

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

1 The University of Law's Student Engagement and Attendance Policy has been informed by the Office for Students Sector-Recognised Standards and the General Ongoing Conditions of Registration and has regard to the Quality Code for Higher Education, specifically the Advice and Guidance Monitoring and Evaluation. The Office for Students Sector Recognised Standards and the General Ongoing Conditions of Registration are the definitive reference points for all UK higher education institutions and set out how academic standards are established and maintained and how the quality of learning opportunities¹ are assured and enhanced. This policy sits within The University of Law's Quality and Standards Code, which provides a suite of policies designed to safeguard the academic standards of The University of Law and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the code.

Introduction

2 This policy has been developed as part of the commitment of the University to provide a supportive learning environment in which encouragement is given to all students to develop their knowledge, skills and competencies.

3 The [University Student Charter](#) requires students to attend and engage with their learning, be prepared for the tasks ahead and communicate with their Lecturer if they are not.

4 This policy expands on these commitments and provides details to students about their obligations and expectations, and the University rules and regulations with regard to Attendance on and/or Engagement with the course delivery within their programme of study. It also sets out the key aims and principles, procedural approach and responsibilities for the implementation and monitoring and review of the policy.

5 This policy considers Attendance and Engagement relating to course delivery only. Assessment regulations for individual programmes of study provide information regarding Attendance at assessment.

6. This policy applies to students on The University of Law's credit-bearing programmes where Academic & Pastoral Support are referred to in the programme handbook

Definitions

7 **Attendance** means a face-to-face mode student's attendance at a compulsory timetabled class.

8 **Engagement** means a student's engagement with their learning resources, measured by their interaction with learning resources which, depending on their mode of learning, may include:

¹ The term learning opportunities includes training provided through an apprenticeship programme.

- Elite (logins, accessing academic courses, accessing content in academic courses)
- Library resources (via OpenAthens, Bibliu logins)
- Panopto (accessing recordings)
- Attendance at compulsory timetabled classes

Responsibility for this policy

9 Ultimate responsibility for the development of clear and effective processes and procedures associated with the maintenance of standards and quality assurance of academic provision and overseeing their application lies with the Academic Board.

Key Aims and Principles

10 In developing this policy, the University:

- 10.1 Supports and encourages students to achieve their full potential in their studies and in developing lifelong skills and competencies;
- 10.2 Enhances the overall learning environment by encouraging active Attendance and/or Engagement in all areas of study;
- 10.3 Provides guidance on why full Attendance and/or Engagement is important;
- 10.4 Uses a student's Attendance and/or Engagement as one of the factors to be taken into account in reviewing the student's commitment to, and performance in, their academic studies;
- 10.5 Is aware of a student's level of Attendance and/or Engagement when developing an appropriate response to any concerns about performance.

11 Attendance and/or Engagement and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who fully attend and/or engage are more likely to achieve success and meet the learning outcomes of their programme of study.

12 Students are active participants in their learning and must take responsibility for achieving their potential through successful Attendance and/or Engagement in all aspects of their studies.

13 Attendance and/or Engagement is a key component in maximising the level of student achievement and employability (for example, in terms of developing transferable workplace skills). As students who have low Attendance and/or Engagement are at risk of not successfully completing their academic studies, the University monitors Attendance and/or Engagement in order to prompt further investigation and offer appropriate support where required. Students who experience problems with Attendance and/or Engagement may have a variety of reasons for not approaching the University for guidance in such circumstances. It is therefore important that the University has effective mechanisms in place to identify students who may be 'at risk', and to interact with them positively at an early stage.

Attendance and/or Engagement

14 Students are expected to attend their compulsory timetabled classes and interact with their learning resources.

15 Student Attendance and/or Engagement will be monitored, and this will include

- keeping a record of a student's absence at a compulsory timetabled class for any reason, including for reasons of religious observance or through ill health or disability
- keeping a record of a student's interaction with Elite and participation in programme-specific online learning activities

16 When monitoring Attendance and/or Engagement the following will be considered:

- Overall percentage Attendance at compulsory timetabled classes since the start of the course
- Percentage weekly Attendance at compulsory timetabled classes (to include current week and preceding four weeks)
- Consecutive absences from compulsory timetabled classes
- For students studying Part-Time or on a non-standard course, the regularity of compulsory timetabled classes and relative importance of Attendance in relation to the mode or nature of the course will be taken into account
- Four-weekly Engagement for online students
- Online students' interaction with Elite and participation in programme-specific learning activities

17 Students with low levels of Attendance and/or Engagement will be contacted to ascertain any reasons for this and to ensure that any need for additional support is considered. Such reasons may lead the University to implement its Students of Concern and/or Support to Study policy.

18 Where Attendance and/or Engagement requirements are specified by the relevant Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), students are expected to comply with these requirements, which are published in the relevant Assessment and Award Regulations.

19 In line with the Student Charter, students are responsible for regularly checking their University email, Elite and MyULaw App and responding where appropriate in a timely manner. Students are encouraged to respond promptly to emails regarding lack of Attendance and/or Engagement in their programme of study to maximise their potential to achieve academic success.

20 The University recognises that it may be necessary to make reasonable allowances and/or adjustments in the case of disability-related low Attendance and/or Engagement, in line with the Equality Act 2010. Each case will be treated on its facts and the University will seek to make fair and proportionate decisions that are in the student's best interests.

21 A student who is experiencing difficulties in Attending and/or Engaging in their programme of study because of personal, financial or other reasons, should contact their Student Journey Adviser or their Programme and Student Lead. The University also has other support services available including a confidential Wellbeing Advice Service, a 24/7 Student Assistance Programme and a Money & Housing Advice Service.

22 The University has an Intermission Policy which seeks to enable students experiencing difficulties to take a break from their studies. A student who wishes to consider this should contact their Student Journey Adviser for advice.

Absence

23 In general:

23.1 Where a student is aware in advance that they will not be able to attend a compulsory timetabled class, it is courteous of the student to inform their Lecturer that they will not be able to do so. This is recommended good practice in line with future professional expectations.

23.2 If a student is absent from a compulsory timetabled class or wishes to enquire about the possibility of attending, space permitting, an alternative session, they should complete an alternative session request form, which is available from Elite. This form will be reviewed by the Student Information team. Unless the student has a provision in a University of Law Inclusion Plan (ULIP) for unlimited alternative sessions, or consent from their Programme and Student Lead, there is a maximum of six alternative sessions which can be substituted during the academic year.

23.3. If a student has missed a compulsory timetabled session, they must complete an absence form, which is available from Elite, stating the session missed and the reason for their absence. The student may be required to produce evidence of the reason for their absence; e.g. a medical certificate in the case of illness.

Absence for Religious Observance

24 The University recognises that there may be religious observance requirements which affect a student's ability to attend or engage with their course on particular dates or days.

25 Students who are unable to participate for reasons of religious observance must inform their Lecturer and Academic Coach at least seven calendar days prior to the absence or the window of potential absence. In the case of religious observances which cannot be determined with seven days' notice (for example Eid Al-Fitr), the student should notify their Lecturer of the potential dates within which the day of absence is expected to occur at least seven calendar days prior to the first of those dates. The University will give sympathetic consideration to the student's circumstances and will try to make reasonable adjustments. However, adjustments can only be made provided they maintain the standard of the student's course and the

programme requirements must nevertheless be satisfied with students being responsible for catching up with the work missed. Students should also understand that adjustments may not always be possible where for example Attendance is required at weekends on programmes that are designed for students who work on weekdays.

Disability-Related Absence

26 The University recognises that in certain circumstances, a student may be prevented from attending and/or engaging in their programme of study for a reason related to their disability or long-term health condition, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

27 Where disability-related non-Attendance is planned and/or is likely to be long-term, students should discuss scope for alternative arrangements that will meet their disability-related needs with the Programme and Student Lead and their Disability Adviser. The Lecturer will be advised of any agreed adjustments for monitoring purposes.

Students who are in receipt of a student loan

28 Low Attendance and/or Engagement may affect a student's continued eligibility for a student loan.

29 Students have a responsibility to inform the relevant student finance authority via their online student finance account of any change in their circumstances in attendance, course being studied, marital status or address. This list is not exhaustive.

Students who are in receipt of the University of Law Bursary

30 Low Attendance and/or Engagement may affect a student's eligibility for the University of Law Bursary (Terms and Conditions of the Bursary can be found on the University's website).

Students whose fees are paid by their employer (or other sponsor)

31 The University reserves the right to provide the employer (or other sponsor, where applicable) with information about a student's Attendance and/or Engagement if this is a term of their sponsorship.

Visa Sponsored Students

32 Students who are sponsored by the University on a Student Visa are subject to the [Attendance Policy for Visa Sponsored Students](#). Visa sponsored students have different Attendance requirements due to the conditions of their visa and Home Office regulations. Any requirements contained in the Attendance Policy for Visa Sponsored Students take precedence over those outlined in this document.

Withdrawal due to non-Attendance and/or Engagement

33 If a student does not have full Attendance or Engagement, has not contacted the University and does not respond to contact from the University, they may be at risk of withdrawal from their programme of study. Any potential withdrawal will only be considered as a last resort after the University has made all reasonable attempts to encourage the student to re-engage with their studies.

34 If a student has not Attended or Engaged at all with their programme of study during the first 14 days of their course and has not responded to contact from the University, the University will cancel the student's place.

35 Where a student's place is cancelled in the first 14 days of their course due to non-Attendance and/or Engagement, they will be informed of their right to appeal the decision and the appeal process. The appeal process can be found in Appendix A.

36 In the event that the University has to consider withdrawing a student (other than in the circumstances in paragraphs 34 and 35 above) based on the view of the Programme and Student Lead that the level of Attendance and/or Engagement means that the student is unlikely to be able to successfully complete the course, the Campus Dean/National Programme Director will verify:

- 36.1 the student's level of Attendance and/or Engagement including Attendance at compulsory timetabled sessions and/or interaction with Elite;
- 36.2 that the University has attempted contact regarding the Attendance and/or Engagement levels on at least two occasions and has not received a response; or has received a response but the level of Attendance and/or Engagement has not improved sufficiently
- 36.3 that, in the opinion of the Programme and Student Lead, the student has reached a level of non-Attendance and/or Engagement on their course which would result in them not being in a position to successfully complete the programme due to the substantial amount of learning material that has been missed.

37 In the event of a Campus Dean/National Programme Director verifying the information outlined in paragraph 36, the student will be withdrawn from their programme of study with immediate effect, without any requirement for further investigation. The student will be notified of this in writing and any funding bodies, e.g. Student Finance England, informed.

- 38 Where a student is withdrawn from their studies due to non-Attendance and/or Engagement, they will be informed of their right to appeal the decision and the appeal process. The appeal form can be found in Appendix B.

Responsibility for the Provision

- 39 Responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy lies initially with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Provision

- 40 Formal responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of this provision lies with the Academic Board.

Version history:

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
V1.0	Operations Manager	Initial Draft	18/08/14
V1.2	External Consultant	External review	09/09/14
V1.3	VP (AGQS) Academic Registrar	Coherence	15/09/14
V1.4	Executive Management Board	Approval	20/09/14
V1.5	Academic Board	Approval	02/10/14
V1.6	AGQS	Review	06/11/14
V1.7	Proofreader	Proofing	18/12/14
V1.8	Head of Student Support Services	Review/update	13/05/16
V1.9	Head of Student Support Services	Incorporate input following review by Senior Tutor	26/07/16
V1.10	Academic Board	Approval	31/08/16
V1.11	Head of Student Support Services	Review/update	14/08/18
V1.12	Head of Student Support Services	Incorporate input from Ops/Programme teams/Head of IVO	14/09/18
V1.13	Head of Student Support Services	Incorporate input from online programme	01/10/18

		team/Director of Operational Services	
V1.14	Head of Student Support Services	Update to enable withdrawal without reference to discipline regulations	15/07/19
V2.0	Registry Officer	Change to coding convention	24/03/20
V2.1	Senior Quality Officer	Further naming convention clarifications	26/03/20
V2.2	Head of Student Information and Administration - Quality	Amendment to department names.	August 2020
V3	Director of Student Success	Comprehensive review of Policy, involving consultation across the University, including renaming of Policy.	August 2024
V3	Academic Board	Approval	13 August 2024

Appendix A – Appeal Process for Cancellations Within the First 14 Days of Course

Where your place is cancelled in the first 14 days of your course due to non-Attendance and/or non-Engagement, you will be informed via email of your right to appeal the decision and the appeal process.

You must make an appeal by email within 48 hours from the date of the cancellation email by completing the Cancellation Appeal Form which is provided in the cancellation email as a link. For an appeal to be considered, you will need to:

- Provide reasons for your non-Attendance and/or non-Engagement, supported by evidence to substantiate this, together with a full explanation of why you have not responded to previous communication

On receipt of the appeal form, the Executive Cancellation Panel will consider the appeal within 7 calendar days. Following the Panel meeting:

- if the Panel reverses the cancellation, your status will be changed to “current”, and you will be allowed to continue your course.
- If the Panel upholds the cancellation, you remain cancelled from your course.

You will receive the outcome of the appeal within 2 working days from the date of the Panel. The Executive Cancellation Panel’s decision is final, but you can request a review of the decision by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Appendix B – Appeal Process and Form (after the First 14 Days of Course)

You must make an appeal in writing within 14 calendar days to the Student Casework team, at the address noted below, setting out the grounds for appeal. For an appeal to be considered, you will need to:

- Provide reasons for your non-Attendance and/or non-Engagement, supported by evidence to substantiate this, together with a full explanation of why you have not responded to previous communications; or
- Demonstrate that the withdrawal process was not followed correctly and that this had a detrimental impact on the outcome; or
- Demonstrate that the University reached a decision that no reasonable body could have reached.

When applying for an appeal, the student should state which ground of appeal they intend to rely on together with all supporting evidence. If the student is unable to submit the appeal within 14 calendar days, they should write to the Student Casework team with an explanation.

On receipt of the appeal the Student Casework team will:

- (a) determine whether the appeal is eligible for consideration;
- (b) appoint an Appeal Panel comprising 3 members of staff to conduct the appeal;
- (c) nominate one member of the Appeal Panel to act as Chair;
- (d) confirm receipt within 7 calendar days;
- (e) provide the panel with any documents to be referred to at the meeting

Following the meeting, the Appeal Chair will notify the Appeal Panel decision to the Student Casework team who will then write to the student within 14 calendar days together with a Completion of Procedures Letter. The Appeal Panels decision is final but the student can request a review of the decision by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

The contact details for the Student Casework team is complaints@law.ac.uk

Appeal Form – Withdrawal for Non-Engagement

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of a decision to withdraw you from your course due to non-Engagement, you can submit an appeal. The appeal will be considered by a panel of three members of staff at Executive Manager level or above. The appeal must be submitted in writing **within 14 calendar days** of the withdrawal letter from the University.

Within this request, you must outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction.

This is the final stage of the University's procedure. If you are dissatisfied by the outcome of the appeal, you may be eligible for a further review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (details will be provided to you with the appeal outcome).

Valid Grounds for an Appeal

For an appeal to be considered, you will need to:

- Provide reasons for your non-Attendance and/or non-Engagement, supported by evidence to substantiate this, together with a full explanation of why you have not responded to previous communications; or
- Demonstrate that the withdrawal process was not followed correctly and that this had a detrimental impact on the outcome; or
- Demonstrate that the University reached a decision that no reasonable body could have reached.

Name

Student Reference Number or Date of Birth
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Address

Telephone Number

Email

Date of withdrawal letter

Completion and Submission

Please complete the details on the reverse of this form and submit with any supporting documents. This form may be submitted by:

- Completing the form electronically and then emailing it together with any supporting documents to complaints@law.ac.uk:

If you require any advice as to the best way to complete this form, please contact the Student Union (studentsunion@law.ac.uk).

Please set out clearly the basis of your appeal :

Please continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary

Are you attaching supporting evidence?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please indicate the outcome you are requesting from this process:

Please sign and date the form below and attach any supporting documents, and submit the form and documentation either by email or through the post to the address shown on the previous page.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Process	Procedure	Timing
Appeals relating to withdrawal for non-Engagement	Student submits appeal form	Within 14 calendar days of receipt of the withdrawal letter
	University acknowledges the request	Within seven calendar days of receiving the application
	Conclusion of the review and report submitted to student	Within five weeks of acknowledgement of appeal