MetFilm School
Student Attendance Monitoring and Engagement Policy

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Approving Body	Academic Board
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1.   Introduction

1.1.   This document sets out the policy and procedure employed by MetFilm School (the School) to monitor student attendance and engagement on all accredited courses. It also outlines the activities the School undertakes to encourage students to attend scheduled classes and also engage with the full range of learning opportunities to support their success.

1.2.   The School recognises, as a collaborative institution, that engagement with programmes and fellow students enhances both the individual and collective learning experience. The School wishes to embed, with its students, the principle of working together for mutual aims, and collective responsibility when contributing to, and engaging with the School and fellow students.

1.3.   The Policy also sets out how the School monitors students sponsored by the School under the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) Tier 4 Sponsorship Scheme in accordance with the School's statutory obligations under its UKVI Tier 4 Sponsor license.

1.4.   The Policy is set in the context of research which demonstrates that student attendance correlates strongly with student performance. While this is not the case for all students, the School believes that monitoring and encouraging attendance is important to support students in their academic studies and as such has the potential to indicate those students at risk of leaving their course early or of failure.

1.5.   The School aims to improve the attendance and engagement of all students. Attendance in lectures, seminars, workshops and other scheduled activities provides students with the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully complete the course. It is therefore in the interests of every student to attend their scheduled sessions. Engagement with the available learning resources and with assessment is also key.

1.6.   This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure as set out in the Student Handbook.

2. Attendance Requirements

2.1. Attendance is expected of all students on every element of their course. This refers to lectures, workshops, seminars, practical sessions, creative productions forming part of and working towards assessed outcomes and any form of formative or summative assessment.

2.2. Students are also expected to attend scheduled academic and personal tutorials as required as they form important check-in points in the student journey.

2.3. Students are responsible for arriving on time for, and remaining for the duration of, the scheduled session. Late arrival at, and early departure from, teaching sessions is disruptive, discourteous and unfair to other class members and tutors. Students are expected to be ready at the start of the scheduled session. Arriving to a session late may mean the student may not enter class until there is break, to avoid disruption to those who attended on time.

3. UKVI Attendance Requirements

3.1. The School has a particular duty to ensure that UKVI Tier 4 Visa students are in attendance as a condition of its UKVI License. Non-attendance could result in withdrawal of sponsorship, which will be reported to the UKVI, consequently affecting the student's status in the UK. This monitoring and reporting are a legal requirement for all UKVI Tier 4 sponsors.

3.2. Additional monitoring requirements for UKVI Tier 4 Visa students are set out in Section 9 below.

4. Attendance monitoring in scheduled classes

4.1. Monitoring refers to all recording of student attendance, whether through Celcat Attendance Live (CAL) or paper-based collection. Student attendance at scheduled sessions including lectures, workshops, seminars, etc will be registered by the supervising tutor at the beginning of the session. Where taken, students are also required to sign any manual registers or Crewing Forms.

5. Collection and use of data for engagement

5.1. Monitoring engagement with study is also undertaken by monitoring other sources including the School Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle, and submissions to assessment.

5.2. This data is used as part of the School's commitment to support student success. The data on a student's general engagement with the School and its learning resources, combined with attendance monitoring data, is used to model the successful study behaviours which enable students to succeed. It is also used to predict which students might require further support.

5.3. Students who are not attending or engaged will be contacted to re-engage them with their course.

6. Use of attendance data for reporting

6.1. Attendance monitoring data is used to asses whether students are meeting attendance requirements for the Student Loans Company (SLC).

Where a student is not attending at the point of a census they may be withdrawn, and this will be reported to the SLC who will end payments.

7. Authorised absence

7.1. Short-term absences due to illness do not need to be authorised, but it is advised that students contact a member of staff to inform them if they are not able to attend scheduled sessions, or individual meetings that have been pre-arranged.

7.2. Students should not normally be absent, unless agreed with tutors, for a period of more than 5 working days.

7.3. Instances of illness or other extenuating circumstances that affect an assessment or examination should be reported to the School. Students undertaking assignments affected by illness or other factors may request extensions. Where an extension is not an appropriate remedy in the circumstances, students should submit a Mitigating Circumstances application, complete with relevant evidence (doctor or hospital note for example). Further details on the Mitigating Circumstances policy and process can be found in the University of West London Mitigating Circumstances Regulations Students can obtain further information and advice via the Student Services & Administration Team.

7.4. Students are permitted to apply for temporary leave, suspension of studies, or intermit their course of study for personal or medical reasons. Guidance and advice on these processes can be found in the Student Handbook and via the School's Student Services & Administration Team.

7.5. Students intermitting or pausing their studies for health reasons may be placed on a Fitness to Study report as set out in the MetFilm School Fitness to Study Policy.

7.6. International students studying on a Tier 4 (General) Visa are not permitted to pause or intermit their studies where the intermittence means they cannot complete the course of study within the issued visa dates.

8. Withdrawal for non-attendance and/or engagement

8.1. Students demonstrating poor attendance and/or engagement with their course of study will be deemed in breach of this policy and subject to sanction under the MetFilm School Disciplinary Procedure as set out in the MetFilm School Student Handbook.

8.2. Where informal attempts to re-engage a student fail, including where they are no longer attending and submitting assignments the following sanctions are available:
- Placing the student on report with strict attendance monitoring requirements;
- Written warnings;
- Withdrawal from course of study.

9.   Non-attendance by Tier 4 sponsored students

9.1.   The School is required to abide by the Tier 4 License Sponsorship duties as outlined by the UKVI. Under these duties the School is legally required to monitor all Tier 4 sponsored students and to maintain attendance records, reporting non-attendance when necessary.

9.2.   A student who has been issued with a CAS to begin either a pre-sessional course, or other course, will be provided with a start date. If the student does not attend within two weeks of the enrolment period or start date, their non-attendance will be reported to the UKVI and their sponsorship will be withdrawn.

9.3.   Under its UKVI obligations, MetFilm School is required to monitor the attendance of Tier 4 students and inform the UKVI after 10 consecutively missed contact points. Contact points include scheduled lectures, workshops, seminars, practical sessions, creative productions forming part of and working towards assessed outcomes and any form of formative or summative assessment.

9.4.   Students are expected to attend all sessions scheduled by the School. Students' attendance within the School will be monitored through the attendance monitoring methods outlined in Section 4 of this Policy. Any student who fails to attend for one week will be contacted by email and warned of the consequences of further non-attendance. The School will request information and evidence as to why they have not attended. If the student is still not in attendance after a second week a second email will be sent and further attempts to re-engage them will be made.

9.5.   Tier 4 sponsored students that have missed 10 consecutive contact points, as outlined in s.9.3. above, are subject to immediate withdrawal from their course of study, will be reported to the UKVI and result in cancellation of their visa.

9.6.   In addition to the expected attendance, students must attend for all enrolment, induction and re-enrolment sessions and any census checks.

9.7.   Tier 4 sponsored students are only subject to monitoring requirements as set out in this Policy during term-time and not during vacation periods.

9.8.   Tier 4 sponsored students may choose to pause or intermit their studies due to personal or medical reasons. Students must apply for this option and provide evidence to support the request (such as medical evidence). However, the School will need to cease sponsorship of that student at the point of intermittence. On interruption of a course of study, the Tier 4 sponsorship will be withdrawn, and this will be reported to the UKVI. When the student wishes to return to study, a new visa must be applied for.

9.9.   The School will normally support the student in their return, but it will need to issue a new CAS. This is dependent on the length of time of interruption and will be clarified on an individual basis with each student concerned.

9.10.   If a student elects to finish a course early, either by taking an exit award, or leaving the course, the School will report this to the UKVI and the student's visa will be curtailed. The student will be required to return home, as stipulated in the UKVI regulations.