

International Student Attendance and Performance Monitoring Procedure

September 2015

Also available in large print (16pt)
and electronic format.

Ask Student Services for details.

www.perth.uhi.ac.uk

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 Perth College UHI is committed to supporting student success and achievement. Under the United Kingdom Home Office Visas and Immigration Sponsor Licence, Perth College UHI has a legal responsibility in relation to recording and monitoring attendance of international students. Students who fail to meet acceptable course attendance criteria could restrict their chance of success, and may be in breach of their visa conditions.
- 1.2 The purpose of this document is to detail the Perth College UHI procedures for tracking and monitoring international student attendance and performance including details of action to be taken in the event of poor attendance or poor performance.
- 1.3 This procedure complies with the UKVI requirements, aligns with UHI Policy and requirements in this respect, and supports the achievement and success of our international students.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This procedure applies only to taught international students studying on Perth College UHI campus and addresses all aspects of attendance tracking and monitoring. The scope of this procedure includes the following:
 - Perth College UHI staff responsibilities.
 - CELCAT attendance recording and tracking.
 - Monitoring of attendance.
 - Staff interventions.
 - Authorised absence and medical self-certification.
 - Student withdrawal decisions.
 - International student obligations.
- 2.2 The procedure is applicable to international students only.

3 Definitions

Unauthorised Absence: An unauthorised absence is defined as failing to attend expected contact without prior authorised absence approval, or post session medical certification.

Expected Contact: Students are expected to attend 100% of timetabled classes and all meetings with their Personal Academic Tutor or International Centre staff.

4 Responsibilities

- 4.1 **Vice Principal, Academic.** Responsible for considering appeals
- 4.2 **Director of Corporate and International Services.** Responsible for strategic oversight of the International Centre and compliance with the UKVI requirements.

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- 4.3 **Head of Quality.** Responsible for coordination of appeal process as detailed in this procedure. In addition, Quality Approval check of the procedure is the responsibility of the Head of Quality who will arrange for the procedure to be published on the web.
- 4.4 **International Centre Manager.** Responsible as Level 1 user for the Perth College UHI Licence and as Level 2 user for the UHI Licence. Responsibilities include interviewing students referred to the International Centre (IC) and informing UHI EO of any HE international student withdrawals, as detailed in Section 5 below. The International Centre Manager is also responsible for briefing international students on attendance monitoring procedures during induction.
- 4.5 **International Student Recruitment Director.** Responsible for monitoring the overall impact of the international student experience, attendance and withdrawals on student performance indicators and future strategy.
- 4.6 **Personal Academic Tutor (PAT).** Reviewing student attendance on a weekly basis and undertaking interviews as detailed in Section 5 below. Informing the Subject Leader (SL) if unauthorised absence reaches the trigger levels detailed in this procedure. Signing student Authorised Absence forms and Medical Self-Certification and forwarding to the SL following approval.
- 4.7 **Lecturing Staff.** In this procedure, lecturing staff are responsible for recording the attendance of international students at class.
- 4.8 **Subject Leader (SL).** Responsible for co-ordinating student attendance tracking and monitoring within his or her Curriculum Area. Interviewing students and issuing warning letters as detailed in this procedure and which may be found at S:\COMMON\International Student Referrals\Warning Letter Templates. Informing the ICM of persistent unauthorised absence as detailed in this procedure.
- 4.9 **Head of Curriculum.** General monitoring of international student attendance, sanctioning of withdrawals due to poor attendance or performance and ensuring that this procedure is followed.

5 Procedure

Authorised Absence and Medical Self-Certification

- 5.1 Students may request to be absent from an expected contact and if so must complete an Authorised Absence Form and submit it to the PAT at least 24 hours prior to the event (see Appendix B). If an authorised absence request is rejected by the PAT, the student must attend the session and failure to do so will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

- 5.2 If a student is unable to attend a planned session for medical reasons and the period of absence is less than 5 days, a medical self-certification form must be submitted. The form must be submitted at the first timetabled class, following their period of absence.

If a student has reason to submit in excess of 5 self-certification forms, they will be expected to make an appointment with a local medical practice and provide evidence for any further illness related absence.

- 5.3 The PAT will present this evidence to the SL who will update CELCAT within 24 hours of receipt of the evidence. This process also allows the SL to monitor occurrences of medical self-certification and if there are in excess of 5 certifications, to contact the student to inform them of their obligations as detailed in Appendix A.

Monitoring and Intervention Process

- 5.4 The Attendance and Performance Monitoring Procedure, known colloquially as the BRAG process, will be followed to monitor attendance and performance for all international students. Details of this process can be found on PerthNet.
- 5.5 Details of any action taken by the PAT is recorded on the BRAG report, and with respect to international students a note made of the expected student improvement action should also be recorded on the International Student Referrals file (S:Common\International Student Referrals).
- 5.6 The monitoring and intervention process is applied over a single academic year. Students do not carry over unauthorised absences to a new academic year.
- 5.7 Attendance is recorded at each class by lecturing staff using CELCAT and monitored on a weekly basis by PATs and Curriculum SLs using CELCAT reporting tools.
- 5.8 A student may be required to be withdrawn from their programme of study where they have unsatisfactory attendance, b) it is considered that their poor performance has jeopardised their opportunity to successfully achieve their award, c) they have significantly breached the student code of conduct which has been upheld at a disciplinary hearing.
- 5.9 The consequences of withdrawal from a programme of study will mean that the College's sponsorship of the student's visa will be rescinded and the Home Office informed.
- 5.10 Upon a decision made to withdraw a student from their programme of study, the International Centre Manager will report to the Home Office (and UHI EO of any HE international student withdrawals) that sponsorship of the students visa has been withdrawn.

Breach of Student Code of Conduct

- 5.11 Where a student has breached the Student Code of Conduct, as outlined in the Student Charter, for either misbehaviour or academic malpractice they will be referred to the Student Disciplinary Procedure.
- 5.12 The outcome of investigation of a breach of the Student Code of Conduct may require a student to be withdrawn. This decision would override the need for the BRAG procedure. The International Centre must be informed of all investigations and outcomes of the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

Right of Appeal

- 5.13 A student may wish to appeal against decisions and actions taken within this procedure. To do this, he or she must have reasonable grounds upon which to base such an appeal (see paragraph 5.16 below).
- 5.14 Appeals should be made to the Head of Quality within 5 working days of receiving the decision to withdraw and should clearly state the grounds for appeal. The Head of Quality will consider the grounds for appeal and the evidence presented and, with due consultation where appropriate, will determine whether there is a prima facie case for reconsideration of the decision.
- 5.15 If it is considered that there are grounds for appeal, the Vice Principal (Academic) will consider the case. If there are insufficient grounds for appeal, the Head of Quality will inform the student that the decision is final. In either case, the final decision will be made within the 10 working day period referred to above.

Grounds for Appeal

- 5.16 Appeals against decisions in this procedure will normally only be considered on the following grounds:
- a That a student's attendance or performance was adversely affected by factors which they were unable or, with valid reason, unwilling to divulge prior to the decision being made;
 - b That evidence is provided that there was material administrative error in the attendance or performance recording process;
 - c That evidence is produced that some other material irregularity has occurred.

International Student Obligations

- 5.17 All international students sign a letter acknowledging the details of the UKVI reporting obligations. A copy of this agreement is at Appendix A to this document.

6 **Linked Policies/Related Documents**

BRAG Process (Attendance and Performance Monitoring)
Student Disciplinary Procedure
Student Charter/Code of Conduct

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Appendix A – International Student Agreement on UKVI Reporting Obligations

International Student Agreement on UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) Reporting Obligations

As a Highly Trusted Sponsor of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), we have supplied you with a CAS which has allowed you to obtain a Tier 4 Student Visa. Under the Points Based System, UKVI has placed the responsibility for students on the sponsoring institution.

Whilst you are studying at this institution we have a legal responsibility to meet certain reporting obligations imposed by UKVI. We take these obligations very seriously and we expect you to take full responsibility for your attendance and behaviour during your time at Perth College UHI.

As a sponsor, we are legally obliged to:

- Keep a copy of your passport and visa.
- Confirm sight of the original certificates, copies of which have been used for your admission.
- Be able to provide UKVI with your current address and telephone number.

We must also advise UKVI if:

- You fail to enrol within 10 days of the start date;
- You leave your course or move to another institution;
- There are any changes to your course eg if you change to a shorter or longer course;
- Your level of unauthorised absences exceeds the UKVI threshold or;
- We suspect that you are breaking the terms of your visa in any way.

There are **5 Key Points** for which **you** must take responsibility:

- 1 **Contact Information:** You must notify the Curriculum Area Office **and** the International Centre if you change your address or telephone number.
- 2 You must advise the International Centre of any **change in your visa status**.
- 3 **Attendance:** You must attend **all** (100%) timetabled classes, and meetings with PAT or International Centre staff, and meet with other students to participate in group work where required.
- 4 Holidays, work commitments and appointments should be planned **outwith** your timetabled classes. If you need to be absent you must complete an **Authorised Absence Request Form** at least one day in advance (available from your Curriculum Area Office) and submit this to your Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) for authorisation by the Head of Curriculum. If you are ill, you must contact your Curriculum Area Office, (the telephone numbers are shown overleaf), on the **first day of your absence** – this is very important.
- 5 If you are absent, due to illness, you must complete a **Self-Certified Medical Certificate**, which will be issued by your Curriculum Area Office. If you are absent

for more than 5 College days, you must obtain a medical certificate from your GP or hospital, you will be charged for this by the doctor before issuing. (The number of forms submitted is closely monitored.)

Students who do not notify the International Centre of any relevant change to address or visa status will be at risk of being withdrawn and reported to UKVI.

Students who do not meet attendance or performance requirements will not be issued with a CAS for visa extensions and may be excluded from sitting exams or attending graduation.

I have read and I understand* the information above and I agree to take full responsibility for the Key Points above. (This information is also outlined in your copy of the International Student Welcome Booklet.) You will be given a copy of this form so that you do not forget your obligations.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

(*If there is anything in this document that you do not understand, please ask the International Officer to explain before you sign.) **Further clarification of terms can be found in the International Student Welcome Booklet.**

Appendix B: Clarification of Terms

Authorised Absence:

Authorised absence requests must be made at least 24 hours in advance and must be supported by written evidence. The form must be signed by your PAT or the Head of Curriculum **before** the absence.

The maximum time allowed for absences are as follows:

	Maximum Time
Doctor and dentist appointments	3 hours
Hospital appointments	1 day
Wedding (own)	2 weeks
Wedding (close family member)	1 week
Funeral (close family member)	1 week

No other reasons for authorised absence will be accepted.

Sickness Absence:

You are expected to register with a doctor within the first 2 weeks of arrival in Scotland.

If you are ill, you must notify the college on morning of the **first day of illness** by email to your PAT or by calling the Curriculum Area Office:

- Engineering Students: 01738 877813
- Hospitality and Business Students: 01738 877605
- Language School Students: 01738 877806

If you return from sickness absence within 5 days, you must submit a Self-Certified Medical Certificate* on your **first day** back in College.

If you are ill for more than 5 days, you must obtain a Medical Certificate from your doctor and hand it to your PAT on your **first day** back.

Perfect Attendance Award

It is possible to achieve a 100% attendance record if you remember to seek authorisation and hand in any medical certificates as appropriate. Every student achieving a 100% attendance record will be awarded a Certificate of Excellent Attendance at the end of the academic year.

*This is limited to 5 self-certification forms which will be accepted before you will be required to produce medical evidence.