency. Tier 4 are students who require visas to study in the UK. At the start of the academic year, an updated register will be sent to all relevant colleagues including; UG Programmes Office; HR; Payroll, Library and the Clinic. Registry will then implement the appropriate course of action. **Due to the strict reporting deadlines of the Home Office it is vital that there are no delays in staff concerns being communicated to Registry.**
- 3.9 If attendance falls below 50% of weekly attendance on two consecutive teaching weeks at practicals/tutorials/clinics or other key contact points are missed, Registry will enact the procedures below. If there is no improvement in engagement after this procedure has been enacted the student will be reported as a non-attender to the Home Office.
- 3.10 Tier 4 sponsored students may choose to defer or suspend their studies due to personal or medical reasons. Students must apply for this option, and provide acceptable evidence to the UG Programmes Office. The University College will support students who defer their studies but must report this to the Home Office.
- 3.11 On deferral or suspension of a course of study, a student visa is withdrawn by the Home Office and when the student wishes to return to study, a new visa must be applied for.
- 3.12 The University College will normally support this student in their return; however, it may be necessary to issue a new CAS. This is dependent on the length of time of deferral or suspension, and will be clarified on an individual basis with each student concerned.
- 3.13 If a student elects to finish a course early, either taking an exit award, or leaving the course, this will also be reported to the Home Office. The student's sponsorship will then be withdrawn by The University College, and the student will be required to return home, as stipulated in the Home Office regulations and guidelines.

4. Procedures

- 4.1 For the purposes of clarity the following are defined as contact points:
 - Enrolment (for new students and re-enrolling students)
 - Weekly Register of Attendance, held in Registry
 - Assignments
 - Practical/Examination attendance
 - Academic Registers of Attendance (this is monitored on a weekly basis and students must demonstrate that they have attended at least 50% of expected practicals/tutorials/clinics)

- 4.2 If weekly attendance at practicals/tutorials/clinics falls below 50% or other key contact points are missed for two consecutive teaching weeks and where there are no reasonable mitigating circumstances, Registry will email the student to warn of the consequences of continued non-engagement.
- 4.3 If, after the initial email is sent, an improvement in engagement is not demonstrated, and no reasonable mitigating circumstances are provided the student will be required to attend an urgent meeting at AECC University College to discuss their absence and any reasons given for prior absence will be recorded. This meeting be held with the Admissions Manager, the Vice-Principal (Undergraduate) and the student's personal tutor. At this stage, the student is expected to continue attending as normal in full- time mode, unless an agreed period of absence through mitigation is confirmed and recorded at the meeting.
- 4.4 If the student does not attend the meeting, and has missed 3 key contact points as recorded by the University College, the student will be reported to the Home Office as a non-attender. The reporting will occur within 10 working days of the meeting and the 'live' status of the student on the Student Record System will be removed.
- 4.5 At this stage, the student's 'live' status will be cancelled from the Student Record System, and sponsorship for their studies revoked by the University College. From this moment, the individual will no longer be considered a student of the University College.
- 4.6 If a student misses two consecutive weekly sign-ins of the register held in Registry, an email will be sent explaining that the student has 48 hours by which to sign the Register and account for the non-signatures of the previous two teaching weeks.
- 4.7 If a student does not sign-in within 48 hours of receipt of the second email delivery, Registry will instruct the IT and Learning Services departments to suspend the student's electronic facilities (library access, Moodle, email).
- 4.8 If a student misses 3 teaching weeks of sign-ins without any reasonable mitigating circumstances, they will be reported to the Home Office as a non-attender and the University College will withdraw its sponsorship of that student, including removing their 'live' status on the Students Record System.

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