



Fairfield School of Business

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Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring Policy:

**Bath Spa University (BSU), and
Birmingham Newman University (BNU) Programmes**

Version	1.5 Public
Last updated	November 2025
Category	Regulations
Approved by	Board of Governors

Abstract:

This policy sets out how Fairfield School of Business (FSB) monitors and records students' engagement with their programmes of study, including their physical attendance in class. It also explains how FSB will respond if students do not actively participate, and the procedures to be followed if students are unable to attend their classes.

Related Policies:

- *Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures*
- *Student Support Policy*
- *Data Protection Policy*
- *Mitigating ('Extenuating' or 'Exceptional') Circumstances Policy*

Applicability:

This policy applies to students enrolled on programmes leading to awards from **Bath Spa University** and **Birmingham Newman University**; it does not apply to students studying for awards from Ravensbourne University London.

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1. Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy

- 1.1. Fairfield School of Business (FSB) recognises that students are unlikely to achieve their degree award if they do not attend and engage with their programme of study. The School distinguishes between attendance – the physical presence at timetabled events connected to the programme – and engagement – general interaction with academic and support staff and submitting formative and summative assessments. As a responsible academic institution, it has a duty to monitor students' and to intervene if the level of attendance and engagement suggests that underachievement will occur. Such interventions will primarily seek to determine the reasons for this and explore all options for supporting students to resume their studies in a way that gives them the best chance of success.
- 1.2. FSB's pastoral database monitors students' overall engagement with their programmes and identifies any students who are at academic risk to the School's Registry and Student Support teams. By 'academic risk' we refer to students at risk of not completing their degree, or achieving a lower level of attainment than they are capable of because of nonengagement.
- 1.3. It is FSB's policy to:

- i. clearly communicate the School's expectations around attendance and assignment submissions to students at their induction, and the consequences of not meeting these,
 - ii. proactively identify and support students who are at academic risk due to non-attendance, poor punctuality or non-submission of assignments,
 - iii. give students the opportunity to excuse themselves from lessons if they genuinely cannot attend and provide a reasonable opportunity for them to catch up with the programme content,
 - iv. ensure procedures are in place for students to notify the School of any mitigating (or 'exceptional'/'extenuating') circumstances that have affected their ability to participation in summative assessment,
 - v. direct 'at risk' students to internal and external support services that can help them overcome any impediment to study or assessment that they may be facing,
 - vi. ensure students have an opportunity to interrupt or defer their studies in the event of compelling personal circumstances that make continued study unfeasible,
 - vii. suspend students if their non-engagement raises serious concerns about their ability to continue on the programme, and ensure that changes of circumstances are promptly reported to external awarding and funding bodies,
 - viii. promptly withdraw students from a programme where there is no reengagement following a suspension,
 - ix. ensure students are aware of their recourse to appeal a decision to suspend or withdraw them from their programme.
- 1.4. FSB understands the impact that an undisclosed disability, learning need or mental health concern can have on a student's academic performance and wellbeing. Students will be encouraged to let us know if they have any specific learning, support or accessibility needs so that we can accommodate these in accordance with our Reasonable Adjustments policy.
- 1.5. Any decisions that may affect a students' enrolment status will be made on a case-by- case basis by the FSB 14-Day Panel or at The Student Engagement and Academic Performance Meeting (SEAP), which consult all relevant stakeholders to ensure that decisions made are in the students' best interests and adhere to the academic regulations of FSB's awarding bodies*.

**NB: Where FSB delivers programmes that are validated by an external awarding body, the procedures for withdrawing students and considering appeals may vary in accordance with that awarding body's regulations. Upon notifying students of their suspension from the programme for reasons of non-attendance or non-engagement, students will be informed of any specific action they need to take.*

2. Expectations around Attendance and Engagement from Students

- 2.1. Students are expected to attend all of their classes, tutorial sessions, seminars and scheduled activities in accordance with their timetable, and must submit their work on time. Any criteria where a quantitative figure below this regarding attendance is expressed is used solely as an expression of the probability of achieving 100%.
- 2.2. All higher education programmes taught at FSB are delivered in-person and require students to be physically present in class for their attendance to be counted. In exceptional circumstances, FSB may deliver classes online using remote applications. Separate regulations and guidance on the management of online attendance will be published if this is required.
- 2.3. Students are required to arrive for their classes on time and remain for the duration of the teaching session.
- 2.4. Where a student cannot attend a lesson or other scheduled activity, they should contact the attendance officer at attendance@fairfield.ac with evidence to excuse themselves before the class is scheduled to take place. They should also contact their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) to make suitable arrangements to catch up on any lesson content missed.
- 2.5. Where a student is unable to submit an assignment on time or attend a formative assessment exercise (such as a group presentation or controlled exam), they should use the Mitigating Circumstances Policy for Ravensbourne University programmes, which can be found on the Policy Hub or under 'regulations' on FSB Connect.
- 2.6. Where a student misses a lesson or other scheduled activity due to unforeseen circumstances, they should use the Notification of Absence form for the periods of absence. This will be recorded as a form of engagement; see page Appendix for further details.
- 2.7. Students should also ensure that necessary arrangements are in place to receive their student finance, as this is a common reason why students fail to attend. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the Students Loans Company receive all the information they need to make timely payment of tuition fees and maintenance loans.

3. How Attendance is Recorded (BSU and BNU Programmes)

- 3.1. The following convention will be used to record students' attendance:
 - Students arriving up to 15 minutes after the start of the lesson will be marked 'in attendance' or 'Y-Present'.
 - Students arriving between 15 and 45 minutes after the start of the lesson will be marked 'late'; attendance will still be recorded for the purposes of claiming

student finance; however, persistent lateness may result in a review of student's academic performance.

- Students arriving 45 minutes or more after the start of the lesson will be recorded as 'absent' for that lesson but may enter the lesson at the discretion of the lecturer (students will be permitted entry to a lesson at any time with advance notice of genuine extenuating circumstances).
- Students who depart the lesson before its scheduled end are recorded as 'early leavers'.
- Entry time is recorded from when the student taps their ID card on the classroom's electronic card reader or by using the in-class code system. Attendance will not be recorded if the student's card is not available, or the card has been tapped before the start of the class. Additionally, failure to tap in at all may be recorded as an absence.
- Where card readers are not available for any reason or the online code system is down, the class lecturer will record attendance and lateness on a paper register, which will be submitted to the attendance officer immediately after the lesson. When the paper register is in use all students are required to manually sign the register.

3.2. Misusing the attendance monitoring system constitutes a disciplinary violation and it will be referred to the "Non-academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Procedures".

3.3. Examples of misuse include:

- A student being recorded as present (for example, by another student) when they are actually absent.
- Using someone else's card to swipe on the attendance monitoring reader.
- Leaving class early without a valid reason and prior approval from the tutor.
- Forging documents to obtain an authorised absence.

NBB: Students' attendance is confirmed by actual attendance in class as opposed to other 'contact points' (for example: inductions, exams, PAT sessions or any personal appointments with support services). Engagement with other contact points may however be considered as contextual information when reviewing a case of non-attendance.

4. Late Arrival/Early Departure

- 4.1. Students arriving late (between 15 to 45 mins after the start of the class) will be challenged by the class lecturer, who will receive the reason for lateness and remind the latecomers of the attendance requirement.
- 4.2. Three successive instances of lateness and/or early departure will be reported by the class lecturer to Student/engagement support and their personal academic tutor. The student will be contacted by a student support officer or their personal academic tutor to ascertain and record the reasons behind later arrival/early departure. The staff are trained to provide assistance to students with poor attendance & academic performance.
- 4.3. Students who continue to arrive late for classes or leave early will be referred to the next available SEAP meeting.
- 4.4. The SEAP will consider a referred student's pattern of attendance along with any other contextual information and will agree on an appropriate course of action, which may include a requirement to attend remedial activities (support/catch-up sessions), up to suspension and withdrawal from the programme.

5. 14- Day Cooling-off Period

- 5.1. It is essential that students attend their induction and classes from the very start of their course. Additionally, students must provide evidence of their eligibility for financial support or demonstrate their means of paying for their course within 14- days of the Course start date.
- 5.2. A panel is held within 2 working days of 14 days from the course start date to review and assess new students' attendance, engagement, enrolment status, and financial arrangements before they incur student loan debt. The data which will be assessed at the panel will be within 14 days from the course start. Attendance is formally confirmed after this period. Students who fail to attend, provide the necessary financial documentation, or fail to enrol with their respective awarding body may be withdrawn from the course.
- 5.3. This approach ensures that FSB upholds students' statutory right to a cooling-off period, allowing them sufficient time to demonstrate their commitment to the Course. The 14-day Panel considers all cases on an individual basis, taking into account students' personal circumstances, to ensure fairness.

6. Responding to Students' Non-attendance after 14-days

- 6.1. To ensure students are committed to and able to pursue their studies, attendance will continue to be monitored after the 14-day Cooling Off period.
- 6.2. Consequent to this, attendance reminders and warnings will be issued by the Attendance Officer for successive instances of absence at timetabled classes or by a pattern of irregular

attendance or lateness which effectively constitutes an inability to constructively engage with the course.

- 6.3. FSB implements a **Student Academic Performance Review system (SAPR)** (see Appendix). This proactive tripartite system rates students' academic risk based on attendance two weeks after the start of each semester and alerts specified services to interact with them thereafter it is monitored on a weekly basis.
- 6.4. Students will be sent an Attendance Reminder from the Registry on a regular basis for unsatisfactory attendance **from the commencement of the semester**, urging them to contact Student Support or their Personal Academic Tutor to discuss their attendance.
- 6.5. We expect students to have at least 70%. If attendance drops below 70%, actions will be taken which will be deemed reasonable such as issuing letters - warning of attendance, warning of withdrawal, finance suspension, or even withdrawal from the course.
- 6.6. Students with 30% attendance or less are at imminent risk of withdrawal.
- 6.7. FSB will take action and reach out to students with attendance that is considered unsatisfactory. The threshold of which is detailed below:
 - i. A **Green SAPR rating** indicates an attendance of 70% and above. This will not normally trigger any notification unless any absence is seen to continually affect a particular part of the course or any impediment to progress becomes apparent.
 - ii. An '**Amber Warning Notification of Attendance**' will be sent to all students who will become at risk of withdrawal if their attendance doesn't improve.
 - iii. A '**Red Warning Notification of Attendance**' is issued to students who are at risk of withdrawal.
 - iv. A "**Withdrawal Warning and Notice of Finance Suspension**" will be issued to students who are at imminent risk of withdrawal and:
 - Tactical suspension 1 may be imposed which will suspend the students' finance
 - Tactical suspension 2 may be imposed if students don't engage with FSB or start attending after receiving Tactical Suspension 1
- 5.5. At Tactical Suspension 1 stage: if students start re-engaging with FSB through any meaningful engagement or they start attending their classes, their Student Finance will be re-instated.
- 5.6. At Tactical Suspension Stage 3 – Tactical Suspension 2: students will receive a 10 working days deadline to appeal the decision formally and provide evidence explaining why they were not able to attend.
- 6.6. The students can submit an appeal within 10 working days of the Tactical Suspension 2 being issued or after being withdrawn.

- 6.7. Students who have been offered the opportunity to appeal the tactical suspension 2 will not be offered the opportunity to appeal being withdrawn.
- 6.8. However, if a student is withdrawn due to extremely low attendance without having gone through a tactical suspension 2 first, they will be offered the opportunity to appeal the withdrawal.
- 6.9. As these warnings are being sent to students, student support teams will be briefed where a student is at risk of non-continuation and will attempt to engage with the student directly to determine the reason for non-attendance.
- 6.10. The progress of students on an individual basis and adherence to this Policy will be reviewed at the regular SEAP meetings (Section 7), at which decisions will be made on their continuation or otherwise on the course.
- 6.11. At the stage of a 'Tactical Suspension', the student will remain active and may access FSB facilities, however they will have "Tactical Suspension" as sub-status; the Registry will liaise with the awarding body to suspend any further maintenance payments from the Student Loans Company (by submitting a Change of Circumstances notification to Student Loans Company to temporarily cease their payments).
- 6.12. The School may make reasonable expeditions to its appeals procedure where external timeframes or service standards necessitate this. Any such changes and the reasons for them will be clearly indicated to the student; the School will ensure that sufficient time for the student to submit an appeal is allowed.
- 6.13. FSB may, at its discretion be flexible in lifting the finance suspension whilst the appeals process is ongoing where the student genuinely commits from thereon to attend their scheduled lessons and requires their maintenance payments to resume in order to do so. In such instances, temporary attendance and/or attainment requirements will be agreed between the Student and the School.

These will be monitored by the associate deans and at the SAEP meeting. If agreed attendance requirements (or any other set conditions) are not met, then the finance suspension will be re-imposed, and students' maintenance funding will once again cease.

- 6.14. Students should note that during any resumption of studies after a finance suspension they will still be considered to have "Tactical Suspension" as Sub-Status whilst their appeal is being considered, and that such a resumption does not guarantee a successful appeal outcome. A demonstrable commitment to study will however be considered favourably by the Appeal panel in reaching a decision about the student's continuance.
- 6.15. The School will specify appropriate actions to reintegrate the student within the course, in such a way that gives them the best chance of success (this may include deferral to a new intake). A set of learning objectives, which include attendance requirements, will be included within the

student's Personal Development Plan and SAPR with the understanding that these must be achieved for the student to continue on the programme.

- 6.16. Should a student fail to appeal during their Finance Suspension appeal window; or their appeal is rejected, FSB will proceed with the next stage and withdraw the student.
- 6.17. A final Notification of Withdrawal will be sent to the student, which may indicate any liability to repay student finance maintenance paid to them by the Student Loans Company from their last recorded attendance in class, up until the date of their withdrawal.
- 6.18. Where applicable, a transcript detailing the student's achievements on the programme will be claimed from the awarding body and sent to the address the student has provided.
- 6.19. No refund will be available to students whose registration is terminated for poor attendance, or who withdraw after receiving a suspension for unauthorised absence.

7. Student Engagement and Academic Performance Meeting (SEAP)

- 7.1. The SEAP takes place during each semester to review students whose enrolment status is considered at risk owing to poor attendance/punctuality, assignment submission or nonpayment of tuition fees. The meeting is responsible for making recommendations to the Principal on a case-by-case basis concerning the continuance or withdrawal of any students referred to it. These meetings take place on a weekly basis during term time.
- 7.2. The meeting comprises representatives from the following teams: Registry, Student Support, Academic Support and the associate deans.
- 7.3. At each meeting all students with a Red warning are considered and additionally any with an Amber Warning whose situation has not shown improvement. To reach a decision, the meeting will consider take a holistic approach in evaluating each case under discussion, considering attendance information and other contextual factors from the Student Support Team.
- 7.4. The Panel is additionally responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, as well as ensuring FSB adheres to any external reporting protocol or service standards (such as those of awarding bodies or the Student Loans Company).
- 7.5. At the conclusion of each Panel meeting, the Principal or appointed personal will review and ratify the meetings recommendations, after which they will be carried out by the Registry.

8. Responsibilities

- 8.1. It is students' responsibility to adhere to the School's expectations around attendance and engagement and to ensure they have registered their attendance using their student ID cards or by signing a paper register on their arrival at that lesson.

- 8.2. FSBs lecturers will ensure that the School's electronic card system is working at the start of their lesson or that some form of a paper register is taken and promptly submitted to the Attendance Officer after the lesson.
- 8.3. The lecturer will additionally be expected to:
- start and finish classes on time and inform the students and Registry staff promptly of any changes (i.e. classroom move),
 - advise students regarding the School's procedures for monitoring attendance and requesting authorisation for absence, described herein,
 - accurately mark attendance, absence, lateness and early leavers if keeping a paper register, or ensure students use their card to clock in when joining the lesson,
 - assist administration staff to make spot checks on attendance in class or on SMS,
 - discuss punctuality with students if they are late for the first two occasions and refer the matter to the student's Personal Academic Tutor on the third occasion,
 - discuss any instances of non-submission of their work (either formative or summative) with the Registry.
- 8.4. The Student Finance Department will be responsible for verifying students' financial payments and eligibility with the awarding body, as well as providing support to students on finance-related matters.
- 8.5. It is the responsibility of each associate (campus) dean to share a list of the students whose academic risk is to be discussed prior to an SEAP meeting taking place.

9. Storage of Attendance Records

- 9.1. The hard copy of paper registers will be kept securely within the registry until the end of the term. After the end of term, electronic data will be maintained on SMS in the form of attendance with comments.
- 9.2. Detailed daily records of students' attendance and comments will remain electronically on the system for the duration of the course year. After this time has expired, detailed records will be archived and only the overall percentage of attendance will be immediately accessible on the system; archived records may be requested from the Head of Registry.
- 9.3. Electronic records of students' attendance will be retained within the Registry for a period of six years.

- 9.4. Any evidence of extenuating personal or medical circumstances submitted to authorise a period of absence will be held securely within the Registry in accordance with the FSB's Data Protection Policy.

10. Review of this Policy

- 10.1. This policy will be reviewed annually or as required by changes in external regulations.
Changes to it will be ratified by the Board of Governors.

Appendix: Procedures for Authorising Periods of Absence: Bath Spa University and Birmingham Newman University Programmes

1. Requesting a Notification of Absence form

- 1.1. A notification of Absence from covers both medical and non-medical circumstances. A student wishing to request an absence will need to complete this form and submit/email it to the Student Support of their campus. The form should clearly explain why the absences is required, the length of the absence and any associated evidence to support the student's form.
- 1.2. Requests for one or more authorised leaves of absence may not exceed a total of two weeks per term.
- 1.3. If a leave of absence exceeds two weeks, the request will be escalated to the Associate (Campus) Dean for review and final determination.
- 1.4. In cases where multiple leave requests cumulatively exceed the two-week limit, the matter will also be referred to the Campus Dean for a final decision.
- 1.5. No leave of Absence will be authorised during any induction period.
- 1.6. No leave of Absence will be authorised during the first 2 weeks of any term at any level of study.
- 1.7. Suitable medical documentary evidence includes:
- A medical certificate,
 - A medical report,
 - A note from a hospital,
 - A formal notification of a hospital or clinic appointment
- 1.8. In case of illness, the note from the GP or a Hospital should also state the period during which the student will not be able to attend classes.
- 1.9. Other acceptable documentary evidence for excusing absence includes:

- A court letter,
 - A police crime report,
 - A death certificate or order of service (absence due to a funeral),
 - A death certificate in case of bereavement (only grandparents, parents, siblings, offspring or long-term partners will be included as a close member of family and not aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces or friends),
- 1.10. Statements from family, friends or a landlord will not be accepted as the sole supporting evidence.
- 1.11. All evidence must be in English or accompanied by an English translation from an accredited translator. The school cannot seek evidence on a student's behalf from a third party.
- 1.12. Where the absence falls at a time of assessment (assignment submissions, presentation deadlines or examinations) and the student wishes to request mitigating circumstances, the 'Mitigating Circumstances Request Form' should be used. Please refer to the school's Mitigating Circumstances Policy for more information.
- 1.13. The maximum length of compassionate leave is two weeks.
- 1.14. Students will be expected to liaise with their Personal Academic Tutor to make arrangements to catch up with any work missed during their absence.
- 1.15. In certain cases, where this is considered to be in the best interests of the student (e.g. long-term illness preventing the student from attending the classes), the school reserves the right to withdraw the student from the course or transfer them to a different mode of study until their circumstances allow them to return to studies.

2. Maternity-related Absence

- 2.1. Maternity and paternity related absences are dealt with under FSB's Pregnancy and Maternity Policy.

3. Student Academic Performance/Progress Review (SAPR)

Rating Colour	Criteria	Key Staff	Action attendance	Action Submission
RED = HIGH RISK Multiple complexity	Serious concerns: Attendance zero or Amber showing no improvement, nonresponsive to the School communication and previously offered support. Poor overall performance Does not engage	Student Engagement Team (SET) /Campus Course Coordinators Head of Student Lifecycle	SET liaise with the student and review attendance and academic performance through assisting them with their personal development plan (PDP) and completing Student Academic Performance review (SAPR) on Student Management System (SMS).	Check to see if any mitigating circumstances apply. Campus Course Coordinators send non-submission lists to SET will then liaise with the student and determine if any mitigating circumstances apply. SET/Head of Student Cycle determine if student should be referred for withdrawal.
Amber = MEDIUM RISK Some complexity	Some concerns: Attendance below 70%. moderate response to support offered and showing improvement attempting some of the assessments and re-sits opportunity. May require pastoral and skills guide. Responds to the School communication but might have time management /engagement issues Broadly on track	Academic Support Centre (ASC) and PAT	Academic Support follow-up on absent students and refer to Personal Academic Tutor to review academic performance through assisting them with their personal development plan (PDP) and completing student academic performance review (SAPR) on SMS.	Academic support and lecturers provide academic support for student. Personal tutor to support student with submissions liaising with lecturers. Students to be advised of 10-day late submission policy. Check if Mitigating Circumstances apply

GREEN = LOW RISK	Good: Attendance above 70 %, responsive to support offered and to communication from the School. Takes opportunities to re-sit and do achieve results. Low Risk and on Track	Personal Academic Tutor (PAT)/lecturer	Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) liaises with the student and reviews academic performance through assisting them with their personal development plan (PDP) and completing student academic performance, review (SAPR) on SMS.	Monitor progress
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Document governance

Document owner*	Registry Lead
Consulted parties**	Principal, Vice Principal, Quality Manager
Next update due	September 2026
Classification	Public – anyone can view this document

**Responsible for updates to this content.*

*** To be consulted on updates to this content.*

Versions

Version no.	Description of Changes	Approved by	Date
1.0	Differentiated attendance policy for taught higher education provision under franchise – replaces the Student Attendance Policy and Procedures.	Board of Governors	Sep 2022
1.11	Re-written introduction and reference to external documents; procedural changes relating to student suspension updated.	Board of Governors	Oct 2023
1.1 – 1.2	Additional changes to suspension procedure and rules relating to leave of absence.	Board of Governors	Oct 2024

1.3 /1.4	Procedural updates. Information about 14day cooling-off period updated. RUL programmes have been excluded and are subject to separate policy. New formatting applied.	Board of Governors	Oct 2025
1.5	Procedural updates	Board of Governors c.a.	Nov 2025