

International Student Academic Engagement Policy

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Scope and purpose of the policy

Barnet and Southgate College is a Student visa Sponsor and is responsible for monitoring Student visa holders' engagement with their studies and reporting any changes to the Home Office in line with Home Office guidance.

The policy has been designed to ensure that any potential welfare issues, which may be indicated by poor attendance or poor engagement, are identified promptly so that appropriate support can be provided.

Policy aims

The aim of the international student academic engagement policy and its associated procedure is to ensure clear and transparent expectations and guidance for all concerned in international students' academic engagement. By ensuring students are actively involved in their studies, this policy aims to improve student retention, progression, and academic achievement.

Visa Compliance

This policy outlines Barnet and Southgate College's commitment to monitoring and supporting student engagement and ensuring compliance with UKVI visa regulations.

Operational Terms

- Emotional Engagement: This refers to a student's feelings and attitudes towards college, teachers, classmates, and the learning environment, including a sense of belonging and positive emotions.
- Behavioural Engagement: This involves a student's actions and participation in learning activities, such as attending classes, completing assignments, asking questions and actively participating in discussions.
- Cognitive Engagement: This focuses on a student's strategic investment in learning, including their willingness to challenge themselves, seek deeper understanding, and use effective learning strategies.

We monitor engagement for:

All international students, studying on a student visa under the sponsorship of Barnet and Southgate College.

Why engagement is monitored:

- Engaged students are more likely to succeed academically, develop a deeper understanding of the material, and develop a love for learning.
- Provide appropriate advice and/or counselling to students who do not engage with their studies regularly
- Comply with our responsibilities as a student visa sponsor, and maintain this status
- Make sure we provide accurate information to external government bodies

Support for disabilities or illness

If a student is unable to meet their engagement or attendance requirements due to disability or illness, Barnet and Southgate College will endeavour to support the needs of the student in line with UKVI guidance.

Monitoring and Intervention

During term-time, Barnet and Southgate College students are required to meet a minimum of 85% of their scheduled 15 hours of daytime (08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday) classroom-based study per week.

As a student at Barnet and Southgate College, you are considered to be academically engaging if you are actively and consistently following your course of study.

- Physical attendance at teaching or study sessions, including labs, tutorials, workshops, studios, lectures, etc. evidenced by the teacher entering a present mark on the register
- Coursework, presentations and assessment submissions

- During extenuating circumstances e.g. Covid outbreak, when learning is received via remote delivery; attendance online, engaged, with a working camera and microphone

Lack of engagement

The International Officer will review the engagement of Student visa holders retrospectively on a fortnightly basis via the electronic register system and held meetings with Curriculum Managers. The following process will be followed where lack of engagement is identified:

- a) If a student fails to meet the minimum weekly attendance rate for two consecutive weeks without an authorised absence, the International Officer will contact the student to remind them of their academic engagement requirements under their student visa. The student will have an opportunity to explain their absence and discuss any areas in which they can be supported.
- b) If the student fails to meet the minimum attendance rate for four consecutive weeks, the International Officer will email the student again and copy in their curriculum manager, offering the student the opportunity to explain the reason(s) for non-engagement and to re-engage appropriately to avoid further escalation.
- c) After six consecutive weeks of failing to meet the minimum weekly attendance rate, the International Officer will send the student a warning email.
- d) After eight consecutive weeks of non-engagement, the student's access to the college campus and online facilities will be removed, and the student will be asked to urgently contact the International Officer. The Student Services department and the student's Curriculum Manager will be informed of the withdrawal of access.
- e) If the student has not met the minimum attendance for nine consecutive weeks, they will be invited to attend a compulsory appointment with the International Officer and their Curriculum Manager, where evidence of physical engagement will be sought.
- f) After 12 weeks of non-engagement, and without alternative evidence of physical engagement, the student's visa sponsorship will be withdrawn for lack of academic engagement with their course. The student's studies will be suspended in compliance with the Student Sponsor Guidance March 2025. This will lead to the student's visa being cancelled, and they will be required to leave the UK.

If this (f) happens, a return flight home will be arranged, and Border Control will keep hold of the student's passport until they are ready to board their flight home. The refusal will remain on the student's immigration history for the next 10 years, and they will need to declare this every time they make a visa application for the UK or any other country.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff and students share responsibility for fostering a culture of engagement.

Ensuring students have access to support and guidance

Personal tutors and other staff members are responsible for providing support and guidance to students on their academic progress and well-being.

Monitoring and managing student engagement

Module tutors and programme leaders are responsible for monitoring student engagement and taking appropriate action when necessary.

Reminding students of the importance of engagement

Academic staff, including programme directors, are responsible for reminding students of the importance of regular attendance and participation in learning and teaching sessions.

Communicating expectations and interventions

The international Officer and academic staff are responsible for communicating the expected levels of engagement and the interventions that will be taken when students' engagement is deemed unsatisfactory.

Providing support services

Staff are responsible for notifying students of support services available within the college, particularly when attendance concerns are raised.

Ensuring records are kept

Staff and students are responsible for ensuring that records are kept of meetings and discussions regarding student engagement.

Addressing engagement concerns

The international Officer and Academic team are responsible for addressing student engagement concerns and communicating these to the necessary staff member(s).

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the International Officer or Curriculum Manager.