

Quality System

Policy Number

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Policy Title

Higher Education Attendance Policy for
The Open University

Written by:	Equality Impact Assessment	Date of Policy	Date of next review
Author: Kevin Hodgson	Date:	September 2019	September 2020

Higher Education Attendance Policy for The Open University



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The College wants all students to achieve the qualification for which they have registered. In order for students to be successful, it is important that they engage fully with their programmes of study. This engagement includes:
- Attending all formal teaching sessions
 - Completing directed, group-based and independent study activities outside scheduled teaching
 - Undertaking all assessments.
- 1.2 The College monitors student attendance making use of attendance registers (which lecturers complete online) in a way that is appropriate for the programme and its mode of study. The College also offers support to students facing difficulties that may hinder their academic progression. Where programmes feature specific attendance requirements students will be informed at the beginning of the programme.

2.0 Attendance

- 2.1 Students will be advised about attendance requirements and the importance of attending classes, both orally and in writing through mechanisms, such as induction events and in Programme and Module handbooks.
- 2.2 Attendance at, and absence from, all timetabled sessions will be recorded and monitored following the College Register system. The marks applicable to Higher Education students are shown in Table One below:

Table one	
Register Mark	Reason
P-Present	The student is present in class
L – Late	The student has attended but is late (amounts of minutes late is added)
Leave blank (work placement)	This is to be used if the student is at work experience or if an apprentice has to remain at work which has been communicated by the employer.
A – Absent	If a student has not responded to the texts or phone calls then the mark

3.0 What to do in the event of a period of absence

- 3.1 If students are unable to attend their normal timetabled classes, they should follow the contact procedure outlined in their Programme Handbook as soon as they are aware that they will not be attending.
- 3.2 Student should give a target date by which they will be able to return to normal timetabled classes. This date will enable the Programme Team to identify how best to support students during their absence.

4.0 Prolonged or repeated absence

- 4.1 If a student misses a significant number of sessions (for a module, this could be between 3-4 classes in sequence) students will be contacted by a member of staff. The College wants to help students begin attending again and to ensure that they complete their course and so the Programme Leader will explore ways to support students.
- 4.2 Where it is clear that, having explored all avenues, a student is no longer engaging with their programme of study, arrangements will be made to withdraw the student from the course and from

Higher Education Attendance Policy for The Open University



the College. The College will also report this situation to external authorities as appropriate. This could be the Student Loan Company, Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies, or Employers/Sponsors. The College takes all reasonable steps to avoid the final step of withdrawing students.

5.0 Prolonged or Repeated Absence – the Process

- 5.1 The step-by-step process the College follows in supporting students with prolonged or repeated absence is outlined in Prolonged or Repeated Absence – the Process Flowchart (Appendix 1). The flowchart refers to three letters written to students during the Prolonged or Repeated Absence Process (Appendix 2).

For further information contact:

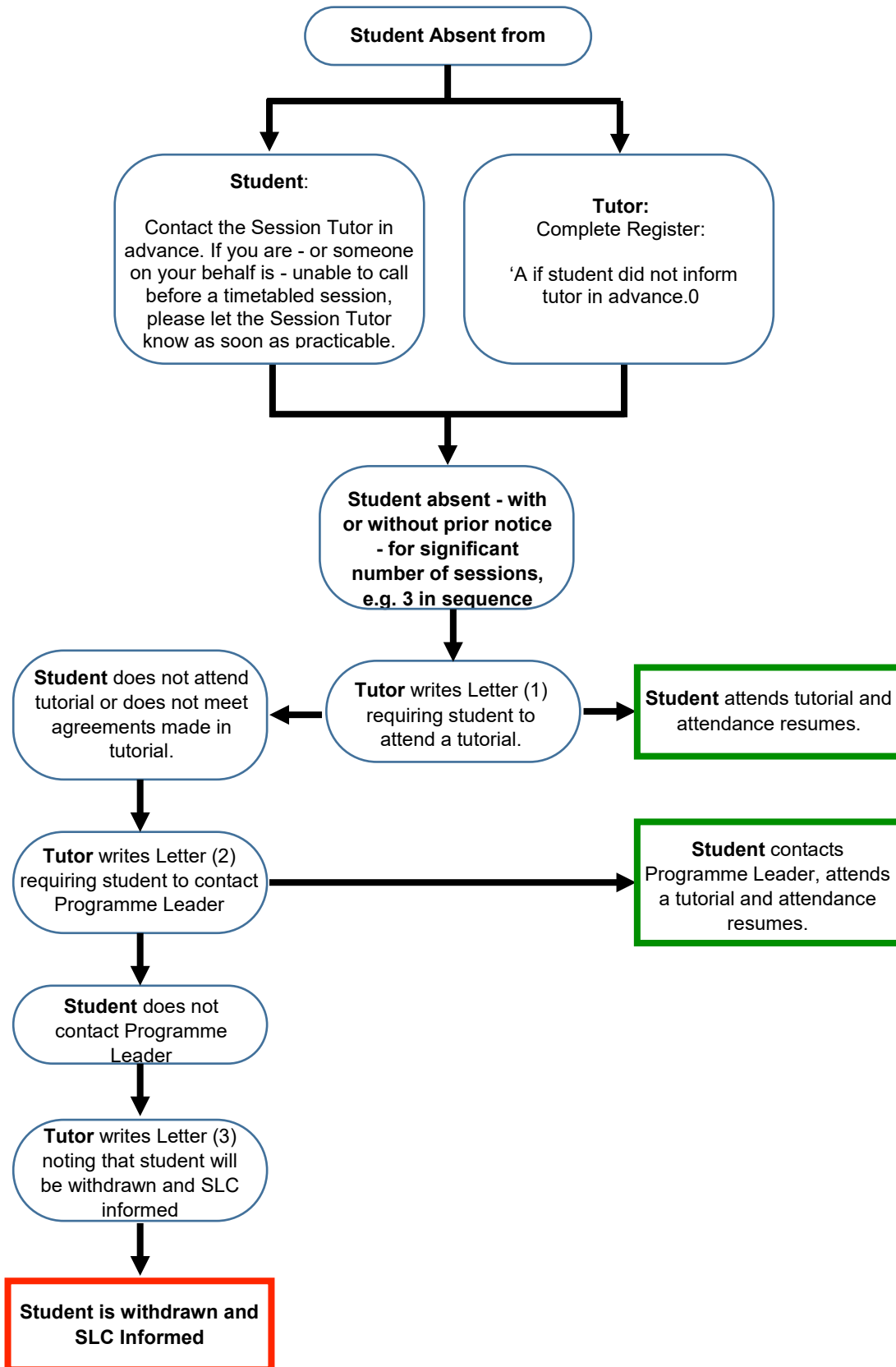
Kevin Hodgson
HE Development Manager

September 2019

Higher Education Attendance Policy for The Open University



Appendix 1 – Prolonged or Repeated Absence – Process Flowchart



Higher Education Attendance Policy for The Open University



Appendix 2 – Prolonged or Repeated Absence – Example Letters for Students

The flowchart in Appendix 1 refers to three letters, examples below:

Letter 1 – Example
<p>[Student Name] [Student Address]</p> <p><Date></p> <p>Dear [Student Name]</p> <p>RE: Attendance [Programme Name]</p> <p>It has been brought to my attention that your attendance for the above course is below the College targets. It is vitally important the you fully engage in your programme of study and show your commitment to the course. The academic team and your Personal Tutor have expressed concern and would like to help.</p> <p>As a consequence, I require that you attend a meeting with [Programme Leader Name], here at the College [Date and Time of Tutorials] to discuss the above. Please bring along any supporting evidence for your absence.</p> <p>Should you wish to discuss this further, please don't hesitate to contact me on [Contact number and email address]</p>

Letter 2 – Example
<p>[Student Name] [Student Address]</p> <p><Date></p> <p>Dear [Student Name]</p> <p>RE: Attendance [Programme Name]</p> <p>It has been brought to my attention that you have not attended any lectures since our meeting on [Tutorial date and time]. As discussed, with your Programme Leader, we are concerned that you are at risk of falling behind with work and ultimately, of being unable to progress.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>It has been brought to my attention that you have not responded to your Programme Leader's letter requiring you to attend a tutorial to discuss attendance issues.</p> <p>At this point, there are a number of options available including, but not limited to, re-engaging with your course, applying for extenuating circumstances, suspension of studies or withdrawal.</p> <p>It is important that you contact us so that we can identify the best way forward for you. Please can you contact your Programme Leader by [Date], to discuss the next steps. If your Programme Leader does not hear from you by [Date], you will be automatically withdrawn from the programme. You also need to know that information concerning your engagement with the course will be shared with Student Finance England.</p>

Higher Education Attendance Policy for The Open University



Letter 3 – Example

[Student Name]
[Student Address]

<Date>

Dear [Student Name]

RE: Withdrawal [Programme Name]

As your attendance issues have not improved . . .

Or

As we have written to you on two occasions, the first inviting you to a tutorial to discuss your attendance [date] and the second requiring you contact your Programme Leader [date] and we have not heard from you . . .

. . . I can confirm that we have withdrawn you from the above programme with effect from the last day of your attendance, [date]. This information will be passed to Student Finance England in due course. We wish you all the very best for your future.