

# Engagement Policy Wrexham University and University of Northampton Validated Degrees

2025-26

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## Committee Approval

Committee	Committee Action	Date
QAEC	Recommended approval	15 November 2023
Academic Committee	Approved	24 November 2023
	<b>Date in force</b>	<b>29 January 2024</b>
	Reviewed by S Ayorinde (Next review in the next Academic Year.)	21 October 2024
	<b>Date in force</b>	<b>24 October 2024</b>
QAEC	Recommended approval	19 November 2025
Academic Committee	Approved	10 December 2025
	<b>Date in Force</b>	<b>11 December 2025</b>

The Engagement Policy will be reviewed annually by the Document Lead. Any significant changes beyond the scope of an annual review will require the approval of the Academic Committee acting on recommendation from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

# 1. Introduction

We recognise the investment that students make, both in time and money, in choosing to pursue a course of higher education. As a responsible institution, we have a duty of care to follow up promptly on matters of non-engagement, whether this be in terms of physical non-attendance at class, non-attendance at virtual classes, non-submission of work, or underuse of the digital learning platforms we provide. Following up instances of non-engagement ensures that students can be supported and given every opportunity to succeed. This duty of care is particularly important in relation to any students under the age of 18 or any vulnerable adults<sup>1</sup>.

In addition, we are obliged to comply with the requirements of the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI), the Student Loans Company (SLC) and other agencies which require monitoring and reporting of student activity and engagement. Engagement involves not only attendance at timetabled classes (face to face or online), but also accessing Canvas and eBooks, submission of work etc.

Good student attendance and engagement also contribute positively to the learning experience of fellow students.

# 2. Definition of engagement

Engagement encompasses various activities, formal and informal, and interaction which leads to successful outcomes with regards to the course of study, enhanced student experience and development of graduate level skills.

# 3. Scope

This Engagement Policy is a student-facing document. Its primary aim is to provide clear information to students on the importance of attendance and engagement for academic success, personal development, and the quality of both the student experience and that of their peers, and how we record and monitor engagement.

The scope of this policy is mainly limited to three desired outcomes:

1. Enhancement of students learning outcomes
2. Optimising the student experience
3. Development of graduate level skills

There are several other elements of interaction which focus on the student voice and contributions to institutional decision-making processes. These elements are articulated separately in the [Corporate and Academic Governance Framework<sup>2</sup>](#) and are embedded in our practices.

It should be noted that the scope of this policy is students' engagement with their course of study and not engagement with the corporate and academic governance arrangements as set out in our Corporate and Academic Governance Framework.

# 4. Attendance and engagement requirements

Students are required to attend all timetabled classes (face to face or online) for their relevant course, unless there are exceptional circumstances preventing you from attending a class. Timetabled classes include lectures, seminars, workshops, and some revision sessions.

Students should note that the academic year is not restricted to timetabled classes or teaching weeks alone, as resits generally take place after teaching ends.

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<sup>1</sup> A definition of "vulnerable adults" can be found in our Safeguarding Policy.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/section-1/>

Students are also required to engage regularly on Canvas, the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) provided by Bloomsbury Institute, to strengthen the learning which takes place in the classroom. Canvas provides students with opportunities to review lecture slides, read the resources recommended by teaching staff and engage in discussion with staff and peers.

## 5. Reasons for engagement

Most students who fail their course do so because of non-attendance, not actively participating, and not engaging with the VLE. Regular attendance requires time discipline and management skills, both of which are critical to any career a student chooses to pursue in future.

Most importantly, engagement is necessary for students to:

- enhance their educational development within their area of study
- experience a sense of belonging within our academic community
- contribute to the learning of others
- receive information about the course
- prepare for all assessments
- undertake any practical work or group work
- maintain compliance with requirements of UKVI, SLC and other external agencies, as appropriate
- develop transferable skills for the workplace including:
  - planning and managing time
  - developing stronger communication skills
  - learning how to give and receive feedback on performance

Poor attendance and engagement by a student also adversely affect that student's peers, who rely heavily on the attendance of others for group projects and for peer learning. Peer learning offers you the opportunity to develop a number of key transferable skills such as:

- learning how to refine understanding through discussion and explanation
- pooling knowledge and skills
- sharing diverse perspectives
- challenging assumptions

## 6. Methods of recording attendance

Physical attendance at lectures, seminars and workshops is recorded using an attendance monitoring system. Students are required to download the app and use that to register their attendance at each session. Attendance at all types of teaching sessions is recorded - lectures, seminars, workshops, revision sessions or other types of sessions. Tutors will sometimes take a register for verification purposes.

For any face to-face classes, attendance will be recorded once per session. If you have a 2-hour seminar, then attendance will be recorded just once for that session. You can register your presence up to 10 minutes before the beginning of the session, so, if the session starts at 10am, attendance can be registered from 9.50am to 10.00am. From 10.10am attendance will be recorded as 'late'. When late attendance is recorded, the system notes 'how late' you were, so we can monitor the actual time you were present during the session. The amount of minutes late will count towards your overall attendance. Students who anticipate being late due to circumstances beyond their control should notify the instructor before the lecture, seminar, or workshop starts. Our Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success team (SEWS) check attendance data on a weekly basis and will intervene in instances of persistent lateness or absence, or patterns of absence.

For any face-to-face classes, you are expected to respect the integrity of our attendance monitoring system and must only record your own attendance. If any student is found to have logged attendance record attendance on behalf of another student who is not in the classroom, both students will be

referred to SEWS for an interview, which could result in a referral to the Deputy Chief Operating Officer for disciplinary action.

In the rare instance where your classes are online, you are expected to use only your own login details to access your online classes. If there is any indication of misuse of the system, then the matter will be referred to SEWS or the Deputy Chief Operating Officer and you may face disciplinary action.

Engagement with the VLE and virtual classes is monitored using data from the system, which shows the frequency and length of student interactions on the platform. By reviewing your interaction, SEWS staff can build up a more holistic picture of your overall engagement with your course, as well as the likelihood of you succeeding on your programme of study.

By using attendance monitoring software, combined with data from the VLE, we are able to record and report on engagement. You will also be able to view your attendance record on Presto.

## 7. Non-engagement

We monitor engagement carefully on an ongoing basis. We recognise that attendance at lectures, seminars and workshops, and active participation is often indicative of a student's level of engagement overall, so we use engagement monitoring intelligence to contact students who show signs that they may be at risk of non-progression, failure or dropping out. The approach of our SEWS team is always supportive and aims to work with students to find solutions to the problems they may be experiencing, whatever those problems might be.

We recognise that instilling the importance of engagement is imperative in the early weeks of a student's study because behaviours learnt during this period set the tone for later practice. SEWS works closely with the Deputy Chief Operating Officer and the Compliance Team to highlight non-engaging students.

SEWS will always highlight the provision of support within Bloomsbury Institute to students whose engagement gives cause for concern. However, if we have concerns that a student is not engaging adequately, we may decide to withdraw a student due to non-engagement. This is covered in our Withdrawal procedures (see Appendix A) and our [Withdrawal Study Break/Suspension of Studies, and Deferral Policy](#). In these instances, we will effect a withdrawal of the student according to our internal monitoring procedures. The start of the period is counted from the date of commencement of the course (the date when the course started and not when you started the course). Should there have been any delay in your start of the course due to administrative reasons, then this will be discounted from the calculations for monitoring.

Additional requirements for international students who are sponsored by us for a student visa are detailed in Section 11 of this document.

## 8. Class changes and cancellations

Rooms and, occasionally, class times are unavoidably subject to change, and it is essential that students check before the following day's classes to see if their timetable has changed. Changes may include a change of time or simply a change of room. Students will be notified in the event of any change via email unless it is a change for a session due to take place within the next 24 hours.

For timetable changes that are going to take place within the next 24 hours (e.g. where a class is cancelled because a tutor calls in sick on the day of the class), we will send students a text message, as well as an email. These emails will be sent to the students' Bloomsbury Institute email address and texts will be sent to the mobile numbers on our student record system. Therefore, it is essential that students keep their contact details up to date. Students can update their contact details using the Student Self-service Portal (SSP)..

Concessions will not be granted to a student missing a class or arriving late because of a change to classes; it is the responsibility of the student to check their timetable, emails and mobile phone for any text messages. The student will simply be marked late or absent, as appropriate.

## 9. Absences or non-engagement with VLE

### 9.1 Evidence in cases of absence

The only acceptable evidence in the case of non-engagement (including absence) is valid third-party (i.e. independent) documentary evidence or, in the case of illness, a self-certification form for the first 7 days of illness.

The most common source of disruption to studies is illness. Students should upload to the SSP a self-certification form, for the first 7 days of illness and other documentary evidence of this if the illness lasts longer than 7 days e.g. a letter from their doctor or counsellor to confirm their illness. (The letter should be current and indicate the period affected with precise dates).

We do not authorise absences from your studies for non-medical problems, other than in exceptional circumstances. To request authorised absence for a non-medical issue, please provide supporting evidence via SSP (e.g. crime reference number if the victim of crime, death certificate or letter from funeral director for bereavement, etc.) and your request will be considered. Our SEWS team is here for you, if you need any support.

An international student with a student visa may be entitled to apply for an authorised absence provided they are able to supply the correct supporting evidence. They will need to contact the Compliance Team for more information on [compliance@bil.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@bil.ac.uk).

## 10. Missed examinations or assignment submissions due to mitigating circumstances

Mitigating circumstances are defined as a serious or acute problem, or an event beyond a student's control or ability to foresee, which has prevented completion of assessment(s) or attendance at examination(s).

It is a student's responsibility to inform the Academic Administration team ([academic.admin@bil.ac.uk](mailto:academic.admin@bil.ac.uk)) within Registry about mitigating circumstances. Birkbeck, University of London students complete the form located on the [Forms](#)<sup>3</sup> section of the website. Academic Administration will respond to students by email.

Wrexham students and University of Northampton students are required to use the awarding body's online submission portal to report extenuating/mitigating circumstances.

## 11. International (Sponsored) students reportable to the UKVI

For international students, academic engagement is defined by the UKVI as (but not limited to):

- Submission of coursework.
- Engaging with the Virtual Learning Environment.
- Sitting examinations either online or in person.
- Other formal assessment activities.
- Taking part in meetings relating to assessments.

Academic engagement will be monitored each month. Students who fail to maintain academic engagement within a 60-day period will be reported to the UKVI. Such reporting will mean that the student's visa will be cancelled, which may lead to the student's deportation. Students may also be

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/section-4/>

interviewed at a UK border and refused re-entry to the UK after a trip abroad. Visa renewal applications may also be declined due to poor attendance. For postgraduate students, there are no in-class sessions during their (third) dissertation term. However, they are still required to have regular contact with their academic supervisor

Students are expected to live within a reasonable commuting distance of the campus to ensure they can fully attend and engage with their studies.

- Requests for timetable adjustments or special allowances based on long travel distances will not normally be granted.
- It is the responsibility of the student to make suitable living arrangements that enable regular attendance

For more information, see [International Sponsored Student Guide](#).<sup>4</sup>

## 11.1 Work and Graduate Visa

The primary purpose of holding a student visa is to undertake full-time study. Students may undertake work within the limits permitted by the conditions of their visa; however, employment must not interfere with academic engagement, attendance, or progress. Study commitments take precedence over any form of employment, and work should fit around study, not the other way around.

Where a student's engagement is unsatisfactory, we will be unable to confirm continued sponsorship for any external purpose or make any required report to UKVI to support eligibility for the Graduate visa route. In cases of continued or serious non-attendance, we will withdraw visa sponsorship and report this to UKVI, which will result in curtailment of the student's visa and withdrawal from the Institute. For more information, see [International Sponsored Student Guide](#).<sup>5</sup>

## 12. Related regulations, policies and procedures

- Safeguarding Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Terms and Conditions
- Withdrawal, Study Break/Suspension of Studies, and Deferral Policy
- Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedures (University of Northampton)
- Extenuating Circumstances Procedure (Wrexham University)
- Mitigating circumstances policy and procedure (Birkbeck, University of London)
- International Sponsored Student Guide

## 13. Review of the Engagement Policy

This Engagement Policy will be reviewed annually by our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC). Any amendments will be subject to approval by the Academic Committee.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies](http://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies)

<sup>5</sup> [www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies](http://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies)



# Appendix A: Withdrawal Overview

The process for the withdrawal of students should be read alongside our:

- Engagement Policy
- Withdrawal, Study Break/Suspension of Studies, and Deferral Policy

These documents are available on the [QEM](#)<sup>6</sup>:

This is stated in our Terms and Conditions for applicants 2025-26:

If you fail to engage with your studies without good cause and due notice within the first term or there is poor academic performance, you may be deemed to have withdrawn from the course, and your registration may be terminated with Bloomsbury Institute and (where applicable) the awarding body.

If you are an international student whom we have sponsored for a Student Visa, we will inform the UK Visa and Immigration of your withdrawal, and this will result in the cancellation of your visa.

If you are withdrawn for non-engagement, you will remain liable for the full tuition fees. For further information see our [Withdrawal, Study Break/Suspension of Studies and Deferral Policy](#).<sup>7</sup>

For international students, academic engagement is monitored in line with our [International Sponsored Student Guide](#).<sup>8</sup> If a student is only provisionally enrolled on the course or fully enrolled but has not attended, we may de-register the student.

Students are instructed to read the Terms and Conditions as part of the enrolment process.

## Engagement points

In order to establish non-engagement, a number of agreed engagement points will be monitored:

- Induction
- Enrolment on the VLE
- Engagement with the VLE
- Attendance in class (virtual or on campus, whichever is applicable)
- Response to Course Leader email(s)
- Response to Week 2 Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success (SEWS) intervention
- Response to Week 4 SEWS intervention

There is no formula for which combination of these will result in withdrawal for non-engagement. A student may fail to attend for weeks and then contact us with reliable evidence for mitigating circumstances, and as a result, the student would not be withdrawn.

## Process

The engagement points are monitored by SEWS, with the support of the Academic Division. Any student who is at risk of being withdrawn will be contacted by SEWS (at least twice) during the first four weeks of their studies.

If a student enrolled and started on the course late, the process commences from the first day that the student was able to engage.

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<sup>6</sup> [www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies](http://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies)

<sup>7</sup> [www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies](http://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies)

<sup>8</sup> [www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies](http://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies)

The decision to withdraw will be made by the Deputy Chief Operating Officer and the Director of the Centre for Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success.

Students have a right to appeal should they believe that there is a procedural irregularity. The appeal process is outlined within the [Student Complaints Policy and Procedures](#)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> [www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/](http://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/)

# Sickness Self-certification Form

## [Face-to-face sessions only]

## Guidance notes

This form is valid for absences due to illness for up to 7 days. If the absence is longer than 7 consecutive calendar days, then you must obtain a medical certificate from your GP.

This form is only for absence from lectures, workshops and seminars, both face to face or online; it **does not** cover missed items of summative assessment (exam, coursework, viva, etc.). If you have missed an item of assessment, you may be eligible to apply for Mitigating or Extenuating Circumstances. Please refer <https://www.bil.ac.uk/gem/section-3/> for relevant policies and forms.

**Notes:**

- Only to be used for the first 7 days of illness
- Do not use for assessment extension or mitigating circumstances
- Submit this form through SSP

First Name:

Surname:

Student Number:

Please give brief details of your sickness:

Please give brief details of your sickness:

First day of absence owing to sickness:                 /                 /

Date of return to class:                 /                 /

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bil.ac.uk/student-services/forms/>