Student Attendance Monitoring Procedures

1. Introduction

1.1   This document sets out the processes employed by the Academy to monitor student attendance on all programmes of study. It is used primarily to identify any potential wellbeing and developmental issues, but it also supports the fulfilment of our obligations as a holder of a Tier 4 sponsorship licence, and underpins our institutional aims to maintain our student progression, success and retention records.

1.2   The processes for monitoring attendance apply to all students and are enforced by academic and administrative staff, as detailed herein.

1.3   Our aim is to apply a fair, robust, uniform policy for attendance monitoring across the institution, though it is accepted that the methods of recording of student attendance may vary between programmes and principal study departments owing to differences in the curriculum structure and at undergraduate and postgraduate level. This is to ensure that attendance can be monitored effectively with agile procedures that are fit for purpose, rather than a rigid inflexible policy that works for some and not others.

2. Definitions

2.1   *Attendance* refers to the expected attendance of all students on every element of their programme. This includes lectures, seminars, principal study one-to-one lessons, rehearsals, scheduled supervisions, departmental activities and any form of scheduled summative or formative assessment. Attendance also includes all activities defined in the Programme Handbooks as compulsory or expected.

2.2   Attendance requirements are inclusive of all sessions whether completed as a large group in lectures, small group for seminars and tutorials, or individual sessions (such as dissertation supervision or work placement).

2.3   Attendance is expected for all activities whether they are run by Academy staff (Principal Study and Academic alike), Visiting Professors and/or conductors.

2.4   *Monitoring* refers to all recording of student attendance, whether electronic or paper-based, according to the most effective system for doing so and the nature of the activities and programme concerned.

2.5 Students should refer to their Programme Handbooks and the Regulations for information on lectures/seminars/rehearsals/activities and all other expected attendance. Further information and specific timetables are made available to students via ASIMUT after enrolment onto the programme.

2.7 *Tier 4 Sponsored students* refers to all students sponsored by the Academy having been issued with a Confirmation of Acceptance to Study letter (CAS), currently undertaking an undergraduate, postgraduate or research degree with the Academy.

3. Tier 4 Sponsored students

3.1 Students studying on a Tier 4 visa are subject to the reporting processes detailed below, and outlined by UKVI. Instances of non-attendance could result in withdrawal of sponsorship, and the reporting of the persons to UKVI, consequently affecting a student's visa and legal status in the United Kingdom. This monitoring and reporting is a legal requirement for all sponsors and essential in the maintenance of our highly trusted sponsor status, which allows us to recruit international students.

3.2 Owing to our reporting obligations to UKVI, a timescale for recording and reporting the absences of Tier 4 students is outlined in section 6.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Students may have their attendance monitored at academic lectures, seminars, orchestral rehearsals, department activities, and practical sessions to ensure engagement with their programme of study. In most cases this will be monitored through the use of registers. These procedures do not stipulate how the registers are to be taken, and this is at the discretion of the relevant departmental or programme protocols.

4.2 In the event of non-attendance at a scheduled performance activity, the formal penalty mark system, as detailed in the Academy's General Regulations, will be enforced. This process is managed by the Concerts Department.

5. Reporting absence from classes/activities and action to be taken for each programme of study

5.1 In the event of non-attendance at BMus academic lectures and classes, absences will be reported by the Module Leader to the relevant Programme Tutor by email. This information is recorded in the weekly Confidential Student Report (CSR) against individual students. Repeated non-attendance and missing classes without explanation and good reason will result in the student being called to a meeting with their Programme Tutor and may result in action being taken under the Student Disciplinary Code.

5.2 In the event of non-attendance at MA/MMus/ProfDip/AdvDip seminars or activities, a pattern of repeated non-attendance will be reported to the relevant Postgraduate Programme Tutor. Repeated non-attendance and missing classes without explanation and good reason may result in the student being called to a meeting with the Head of Programme. Details of any follow up by Tutors will be documented by email and placed on the student file.

5.3   MPhil/PhD students must be in regular contact with their supervisor and be able to provide evidence of continued research and progress in their research topic. In the event of non-attendance at fortnightly MPhil/PhD seminars or supervision sessions, absences will be flagged and followed up with the student by the Programme Tutor and any correspondence kept on the student file.

5.4   Principal Study teachers will record attendance in their individual lesson registers and flag any absences to the Department Administrator, who will alert the Head of Department and relevant Programme Tutor as necessary. In the case of 3 or more consecutive missed principal study lessons without explanation, the Head of Department will contact the student to ask for an explanation.

6. Tier 4 attendance monitoring

6.1   The Tier 4 regulations specify that the Academy must withdraw sponsorship of students who miss ten consecutive expected contact points. For taught programmes, these attendance points comprise the following:

- attendance at enrolment
- scheduled Programme Tutor meetings
- Principal Study lessons
- scheduled Portfolio supervision meetings (MA/MMus only)
- end of year/final recital

For research degree programmes, these attendance points comprise attendance at enrolment and nine research degree supervision sessions.

6.2   In the event that a student misses 5 consecutive contact points, the Registry will be alerted that they may need to review the student case in due course with a view to reporting to UKVI.

6.3   In the event that a student misses 10 contact points, the Registry will be notified immediately and commence a review of the case to be concluded within 10 working days. The review will consider in particular whether there are any extenuating circumstances that had not yet been formally recorded.

6.4   If, after review of the case, there are no extenuating circumstances and the student remains absent, the Registry will notify UKVI that the student has been deemed to have withdrawn from the programme and this may result in the student's visa being curtailed.

7. Authorised absence

7.1   Leave of absence must be authorised by the relevant academic and administrative staff using the Leave of Absence request form. This form requires students to declare if they are on a Tier 4 visa. Leave of absence is recorded in hard copy on the student file.

7.2   Short-term absences due to illness do not need to be authorised, but students are required as stipulated in programme Handbooks to contact the relevant module leader or their Programme Tutor to inform them if they are not able to attend a particular activity.

7.3   Instances of illness that affect an assessment must be reported to the Academy, and where relevant, a Special Circumstances form completed with any relevant documentary evidence. The same is applicable for other extenuating circumstances and deferral of assessments. Further details are found in the Special Circumstances Regulations.

8. Unauthorised absence

8.1   Absence due to undocumented medical, personal or other extenuating circumstances are not permitted.

8.2   Students are not permitted to be absent from scheduled classes or activities due to employment, unless agreed with the tutor or module leader. There are additional restrictions in place for students on a Tier 4 visa.

8.3   All examinations and assessments must be attended and completed on time (and within any pre-agreed extensions already granted), unless approved through the Special Circumstances Committee.

8.4   Unauthorised absences by students will result in intervention by the Programme Tutor. If a student fails to respond and there is concern regarding their wellbeing, development or safety, the emergency contact may be approached, in line with the Academy's Regulations on the contacting of third parties.

8.5   All students are at risk of eventual withdrawal from their programme if consistent and continued periods of unexplained absence are recorded. This may result in an exit award (if applicable) and removal from the programme with no opportunity to re-enrol on the programme.

8.6   Tier 4 students are at risk of withdrawal from the programme if they miss any of the ten expected contact points for their particular programme (see Tier 4 student absence reporting), and will have their withdrawal reported to the UK Border Agency, who may subsequently revoke their student visa, requiring them to leave the UK and return to their home country.

8.7   No extended period of absence is permitted unless authorised through application for Leave of Absence or an approved Interruption of study.

9.   Monitoring and review

9.1   This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose for internal use and compliant with the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance and Immigration rules.

Document Control

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