

STUDENT ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT POLICY			
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Authorised By:	Director of Strategic Planning and Student Administration		
Implementation By:	Strategic Planning and Student Administration		
Policy Reference:	POSP1819001		
Policies Replaced:	N/A		
Version No:	V8	Approval Committee:	Academic Board
Date approved:	Sept 22	Minute no:	22.021
Status:	Approved	Implementation Date:	Sept 22
Period of approval:	3 years	Review Date:	August 25

This policy does not apply to students being taught entirely by online distance learning. Separate award regulations apply to these students.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The University's Academic Engagement Policy objective is to ensure that the University fulfils its duty of care to its students; ensuring that each student makes the most of the learning opportunities available to them. This is supported by the work of the Student and Campus Life Team, who are there to help students with a range of issues if required. The University will implement consistent and robust engagement monitoring practices, adopted by all Faculties, in order to help identify absences from teaching and support students where required. The University will clearly communicate this policy to all students via handbooks and its website.

The Access and Learner Engagement Group will internally oversee the effective operation of this policy and make further recommendations as necessary. The Group meets at least three times a year with additional meetings as required. Compliance requirements relating to students who require Student Visas is the responsibility of the

Pro-Vice Chancellor (Partnerships). Each Faculty has responsibility for monitoring the engagement of their students and will ensure that all relevant staff not only use engagement monitoring scanners and registers but also are aware of the University Academic Engagement Policy.

Important: Please note that where tuition fees, maintenance loans and grants are being paid by a third party, either directly to the University or to the student (e.g., Student Loans Company, Research Councils, other sponsors), failure to attend/engage (eg, submit assessed work, attend examinations, etc) with your course will normally lead to the cancellation of this funding. The University is obliged to inform these third parties of non-engagement/engagement.

Students remain liable for all fees as long as they remain enrolled as students of the University. Please see the University's Tuition Fee Regulations appropriate to your level of study and available through the University's Fees and Funding pages on its website: <https://www.glyndwr.ac.uk/en/Feesandstudentfinance/>

1. POLICY

- 1.1 The University's Academic Regulations require that students satisfy programme and module engagement requirements.
- 1.2 It is University policy that engagement registers be kept for all students on taught programmes.
- 1.3 This policy is in line with the commitment of Wrexham University to support widening participation, promote student retention and enhance the student experience.
- 1.4 It recognises also the significance for both the University and for individual students of accurate reporting internally and to external agencies, such as the Local Authorities and Student Loans Company, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the Higher Education Statistics Agency and UK Visas and Immigration.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 To identify and provide support for any student who is not engaging with their studies;
- 2.2 To provide information on student engagement to enhance student support and the student experience;
- 2.3 To provide a clear, positive and well-informed route for students to withdraw from studies if so required;
- 2.4 To ensure that student records are up-to-date and accurate and ensure that the University's reporting responsibilities are fulfilled.

3. UNIVERSITY'S REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 To report unsatisfactory engagement to grant awarding authorities, and where appropriate, to employers or other sponsors.
- 3.2 To identify any Student Visa sponsored student who has a period of non-engagement which exceeds 60 days in duration. This will result in withdrawal of sponsorship
- 3.3 To provide the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the Higher Education Statistical Agency and other external agencies with accurate information regarding the students enrolled at the University at any time.
- 3.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the University's Policy on Reporting & Record Keeping Responsibilities to UK Visas and Immigration and any other advice provided on an individual basis by the Immigration Compliance Team and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Partnerships).

4. ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Overseeing the implementation of this procedure in respect of taught students and postgraduate dissertation students is the responsibility of the Programme Leader (and

throughout this procedure Programme Leader includes their nominated deputy). However, it should also be noted that:

- i. It is the responsibility of every member of staff who is responsible for delivering a timetabled class (in lectures, seminars or other formats) to use the current engagement monitoring system in both registering the engagement of students and then in passing that data on as required. Engagement of staff in using engagement monitoring is monitored routinely and shared with Faculty administration, as is the resulting student engagement data. Failure to use the engagement monitoring system will be addressed by the Dean of Faculty.
- ii. Implementation of this procedure in respect of postgraduate research students is the responsibility of the Main Supervisor, although implementation may be delegated to another member of the supervisory team.

4.2 Administrative support for implementation of the procedure will be provided by staff in Strategic Planning and Student Administration The SPSA team may contact the student on behalf of the Programme Leader or their nominated deputy.

4.3 Taught Students

The University monitors the engagement of all taught students and shares information on any absences to appropriate staff, such as Programme leaders, Personal Tutors or Faculty Administrative staff. This is done to help the University identify where it can support students. Levels of a student's individual recorded engagement are available for the student to see for themselves on request for the current academic year only.

Academic absence

- 4.3.1 All students have a responsibility to satisfy programme and module engagement requirements as specified in their Programme Handbook and to notify the University without delay of absence through illness or other unavoidable cause.
- 4.3.2 It is University policy that engagement registers are taken for all taught programmes, and these will be monitored to see whether students are attending their programme. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to ensure that (in line with 4.1(i)) registers are taken, monitoring takes place and follow up action is taken. It is not appropriate for absence communication to be sent outside of formal teaching weeks, and therefore the process will pause two weeks prior to the end of semester 2 teaching, for all programmes where teaching does not continue into semester 3.

Stage One: First Communication

- 4.3.3 If a student is absent without reporting in and is considered a cause for concern by the relevant Programme Leader, the Programme Leader should enquire why the student has not been attending and to encourage the student to re-engage and advise them of support available. This communication will usually be sent by the SPSA team on behalf of the

Programme Leader after consultation between them. Others such as the Personal Tutor, Student and Campus Life and the Faculty will usually be advised that communication has been sent so that they can also offer support and advice to the student.

- 4.3.4 If a student subsequently re-engages with their studies but then fails to maintain their engagement, the Programme Leader will have the authority to commence stage two of the engagement warning process. If a student subsequently re-engages and maintains an appropriate level of engagement for the remainder of the academic year their engagement monitoring will return to normal at the start of the subsequent academic year.

Stage Two: Formal

- 4.3.5 If, after Stage 1, the student does not re-engage with their studies, he/she will be sent a further absence communication requesting that contact is made with the Programme Leader and discuss any issues or factors which may be impacting on their engagement or engagement. The Personal Tutor, Student and Campus Life and the Faculty will be advised that the letter has been sent so that they can also offer support and advice to the student.

Stage Three: Final Engagement Communication and Appeals

- 4.3.6 If the student does not respond to Stage Two communications or subsequently reengage with their studies a final communication will be issued. The Personal Tutor, Student and Campus Life and the Faculty will be advised that the letter has been sent so that they can also offer support and advice to the student.
- 4.3.7 The final communication will explain that, prior to withdrawal, students will have 10 working days to appeal against any withdrawal decision by providing any relevant documentary evidence, or demonstrating their effective reengagement with the learning which will be considered by the relevant Dean of Faculty or their nominee.
- 4.3.8 The relevant Dean of Faculty, or their nominee, will consider any appeals and reach a decision based on the information and evidence provided. The Immigration Compliance Team will be informed of all appeal outcomes for international sponsored students who require Student Visas.
- 4.3.9 A successful appeal does not automatically over-write any record of previous lack of engagement or engagement warning letters. If a student subsequently re-engages with their studies, or is given another opportunity to continue by the Dean of Faculty, or their nominee, but then fails to maintain their engagement, the Programme Leader will have the authority to recommence any stage of the engagement warning process or request the withdrawal of the student in accordance with this Policy.
- 4.3.10 If a student has enrolled, however engagement concerns are considered to be sufficiently severe and there are additional factors which suggest a potential cause for concern the matter will be referred to the Director of Strategic Planning and Student Administration or

their nominee. That person will undertake a credibility check of the student which may include address details, access to funding, payment of fees or other checks considered appropriate depending on the individual circumstance. If this check results in a cause for concern regarding the student's status the Director of Strategic Planning and Student Administration, or nominee, has the authority to progress the student directly to Stage Three: Final Engagement Communication and Appeals.

- 4.3.11 The decision of the Dean of Faculty, or their nominee will be final and there will be no further opportunity for the student to appeal under the University's procedures. The student may wish to bring a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), in which case they can request a Completion of Procedures letter from the University. The letter should be requested within six weeks of the completion of the review. Following withdrawal the Student Loan Company will be notified as appropriate. The Immigration Compliance Manager will also be notified of any international students who require Student Visas who are withdrawn under this policy for reporting to the UKVI.
- 4.3.12 Following the final communication, and prior to the appeal deadline, if appropriate, students can request to suspend their studies. However, evidence must be provided to support circumstances and Programme Leader authorisation must be obtained.

4.4 Postgraduate Taught dissertation students

- 4.4.1 All full-time dissertation students will be required to engage with their dissertation supervisor at intervals not exceeding three weeks and all part-time dissertation students will be required to attend the University to engage with their dissertation supervisor at intervals not exceeding eight weeks. It is the responsibility of the student and their dissertation supervisor to ensure that a record is kept of these meetings.
- 4.4.2 Students who fail to engage with their Dissertation Supervisor will be subject to Student Academic Engagement Policy processes.

4.5 Postgraduate research students

- 4.5.1 Students registered for a University of Chester Award:
All full-time research students are required to engage with their supervisors frequently and at least one formal supervisory meeting should be recorded each month. It is expected that the minimum that part-time students would engage with their supervisors and record this meeting would be every two months, although this could be more frequent should the student and the supervisor agree that this is necessary. There should be at least one formal meeting with the supervisory team per term.
- 4.5.2 All records of formal supervisory meetings must be submitted promptly.
- 4.5.3 Students who fail to engage with their Supervisor will be subject to Student Academic Engagement Policy processes.

4.6 Additional requirements for UG taught and PGT/PGR International sponsored students

4.6.1 There are additional requirements in respect of sponsored (international) students due to the University's responsibility to the UKVI which will apply, in addition to the general requirements above. Responsibility for supporting international students, and ensuring they continue to comply with visa and other requirements, lies with the Immigration Compliance Team and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Partnerships). Their advice should be sought if anything is unclear.

4.6.2 Any student who has a period of non-engagement which exceeds 60 days in duration must be highlighted with the Immigration Compliance Team by the relevant Programme Leader. This will result in immediate withdrawal of sponsorship and withdrawal from programme.

5. STUDENTS WHO ARE CONSIDERING WITHDRAWING FROM THEIR PROGRAMME AND AVAILABLE SUPPORT

5.1 Students are encouraged to seek advice in the event of any difficulties they encounter. Students should approach their Programme Leader for advice and guidance on academic issues. In the case of personal problems, students may wish to approach their Personal Tutor or Student & Campus Life (Counselling/Inclusion services/ Health and Wellbeing advice/Finance and Money Advice) for advice and support. The Students' Union is also available if you are experiencing difficulties or would like to discuss possible withdrawal.

5.2 During a discussion with a student who is considering withdrawing from a programme, the appropriate tutor or staff member of Student & Campus Life should discuss the reasons for this with the student and consider whether support can be provided and action taken that will help the student remain engaged on the course. The options of suspension from the programme, transfer (to another programme or another institution), and change of mode of study should be discussed, as well as withdrawal. Agreement should be reached on any action to be taken, and recorded appropriately (see 5.3 below).

5.3 Once a decision is made, either because the student has decided to withdraw (or to suspend studies) or because the student has not responded to communications as per Academic Absence 4.3 above, the student and/or member of staff must complete the appropriate form. If the student decides to suspend studies, the agreed date of return should be recorded. Any other observations and agreed actions should be recorded on the form. Further information on suspension of studies is available via the Policy on the Suspension of Studies for Students. The Programme Leader is responsible for confirming a student is to be withdrawn from study.

5.4 If a student has decided to withdraw from the university they are asked to complete the appropriate form. Withdrawal forms are available via the MyUni portal and should be completed fully by students.

5.5 When a student is withdrawing from the university and speaks to their personal tutor or programme leader, the member of staff is encouraged to conduct an exit interview with the

student to understand the reasons why the student wants to leave. This will allow the university to understand why students are withdrawing and so will inform future practice.

- 5.6 Failure to notify the University promptly of a student withdrawal, will result in the student continuing to be liable to pay fees to the University and may also result in them subsequently being required to repay a bursary or student loan.
- 5.7 The Programme Leader is responsible for notifying the programme team if a student withdraws or suspends.