

London School of Theology

## Student Attendance & Engagement Policy

For all Taught Programmes

Process of ratification:	Academic Board
Executive Team Member Responsible:	ASDAS
Individual Responsible:	ASDAS/Assistant Registrar
Date Last Approved:	November 2024
To be Reviewed:	Every 36 months
Review consultation:	Registry, Pastoral Team, Programme Leaders
Date of Next Review period:	November 2027

### 1. Principles

- 1.1 Adult learners are expected to take responsibility for their own learning; however, this should be balanced with the School's ethos and vision, which aims for holistic student development beyond academic achievement.
- 1.2 Students should be expected to participate in all learning activities, with full attendance/**engagement** being a condition of enrolment.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.3 Individual programmes / modules may have their own specific participation requirements based on skills-acquisition, assessment or requirements of external professional bodies or by the relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) such as the BACP.
- 1.4 Students may occasionally miss lectures because of issues beyond their control such as transportation, health or childcare. There may be equivalent reasons for students missing online forums. It is not reasonable to expect evidence to be provided for individual one-off absences, however where these issues are causing absence on a regular or ongoing basis, a student should be invited to review their commitment and fitness to study.
- 1.5 There may be a variety of reasons why students with disabilities or health issues (including mental health) may fail to attend or participate, and asking for information/evidence for individual absences may be intrusive.
- 1.6 Students who miss lectures will not be prevented from accessing handouts, slides or video recordings on the VLE, but will be actively encouraged by lecturers to access such information in order to inform their progress and success. In addition, key information regarding assessments will not be withheld or provided 'in person only'. All teaching materials and module information will be provided on the VLE module area for all students, thereby ensuring that LST are providing an inclusive educational environment for all.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Community Code: "Engage actively in all aspects of academic life as a fully committed member determined to succeed through the creation and maintenance of a supportive educational community."

<sup>2</sup> Providing paper handouts in on-campus lectures is not recommended unless specifically required for classwork.

- 1.7. In-course tests will not be given without warning and students with legitimate absences should be given adequate opportunity and support to catch up. Unannounced in-person quizzes will not be part of formal assessments.
- 1.8. Preventing students from submitting work, however poor their attendance/ **engagement**, is not in the School's or students' interests.
- 1.9. The School is required to monitor attendance/**engagement** both to comply with external regulatory requirements and for the pastoral monitoring of students.<sup>3</sup>
- 1.10. Monitoring attendance/ **engagement** is carried out on an ongoing basis by Registry through SIS electronic registers completed by on-campus lecturers and through online forum participation reports. Therefore, regular and timely completion of electronic registers is vital.
- 1.11. Lecturers and tutors may also recognise attendance/**engagement** issues for particular students, and may raise issues with students informally or bring them to more formal attention.

## 2. Procedures

- 2.1 Students are informed of attendance/**engagement** requirements during Induction and included in Student Handbooks.
- 2.2 Registry prepare fortnightly undergraduate attendance/engagement reports based on on-campus registers, and ongoing VLE monitoring for online modules. Reports to be circulated to Programme Leaders along with the Disability, Inclusion & Learning Support Manager and the Chaplain.
- 2.3 Programme Leaders for Postgraduate Taught programmes monitor attendance/engagement with their Tutors and where concerns are raised, liaise with the Disability, Inclusion & Learning Support Manager and the Chaplain as necessary.
- 2.4 The Disability, Inclusion & Learning Support Manager and Pastoral Team will review attendance/engagement and contact students with poor attendance/**engagement** via email and phone, to offer pastoral support and advice where needed. A record will be kept of communication attempts, with students who do not respond referred to the Attendance & Welfare Panel (AWP).
- 2.5 An Attendance & Welfare Panel will be convened within 5-6 weeks of the start of Semester 1 (either face-to-face or via email), and at regular intervals following,<sup>4</sup> chaired by the Registrar (or their nominee) and including the Programme Leader (or nominee), the Disability, Inclusion and Learning Support Manager, and a member of the Pastoral Team. Other members of staff may also be invited as relevant. The Panel may also communicate and make

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<sup>3</sup> UK Visas and Immigration require LST to monitor the attendance and engagement of all students who hold a Student Visa. LST is obligated to withdraw institutional sponsorship of a student's visa if they are absent from their studies without permission or if they have not been engaging sufficiently with their programme of study (for example by failing to complete assessed work). If a student has their visa sponsorship withdrawn, they will automatically be withdrawn from their programme of studies and their enrolment with LST will be terminated.

<sup>4</sup> For example: January, March, May August.

decisions by email at other times.

- 2.6 The Panel will authorise warning letters to be sent from Registry (in the name of the chair of the Attendance Panel) to **students whose attendance/engagement drops below 80%**, unless the Panel is aware of legitimate reasons for non-attendance and/or EC has been given.
- Where a warning letter has been sent and attendance/**engagement** remains below 80% during the next reporting period, the student will be invited to meet with the AWP Panel or a panel representative (see [Fitness to Study Policy](#)).
- 2.6.1 As per the [Fitness to Study Policy](#), the Panel (or representative) will discuss the student's fitness to study with them and make recommendations to address attendance/**engagement** issues, which may include interruption of studies.
- 2.6.2 Where a student does not respond to this letter to confirm their attendance or does not attend the meeting, the Panel will discuss the case in their absence and agree any recommendations or actions.
- 2.7 Attendance/**engagement** percentages will be calculated for all students at the end of the academic year.
- 2.7.1 Attendance/**engagement** information to be made available to the Module/Assessment Board, and may be relevant to progression/continuation discussions.
- 2.7.2 Attendance/**engagement** commentary may be included in a student's reference; however, they will not appear on transcripts.
- 2.8 For continuing students, enrolment at the start of each academic year is conditional on good (80%) attendance/**engagement** during the previous year, unless there are Extenuating Circumstances or the Panel or Assessment Board agrees to waive the requirement for other good reasons, such as academic success.
- 2.9 The Attendance & Welfare Panel will consider cases of ongoing non-attendance/**engagement** at the end of the Academic Year and make recommendations regarding such non-attendance/**engagement** to the Assessment Board with respect to continued enrolment. The Assessment Board may require the student to interrupt their studies, or may withdraw the student from their programme. Alternatively, the Attendance & Welfare Panel may refer cases of continued non-attendance/**engagement** without good reason to be addressed through the [Student Disciplinary Procedure](#), as a breach of the Community Code.