Student Attendance and Engagement Policy for Undergraduate and Post Graduate Taught Students

1. **INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been developed as part of the College's commitment to provide a supportive learning environment in which encouragement is given to all students to develop a range of skills, abilities and approaches to their studies and other activities. This policy takes account of students' individual circumstances, whilst enabling the College to ensure that all students are fully engaged with their studies.

For the majority of students to achieve academic success there is a need to engage fully with online and face to face teaching and learning, as studying and attending lectures, seminars, tutorials and practicals/workshops provides opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully achieve the outcomes of our taught programmes.

The policy is designed to facilitate early intervention where a student's engagement is a cause for concern. It is designed to encourage students to report any factors they feel are impacting on their ability to attend or engage. **The guiding principle of this policy is that wherever possible, withdrawal from studies should be avoided**.

This Policy sets out how the College aims to support its student to engage fully with their studies and is intended to:

- improve the engagement and attendance of all students
- ensure a proactive approach to providing support when needed
- enable students to maximise their full potential, increasing success and achievement.
- avoid preventable student withdrawals

2. **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

Students can engage with their studies via a range of different means. Some of this will be via formal attendance at online or face-to-face teaching sessions, including practicals, fieldwork, work placements and study abroad, or peer-to-peer learning activities. Engagement is also demonstrated through the submission of coursework and sitting of assessments. Engagement with studying is also undertaken through the use of Moodle and library resources, and through meetings with personal tutors. Wider engagement with the College is through interactions with other services and activities such as those run by Careers, Volunteering, Student Life, CeDAS, and Student Advisory and Well-being. As a College we may draw on evidence of engagement with any of these activities in order to best understand the specific patterns of engagement and needs of students. In sharing data across the College we will abide by the Data Protection protocols set out at the end of this policy.

3. **AIMS OF THE POLICY**
   3.1 To support and encourage students to achieve their full potential in their studies by encouraging active participation through regular engagement in all areas of studies, and more generally with College services.

   3.2 To intervene at an early stage and offer further support where it is apparent that students are not engaging with College and where students may benefit from additional help.

3.3 To unify the approach across College to engagement monitoring to ensure parity of treatment, intervention and support is provided for students.

3.4 To ensure the College and its Tier 4 sponsored students comply with UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) legislation to maintain the College's Tier 4 Sponsor Licence and protect students' Tier 4 visa status.

4. **SCOPE**

The policy applies to the following groups of students:

- All students registered on a taught degree course that is awarded and wholly delivered by Royal Holloway, University of London.
- All students registered on a taught dual degree course that is awarded by Royal Holloway while they are being taught at Royal Holloway.
- While students are attending other institutions as part of a study abroad year the hosting institution will be responsible for attendance and engagement under their policy and Royal Holloway should be informed as soon as possible.
- While students are attending work placements as part of their degree course, the College is responsible for monitoring regular engagement. The employer will inform the College of any unauthorised absence.
- For some qualifications which are accredited by a PSRB, alternative attendance and engagement guidelines may be required. These will be made clear to students via the degree course handbook.
- For students undertaking official roles as Students' Union sabbatical officers, the Student's Union will inform the College of any unauthorised absence.
- PGR students are covered by the PGR Code of Practice and thus this policy does not pertain to them.

5. **PRINCIPLES**

5.1 Undertaking a programme of study indicates a willingness on the part of the student to adhere to the requirements and expectations contained in this policy and an ability to meet these requirements.

5.2 The College has a legal requirement as a Tier 4 Sponsor to monitor the attendance and engagement of its Tier 4 visa students and report to the UKVI any student who is found to be in breach of their visa conditions.

5.3 Monitoring engagement can highlight disengagement with studies and enables poor engagement to be identified early. The College then has the opportunity to offer appropriate support and, in the case of Tier 4 students, warning of potential visa breaches if unauthorised poor engagement continues.

5.4 A student's engagement record is one of the factors considered when reviewing academic progress as regular engagement is likely to support a student's ability to succeed and achieve learning outcomes.

6. NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

6.1 The College recognises that, occasionally, students may be unable to meet the minimum engagement requirements as set out in the School handbook due to unforeseen circumstances.

6.2 If a student is unable to attend, they must notify the College using the absence process; if this is not done, the absence will count as a missed point of contact.

6.3 For short term absences from study of **less than 5 consecutive working days,** students should notify the College via the notification of absence process. Evidence is not required. Where possible notification should be submitted in advance and by the end of the day that the absence occurred.

6.4 Where multiple notification of absences are submitted that may have a detrimental effect on a student's academic progress, or where engagement levels are already of concern, authorisation for absence may not be given. Students with long-standing conditions, or in need of D&DS support, should ensure that they have registered with the appropriate Student Advisory & Wellbeing team.

6.5 For absences of **more than 5 consecutive working days**, or where a student has been unable to notify us of an absence of less than five working days by the end of the day it occurred, students should request an authorised absence via the notification of absence process with appropriate evidence. Where possible, requests for authorised absence **of more than 5 consecutive working days** should be submitted in advance. Authorisation for unplanned absences may be submitted up to 5 working days after the last day of absence, and be accompanied by appropriate evidence. Requests for authorised absence submitted after 5 working days may not be considered.

6.6 The College will consider requests for authorised absence sensitively and will try to accommodate all reasonable requests up to 10 working days. Where an authorised absence request may have a detrimental effect on a student's academic progress, or where engagement levels are already of concern, such requests may not be granted and the absence may be treated as if they are a missed point of contact. Students with long-standing conditions, or in need of D&DS support, should ensure that they have registered with the appropriate Student Advisory & Wellbeing team.

7. MEASURING ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

7.1 All Schools are required to use the College's designated attendance monitoring system for students on taught programmes of study to ensure a consistent approach and robust record keeping.

7.2 All Schools must communicate clearly, and publish in Student Handbooks, their engagement requirements, the support available to students, the consequences of non-engagement and procedures relating to attendance and engagement monitoring.

7.3 The College expects students to attend scheduled learning sessions in the manner in which they are designed to be delivered (online or in person), for example but not limited to, lectures, seminars, workshops, tutorials, field trips, orals, laboratory sessions, PC Labs and practicals. College also expects students to undertake all set coursework and examinations and play an active role within classes. Participation in learning through the use of Moodle and other learning resources is also expected. It is also recommended that students engage with other services on offer by the College which are aimed at supporting the further careers, learning or welfare of students.

7.4 Schools must follow the College's attendance and engagement monitoring procedure for contacting students;

- That have not engaged with the College in person or remotely for more than five consecutive days and have been flagged by Student Administration.
- whose pattern of absence is affecting the student's academic progression or is likely to, or is causing concern for their wellbeing.

7.5 An integrated approach must be adopted between schools, Student Advisory & Wellbeing and Student Administration which will provide all students with the appropriate structure for support when dealing with poor engagement.

7.6 In cases of persistent non-engagement as defined by School handbooks, disciplinary procedures as described in the Academic Regulations will apply and may ultimately lead to the ending of the student's registration (see undergraduate regulations 23/24 and post graduate taught 16/17) .

Tier 4 visa students are required to meet the engagement requirements in line with their visa. Student Administration will monitor Tier 4 students and identify engagement issues. If a student's engagement falls below acceptable levels and a student is considered to have breached their visa they will be reported to the UKVI and their Tier 4 visa will be withdrawn. In line with the College's obligations to UKVI, the College may terminate a student's registration for this reason without following the disciplinary procedures outlined in the Academic Regulations.

7.7 In considering whether the School attendance and engagement requirements have been met consideration will be given to the whole contextual circumstances of a student and their engagement activities as shown on the Student Dashboard, records in Banner and, for example circumstances where ill health or other legitimate reasons prevent students from attending all scheduled learning sessions or engaging with other forms of learning and support services. Students are responsible for informing their School of these absences through the College's notification of absence process and providing appropriate documentary evidence.

Use of Data

Use of Data

The College is committed to handling student data with care and ensuring compliance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, which set out the legislative framework for managing personal data. The College's Data Protection Policy is available to read online here. For more information about your personal data that we collect and use, please see the Student Data Collection Notice.

21 September 2020

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