Student Engagement, Participation & Attendance Policy

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Quality Enhancement Office

Document Control Information			
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Author	**Summary of changes**	**Version**	**Authorised & Date**
Annette Cooke	*Addition of flowchart showing process for cancellation of registration*	V1.1	Chair's Action by Dean of Students on behalf of SELTEC
Sam Grogan	*New policy to replace the Student Participation Policy*	V1.0	LTEC: 16/05/2015 Senate: 10/07/2015
Policy Management and Responsibilities:			
Owner:	This Policy is owned by the Dean of Students.		
Others with responsibilities (please specify):	All students who are undertaking a taught or research qualification that is awarded and wholly delivered by the University of Salford, all staff who are involved in teaching, supervising or supporting these students are responsible for engaging with and adhering to this policy.		
Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:			
Equality Analysis (E&D, HR) *Equality Assessment form*	1. *This is mandatory. Specify date completed and brief outcome. Completed EA to be emailed to Equality@salford.ac.uk*		
Legal implications (LPG)	2. *N/A*		
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Student facing procedures (QEO)	4. *Throughout development of policy*		
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University of Salford Policy & Procedure pages			
The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document.			

1.0 Purpose

1.1   This policy sets out our approach to supporting the development of our students such that they can become confident HE learners who successfully complete their chosen programme of study. It aims to improve our students' learning and teaching experience by contributing to the following outcomes and benefits:

1.2   Outcomes

- Increase the proportion of our students who continue on a programme of study at the University

- Increase the proportion of our students who progress to the next level or stage at the first attempt

- Increase the proportion of our students who complete their programme of study

- Our students have greater ownership of their academic achievement and success performance data

- Compliance with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), professional, statutory and regulatory body and other external agency monitoring, reporting and audit requirements

1.3   Benefits

- Positive contribution to the institutional key performance indicator for Student Progression

- Increase student belongingness (as measured by the above outcomes)

- Increase student engagement in their programme of study

- Enhance the institution's reputation

- Improve our institutional position in national league tables

2.0 Scope

2.1   This policy applies to all students who are undertaking a taught or research qualification that is awarded and wholly delivered by the University of Salford.

2.2   It does not apply to students who are studying towards an award that is delivered wholly or in part by a partner institution, except where its application may be stipulated under the relevant franchise agreement. In all cases where it does not apply, our collaborative partners are responsible for ensuring commensurate arrangements are in place to support and monitor students' achievement and success.

3.0 Policy Statements

3.1   A developmental approach to academic success and retention through engagement, participation and attendance.

3.1.1   Within our approach to contributing to the delivery of the outcomes outlined in 1.2 there are two distinct aspects to supporting our students to succeed in their studies:

- Engagement: this refers to the supportive structures we put in place which aid in enabling our students to emotionally engage with their peers, tutors and programme. Research by the Higher Education Academy shows that students who are actively engaged with their programme are more likely to succeed and obtain the award for which they register.

- Attendance and participation: these are the features of success and retention that we can quantify, for example attendance at teaching events, participation in assessment and other academic activities. It also includes monitoring and reporting on how many of our students stay at the University from one year to the next and the proportion that progress to the next level or stage of their studies.

3.1.2 There is an important interrelationship between the quantifiable and emotional components of student success. Students who attend contact points, actively participate in their programme and build successful relationships with their peers and tutors are more likely to feel a connection with their academic programme - that is, through their engagement they feel they belong here. They are therefore more likely to complete the award for which they register, even if they face difficulties along the way.

3.1.3 The quantifiable processes and outputs of engagement, attendance and participation are co-owned by us and our students. Section 3.4 describes what data we collect, why collect them and how we use them. Where our students do not engage, attend or participate in their studies at the level required by their programme or an external body, such as UKVI or professional, regulatory and statutory bodies, other institutional procedures may be initiated.

3.2 Co-responsibility for engagement, participation and attendance

3.2.1 Academic engagement, participation and attendance are co-owned by our students and us. The success of this joint enterprise relies on mutual trust and working together to fulfil our respective responsibilities:

3.2.2 Responsibilities

Students will:

- o Attend all scheduled contact events, including timetabled classes and research meetings with the supervisor

- o Participate in learning activities as guided by their tutors

- o Engage with the learning objectives of programmes and modules, including handing in academic assignments on time

- o At postgraduate research level, adhere to the Learning Agreement drawn up with the research supervisor

- o Communicate with us through academic staff, the personal tutor system, School office, AskUS, the Library or student representatives when help is needed or to tell us when we can make improvements to our programmes and services

o Be aware of the different types of support we offer and how to access these services

o Ensure they comply with all duties that are their responsibility as stipulated by the University of Salford, professional, regulatory and statutory bodies and other external agencies as appropriate

We will:

o Be transparent about the engagement, participation and attendance data we collect and wherever possible, share these data with our students

o Provide guidance for our students on how to use, interpret and act on this information

o Use these data to improve the student support and services we provide

o Ensure we comply with the monitoring and reporting requirements of external organisations such as UKVI and professional, regulatory and statutory bodies

3.3 Engagement

3.3.1 We provide a variety of opportunities to facilitate and support our students' engagement in their programme. Our students can access these through the host School, central services and the students' union.

3.3.2 Engagement opportunities in Schools

- School offices are the first point of help for queries, issues or comments regarding an academic programme. This includes, for example, timetabling, assessment or other programme or module matters that require a response.

- The supervisor is normally the first point of contact for postgraduate research students.

- Each student is allocated a personal tutor who provides personal, pastoral support, either directly, or through signposting and referring students to other sources of support as necessary.

3.3.3 Engagement opportunities through central services

- The AskUS student information hub houses a wide range of services in one central location on campus. Services include fees, finance, visas, registration, wellbeing, disability support and careers. In addition to face-to-face advice and support, AskUS provides information, resources and services online.

- The Library offers a variety of flexible academic support services and resources. These include face-to-face workshops, one-to-one support and online guides and tutorials covering: academic reading and writing skills; finding, evaluating and referencing information; assessment, revision and exams; and IT skills.

- English Language support for academic purposes is available to non-native English speakers while studying with us.

3.3.4 Engagement opportunities through the students' union

- The Students' Union Advice Centre provides independent professional advice on a range of academic-related issues, including academic appeals, personal mitigating circumstances, disciplinary issues and complaints.

- Student representatives are volunteers who represent the views of students to bring about changes to improve academic aspects of their programme in partnership with us. Our students have the opportunity to engage in the student representation system through their programme representative or by becoming a representative themselves.

- The Activities Department of the Students' Union provide opportunities for students to set up programme based societies. The Union also provides support staff to help societies run effectively and in the best interests of students.

3.4   Participation and attendance in academic programmes and University life

3.4.1   We monitor the attendance of our students at certain timetabled sessions and scheduled meetings, and their participation in academic programmes. These data are collected to enable us to offer timely pastoral, academic and other specialist support to students who may be unable to fully participate in their studies and in University life.

3.4.2   We are legally required to collate specific information about the attendance and study activities of international students on behalf of UKVI, and about students on certain programmes that are accredited or funded by one or more professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

3.4.3   We collect the following types of data about our students' attendance and participation:

- Attendance at timetabled classes such as lectures, seminars, practicals, laboratory sessions and placements. Since monitoring and reporting requirements vary between programmes and may have to comply with specific criteria applied by external professional bodies and other agencies, our programme teams will inform students of the attendance arrangements that apply to them.

- Postgraduate research students' attendance at regular research meetings with the supervisor.

- Submission of summative assessments, including written assignments, practicals and examinations.

- Use of the Library services, Blackboard as our virtual learning environment and University email accounts as indicators of how our students are participating in their programme outside of timetabled classes, and how frequently these learning resources are used.

- Engagement with employability and related opportunities via the Salford Advantage system.

- Other data that from time to time may help us to improve our understanding of, and activities to enhance, our students' engagement, participation and attendance, for example, participation in extra-curricular activities.

- Interruptions of study.

- Student withdrawals.

3.4.4 We collect individual student data and also datasets which cover groups of students such as whole programmes and levels of study. These data are collected and used in accordance with the terms and conditions of student registration, the Data Protection Act and our Information Security Policy.

3.4.5 We use the data we collect in the following ways:

- The professional services and academic staff teams within our academic Schools are responsible for using attendance and participation data to support our students' journey.

- We map student attendance and participation information against other datasets, e.g. student achievement and entry tariffs, to help us improve the educational provision and support services we provide.

- In references to prospective employers and other external organisations, such as further study destinations.

- To comply with our reporting obligations to external agencies.

3.4.6 In keeping with 3.2 above we are making technological improvements to our systems to enable us to share personalised data with our students. This development will further empower our students in becoming co-owners of information about their attendance and participation.

3.5 Outputs of this policy

- Real-time, meaningful participation and attendance data that is easily accessible by our staff and students.

- Actions that lead to programme improvements via the Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Procedure (PMEP), Module and Programme Boards of Examiners and the Postgraduate Research Awards Board.

- A clear picture of how our resources are used and how they may be best utilised to support student engagement and success.

4.0 What happens when the policy is not followed

4.1 Our students may not receive appropriate support to develop as successful HE learners, potentially leading to their leaving a programme without gaining the award for which they register. This may have undesirable personal, academic and financial consequences.

4.2 We may not be able to fully comply with the monitoring, reporting and audit requirements of our Tier 4 Sponsor status awarded by UKVI.

4.3   The Fitness to Practise Procedure may be invoked where a student's programme is regulated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council, the Health and Care Professions Council or the General Pharmaceutical Council.

4.4   Any delay in the reporting of changes in attendance patterns for students on externally accredited programmes may result in overpayments incurred by our students and Schools. This will also create anomalies with the financial forecasting undertaken by the University and external accreditors.

4.5   In line with the University's Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes, where a student has failed to satisfy the minimum attendance and expectations and requirements of their programme, the University shall have the right to cancel the student's registration with immediate effect. Students whose registration is cancelled will have the right to appeal against their cancelled registration using this form. The process to be followed can is outlined in Appendix A.

5.0 Related Documentation

The following documents can be found on the University Policy & Procedure pages University Policy pages http://www.salford.ac.uk/policies or under 'P' via the Staff Channel A-Z index.

- Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes

- Admissions and Retention Policy

- Boards of Examiners

- Code of Practice for the Conduct of Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes

- Data Protection: Fair processing of student personal information

- Data Protection Policy

- Expectations of Academic Practice

- Fitness to Practise Procedure

- Fitness to Study Procedure

- Home Office, Tier 4 of the Points Based System: Guidance for Sponsors, Document 2: Sponsorship Duties

- Information Security Policy

- Personal Tutoring

- Programme Design, Approval, Amendment, Review and Withdrawal

- Programme Developer's Handbook

- Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Procedure

- Student Charter

6.0 Appendices

Appendix A: Process for cancellation of registration for non-participation / non-attendance

Appendix A:

CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATION FOR NON-PARTICIPATION/NON-ATTENDANCE

Student registers at the start of the academic year – normally no later than the end of the second week of teaching.

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School monitors student engagement and participation in line with programme requirements.

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If programme requirement are not met, School contacts student to discuss.

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If no improvement, student's registration is cancelled. Student is informed of this in writing and of their right to appeal.

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Appeal to be submitted within one week to the relevant School.

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Appeal referred to ADA for review. ADA to advise Dean of School.

Appeal Upheld ↙   ↘ Appeal Rejected

Student is informed by School. Interruption of Study required?

School notifies QEO of decision and rationale. QEO issues Completion of Procedures letter.

Yes ↙   ↘ No

Student's registration lapses for duration of interruption and student re-registers at agreed time.

Student's registration continues without interruption.