

STUDENT PREPARATION, ATTENDANCE & ONLINE PARTICIPATION POLICY

- 1 The University of Law's Student Preparation, Attendance & Online Participation Policy has been informed by the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code for Higher Education, specifically the Advice and Guidance for Enabling Student Achievement. The QAA's Quality Code is the definitive reference point for all UK higher education institutions and sets out how academic standards are established and maintained and how the quality of learning opportunities are assured and enhanced. This policy sits within the University's Quality and Standards Code which provides a suite of policies and supporting protocols designed to safeguard the academic standards of the University and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the code.

This policy is also informed by the Office for Students Regulatory Framework, specifically Condition B2

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 give a number of commitments to make the most of their time at the University and to ensure they achieve the outcomes of their programme of study. The Student Charter sets clear boundaries of acceptable conduct and behaviour and all students are required to abide by this Charter and conduct themselves in a way that is not disruptive or disrespectful to fellow students or staff members.

4 This policy expands on these commitments and provides details to students about their obligations and the University rules and regulations with regard to attendance on and/or Participation with their programme of study.

Definitions

5 **Participation** means a student's attendance at timetabled classes and/or a student's submission of online tasks and coursework assessments (in accordance with published deadlines) in relation to the student's programme of study;

6 **Events** include timetabled matters such as lectures and workshops and also online task submissions and coursework assessments.

Responsibility for this policy

7 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.

Expectation

8 The University has in place, monitors and evaluates arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential, in particular through full preparation, attendance and submission of online tasks.

Key Aims and Principles

9 In developing this policy, the University:

9.1 Supports and encourages students to achieve their full potential in their studies and in developing lifelong skills and competencies;

9.2 Enhances the overall learning environment by encouraging active Participation in all areas of study.

9.3 Provides guidance on why full Participation is important;

9.4 Uses a student's Participation as one of the factors to be taken into account in reviewing his or her commitment to, and performance in, his/her academic studies;

9.5 Is aware of a student's level of Participation when developing an appropriate response to any concerns about performance.

10 Participation and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who fully participate are more likely to enjoy success and achieve the learning outcomes of their programme of study.

11 Students are active participants in their learning experiences and must take responsibility for achieving their potential through successful Participation in all aspects of their studies.

12 Participation is a key component in maximising the level of student achievement and employability (for example, in terms of developing workplace skills). Based on the assumption that students who have poor Participation in their studies are at risk of disengaging, the University monitors Participation in order to prompt further investigation and offer appropriate support where required. Students who experience

problems with Participation 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.

13 Where this policy indicates that notification is to be provided in writing, such notification may be provided using the University email system.

Participation

14 Student Participation in all Events is compulsory. Every student has a responsibility to participate in the correct Event, including when the Event is divided into different groups.

15 There is a clear correlation between full Participation with the programme of study and pass rates in related assessments; failure by a student to fully Participate is likely to adversely affect his or her progress.

16 Student Participation will be monitored, and this will include keeping a record of a student's failure to attend an Event or submit work for any reason, including for reasons of religious observance or through disability.

17 Students with poor levels of Participation will be contacted to ascertain any reasons for their non-Participation with their programme of study. Such reasons may lead the University to implement its Cause for Concern and/or Support to Study policy.

18 Students who are identified as being persistently or substantially late or absent from Events will be contacted to ascertain any reasons for this lateness/non-attendance.

19 Students who are identified as regularly failing to complete adequate preparatory work for Events will be contacted to ascertain any reasons for such behaviour.

20 Where attendance and/or participation requirements are specified by the relevant Professional Statutory Body, students are expected to additionally comply with these requirements, which are published separately.

21 In line with the Student Charter, students are responsible for checking their University email account on a regular basis and at least twice a week. When doing so, students are obliged to open and read any new University emails they have received; respond promptly to University emails requiring a response; and in particular to respond promptly to emails regarding lack of Participation in their programme of study.

22 The University recognises that it may be necessary to make reasonable allowances and/or adjustments in the case of disability-related non-Participation, 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.

23 A student who is experiencing difficulties in Participating fully with their programme of study because of personal, financial or other reasons, should contact their Personal Tutor or the Programme and Student Lead. For students studying online, contact should be made with the Course Administrator. The University also has other support services available including a confidential Counselling Service.

24 The University has an Intermission Policy which enables students experiencing difficulties to take a break from their studies. A student who wishes to consider this should contact their Personal Tutor, a member of the University's Student Information team or the Programme and Student Lead for assistance.

Absence

25 In general:

25.1 Where a student is aware in advance that they will not be able to Participate an Event, it is the responsibility of the student to inform his or her subject tutor that he or she (the student) will not be able to Participate in that Event.

25.2 If an attendance mode student is absent from an Event or wishes to enquire about the possibility of attending, space permitting, a substitute Event, he or she should contact the Student Information team in his or her Campus. Without good reason and the consent of the Programme and Student Lead, there is a maximum of 6 Events which can be substituted during the year.

25.3 If a student on an attendance mode course has missed an Event, they must:

25.3.1 complete an absence form, which is available from ELITE, stating the Event missed and the reason for his or her 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; and

25.3.2 within 14 calendar days from the date of their absence, contact the relevant subject tutor to confirm that they have made up the work missed. This requirement will usually be satisfied in the subsequent Event by the student demonstrating to their subject tutor that they have completed all work associated with the missed Event; e.g. Test and Feedback questions, related preparatory work and the Event exercises and activities.

Religious Observance Matters

26 The University recognises that there may be religious observance requirements which affect a student's ability to study or participate on particular dates or days.

27 Students who are unable to participate for reasons of religious observance must inform their subject tutor and personal tutor at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the absence. 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 degree or award and the programme requirements must nevertheless be satisfied with students being responsible for making good 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, or attendance (at any time) is required for programmes otherwise delivered online.

Disability-Related Matters

28 The University recognises that in certain circumstances, a student may be prevented from engaging in their programme of study for a reason related to his or her disability, as defined in the Equality Act 2010. Disability-related non-participation may only be approved provided that the student will still meet the programme requirements. Students are responsible for making good the work missed through such non-participation.

29 Students who wish to seek approval for planned disability-related non-participation should, in the first instance, discuss this with their Personal Tutor or the Programme and Student Lead. Where it is not possible to approve non-participation in advance, students must contact their Personal Tutor and the Programme and Student Lead as soon as practicable following the Event. It should be noted that disabled students who are absent from Events and have failed to follow this procedure without good reason will be regarded as being absent/not participating.

30 Where disability-related non-participation 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 a member of the Disability Support Service team. The Personal Tutor will be advised of any agreed adjustments for monitoring purposes.

Students who are in receipt of a student loan

31 Unsatisfactory participation may affect a student's eligibility for a student loan.

32 Students have a responsibility to inform the Student Loan Company by completing and returning 'Change of Circumstances' form (CO1) which can be obtained from the *Student Loan Company* if they:

- 32.1 leave at any time before the end of their programme; or
- 32.2 suspend participation on their programme for any reason; or
- 32.3 transfer to another programme; or
- 32.4 marry; or
- 32.5 change address.

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

33 The University reserves the right to inform the employer (or other sponsor, where applicable) where a student is not participating in their programme without good cause.

Tier 4 Students

34 Students who are sponsored by the University on a Tier 4 Student visa are subject to the Attendance Policy for Tier 4 Students. Tier 4 Students have different attendance requirements due to the conditions of their visa and Home Office regulations. Any requirements contained in the Attendance Policy for Tier 4 Students take precedence over those outlined in this document.

Withdrawal due to non-engagement

35 If a student is not participating in his or her programme of study on any level, has not contacted the University to advise of any illness/extenuating circumstances and does not respond to contact from their Personal Tutor, Programme and Student Lead or other staff member, the student 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.

36 In the unlikely event that the University has to consider withdrawing a student from their programme of study due to non-engagement, the Campus Dean/Programme Director will verify:

- 36.1 the student's level of attendance/participation including timetabled sessions and/or online submission of tasks as applicable and last login to the University's VLE/email system;
- 36.2 that the University has attempted contact regarding the poor engagement levels on at least two occasions and has not received a response;
- 36.3 that, in the opinion of the Programme and Student Lead, the student has reached a level of non-engagement on their course which would result in them not being in a position to pass the related assessment(s) due to the substantial amount of material that has been missed.

37 In the event of a Campus Dean/Programme Director verifying the information outlined in paragraph 38, 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-engagement, they will be informed of their right to appeal the decision and the appeal process. The appeal form can be found in Appendix A.

Responsibility for the Provision

- 39 Responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy lies initially with the Director of Operational Services.

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 team/Director of Operational Services	01/10/18
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

Appendix A – Appeal Process and Form

An appeal must be made in writing within 14 calendar days to the Academic Registry, 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-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 he or she intends to rely on together with all supporting evidence. If the student is unable to submit the appeal within 14 calendar days, he or she should write to the Academic Registry with an explanation.

On receipt of the appeal the Academic Registry will:

- (a) determine whether the appeal is eligible for consideration;
- (b) appoint an Appeal Panel comprising 3 members of staff at Executive Manager level or above 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 Academic Registry 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 address of the Academic Registry is:

Academic Registry
The University of Law
14 Store Street
Bloomsbury
London WC1E 7DE
academic.registry@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-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

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 Academic.Registry@law.ac.uk;
- Printing off and completing the form manually and posting it together with any supporting documents to:
Academic Registry
The University of Law, 14 Store Street, London, WC1E 7DE.

If you require any advice as to the best way to complete this form, please contact the Student Association Administrator (student-association@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