Sponsored Student Academic Engagement Monitoring Policy & Procedures

The policy applies only to students sponsored by AECC University College to study in the UK.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Sponsored Student Academic Engagement Monitoring Policy and procedures are in place to ensure that AECC University College is compliant with its duties as a Student 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 Student visa abide by the conditions of their visa with respect to 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 and Immigration Compliance Manager acts as the main point of contact with regards to the implementation of this policy.

2.3 The Course Administrators are responsible for informing the Admissions Manager and Immigration Compliance Manager of any students sponsored on Student visa who have not progressed/completed as expected following assessment boards or who have not still not engaged following the enactment of the procedures described below.

2.4 The Academic Registrar and The Admissions Manager and Immigration Compliance Manager are responsible for reporting withdrawals and non-attenders to the Home Office through the SMS system.

2.5 Under this policy and associated procedures any University College role or officeholder or officer of the Students' 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 engagement, students must attend for all enrolment 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 latest date to enrol onto a course, which is usually 10 working days from the start of teaching. If the student does not enrol by this stated date, their non- enrolment will be reported to the Home Office and their sponsorship withdrawn.

3.6 Students studying on a Student visa must advise the University College of any changes to their UK address, e-mail address and mobile telephone number throughout the duration of their course. These

details are normally confirmed at enrolments, re-enrolments but can also be requested at any time by the University College and students should inform the institution of any changes.

3.7 Student's engagement will be monitored through the analysis of assignment submissions and exam engagement. Further information about designated contact points can be found in our procedures.

3.8 If staff have any concerns about the engagement of a student being sponsored by the University College, they should contact Registry via registry@aecc.ac.uk as a matter of urgency. At the start of the academic year, an updated register of students being sponsored by the University College will be sent to all relevant colleagues including; Registry; 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 there is evidence of continued non-engagement from sponsored students, 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 and their sponsorship withdrawn through the SMS system.

3.10 Students sponsored by the University College may choose to defer or suspend their studies due to personal or medical reasons. Students must apply for this option, via the relevant form from Registry and follow the normal study break procedure. 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 Student 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 – Taught students

4.1 For the purposes of clarity the following are defined as contact points:
- Enrolment (for new students and registration for continuation students)
- Assignments
- Engagement at practicals (technique laboratories), seminars and tutorials

4.2 If a sponsored student's engagement falls below 50% of the expected number of above- mentioned contact points over a two-week period during term time, Course administrators will contact the student's personal tutor in the first instance who will contact the student directly to ensure there are no wider issues causing the reduced engagement.

4.3 If, after the initial email is sent, engagement does not improve and there is another consecutive two-weekly period of expected engagement levels below 50%, and no reasonable mitigating circumstances are provided; the student will be contacted by the course leader. A formal letter will be sent at this stage by the Immigration Compliance Manager reminding the student of their responsibilities in respect of their leave to remain in the UK.

4.4 If the student does not demonstrate a substantial and immediate increased level of engagement, measured through the above-mentioned contact points, the Immigration Compliance Manger will notify the Home Office of this and sponsorship will be withdrawn through the SMS system.

5. Procedures – Taught students on placement

5.1 For the purposes of clarity, the following are defined as contact points:
- Enrolment (for new students and registration for continuation students)
- Assessments
- Monthly engagement checks on placement

5.2 If a sponsored student's non-engagement is triggered by one the contact points. Registry must be informed via email registry@aecc.ac.uk so that the taught students procedure can be followed (4.3 – 4.4).

5.3 Placements not taking place at AECC must be recorded on the placement spreadsheet two weeks prior to placement. The Admissions and Immigration Compliance Manager is responsible for adding the details to UKVI SMS reporting.

5.4 An email is sent to the placement provider from the Admissions and Immigration Compliance Manager informing them of the sponsored student and their duties whilst the student is on placement with them.

5.5 An email is sent to the student from the Admissions and Immigration Compliance Manager confirming their placement and reminding them of the UKVI regulations.

5.6 Any changes in placement must be communicated to the Admissions and Immigration Compliance Manager so UKVI can be informed.

6. Procedures – Research Students

6.1 For the purpose of clarity, the following are defined as contact points:
- Enrolment for new students and annual registration
- Completion of the PG Cert component of PhD
- Supervisor meetings
- Hand-in deadlines
- Attendance at transfer viva

6.2 If any of the above are missed, the Supervising team will alert the Course Administrator who will contact the student directly to ensure there are no wider issues causing the reduced engagement.

6.3 If, after the initial email is sent, engagement does not improve and no reasonable mitigating circumstances are provided; the student will be contacted by their supervisor. A formal letter will be sent at this stage by the Immigration Compliance Manger reminding the student of their responsibilities in respect of their leave to remain in the UK.

6.4 If the student does not demonstrate a substantial and immediate increased level of engagement, measured through the above-mentioned contact points, Registry will notify the Home Office of this and sponsorship will be withdrawn through the SMS system.

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