

Attendance Policy and Procedures for Dealing with the Poor Attendance of Students



**Harper Adams
University**

NOVEMBER 2017

Attendance Policy and Procedures for Dealing with the Poor Attendance of Students

The University's Academic Board approved the following policy on the attendance of students at scheduled classes.

1. Preparatory and first year undergraduate students on Foundation Degree and Honours Degree programmes are required to attend **all** class sessions, including academic guidance sessions for identified students based on their entry qualifications, except where students provide either:

- acceptable medical evidence to their Course Tutor.

Acceptable evidence includes, for absences of less than seven days, an email notification to their Course Tutor outlining nature of ailment, treatment and specifying on which dates they could not attend or, for absences of seven days or more, a note from an independent medical authority, such as a GP. This evidence should be provided as soon as possible but, at the latest, by the date study resumes. The Course Tutor will advise relevant Module Tutors and Academic Guidance Tutors of absences because of illness, without divulging the details of the illness.

or

- an explanation, in advance, of other reasonable grounds for their absence, by notifying both the Module Tutor or Academic Guidance Tutor and the Course Tutor by email.

Tutors will exercise their professional judgement on what constitutes 'reasonable grounds', whilst taking into account the frequency with which such absences are notified. Grounds such as those listed below, and similar, will normally be noted as unauthorised absences, where more than two instances affect an individual module or where a cumulative total of five days' worth of absence are recorded:

- Completing assignment work
- Attending or participating in sporting fixtures
- Part-time work
- Family events or holidays
- Travelling home
- Social events

Attendance at placement employment interviews are excluded from this limitation, although students are required to advise tutors, in advance, of their absence.

2. Tutors will record attendance for all classes with no more than 30 students and, at their discretion, also do so for larger groups.
3. A preparatory or first year undergraduate student who fails to regularly attend classes without notifying the relevant staff, as outlined in paragraph 1, will be issued, normally via email, with a notification of poor attendance (with exemplar notification appended) by the Module Leader or Academic Guidance Tutor, copied to the Course Tutor. Irregular or poor attendance is normally considered to be consecutive missed classes or consistent patterns

of irregular session attendance, or routine absence from a particular type of session.
Module Tutors are responsible for recording the attendance of their classes by students and Module Leaders are responsible for monitoring attendance within modules they oversee.

4. Although there is no requirement for other categories of student to attend all classes, tutors will exercise a professional judgement in determining whether a student's pattern of attendance is acceptable, taking into account their levels of achievement. If it is deemed unacceptable, the process outlined above will be followed. Whilst the policy outlined herein applies to all students, there are additional attendance monitoring arrangements in place for overseas students, at all levels, who require visa sponsorship, in fulfilment of Home Office regulations. The details of these arrangements are available from the Head of Registry (Admissions, Student Records and Visa Compliance) and as advised to visa sponsored students before enrolment at the University.
5. All students are expected to remain available for assessments for the duration of the published term dates and for the published reassessment period.
6. The following outlines the subsequent stages of the attendance policy where poor attendance is of concern.

Stage 1

7. A student who receives a notification of poor attendance must make an appointment to meet with their Course Tutor to discuss the reasons for their poor attendance, within seven days of receiving the notification. Poor attendance might be caused by several reasons. These include: the student experiencing difficulties which would benefit from support of either an academic or pastoral nature; or the student is poorly motivated and might be advised to withdraw from the course and, with guidance, seek an alternative study or career path; or the student, without valid reason, is failing to fulfil their attendance and associated study obligations. The Course Tutor will discuss the reasons for poor attendance, highlighting the contents of this policy, and agree a course of action with the student that will be recorded on the student's file held in the Registry.

If the student fails to arrange a meeting as part of Stage 1 proceedings, with no reasonable cause, the Course Tutor will initiate Stage 2 proceedings.

Stage 2

8. If the student receives further notifications of poor attendance from a Module Leader or Academic Guidance Tutor, or if they fail to schedule a meeting within the Stage 1 proceeding, the Course Tutor will initiate the proceedings to formally review the overall attendance pattern of the student and their associated achievement levels. This entails the student attending a formal meeting with the Course Manager and Course Tutor (where the Course Tutor is not also the Course Manager). The Course Manager will require the student to submit, in advance of the meeting, a written statement outlining their reasons for poor attendance for discussion during the meeting. An exemplar notification of the formal review of poor attendance is appended, and this is normally sent by email and in hard copy to the student, by secure delivery.
9. During this meeting to formally review poor attendance, the course management team will reiterate to the student the provisions of the attendance policy, the expectations placed on the student in relation to attendance, their achievement levels and the procedure for notifying staff of non-attendance for valid reasons, where they exist. They will also outline the likelihood that, unless attendance levels improve, they will initiate the next stage of the attendance policy and also confirm that the course team will withhold its support to the student (for reference requests for job interviews, university or course transfer requests or scholarship applications, for example). Only where a student can demonstrate that neither

their own achievement levels nor the effectiveness of classes for other students are limited by their poor attendance is the course team likely to waive the normal requirement for attendance.

10. The outcomes of this meeting will be formally recorded and the student provided with a copy shortly after the meeting. The letter will confirm what has been agreed and the action that is required of the student if the next stage of the poor attendance procedures is not to be invoked. This letter should be copied to the student's file held in Registry. This letter is normally sent by email and in hard copy to the student, by secure delivery and also, where necessary, by recorded delivery to the student's term and vacation addresses.
11. If a student fails to attend a scheduled meeting as part of Stage 2 proceedings, without reasonable cause, the Course Manager will initiate the arrangements for Stage 3 proceedings, adopting the communication channels set out in paragraph 8, which should include a summary of the attempts made to date to engage the student in dialogue about their attendance.

Stage 3

12. Where a student receives further notifications of poor attendance, they will be required to attend a formal hearing with the Course Manager, the Student Services Manager and either the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Director of Academic Services, at the request of the Course Tutor. The student will have an opportunity to justify their poor attendance and their achievement levels will be reviewed. This meeting will conclude with an agreed outcome, in which the expectations placed on the student will be specified in order for them to be permitted to remain enrolled as a student of Harper Adams University. They will be given a final written warning, shortly after the meeting, which confirms the conditions of their continued enrolment. In most instances, continued poor attendance, evidenced by notifications of poor attendance, and associated low achievement levels, will result in immediate **withdrawal, from the date of the notification**. If a student fails to attend the scheduled hearing, without reasonable cause, the likely outcome is that they will be withdrawn as set out in the final stage of the proceedings for addressing poor attendance and engagement.

Final stage

13. A student who breaches the expectations laid out in a final written warning on attendance will be **withdrawn from their course**, by either the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or the Director of Academic Services, in consultation with the Course Manager and the Student Services Manager. The student will also be issued with a notice to vacate University residential accommodation within 28 days (where relevant) and, thereafter, be excluded from the University campus.
14. The student will have the right of appeal to the Vice-Chancellor within seven days of the date of the notification of their withdrawal from their course and exclusion from the campus.

Preparatory / First Year Students – Poor Attendance Notification Letter

Student Name: Insert student's full name (first name and family name) here.

Title of Course: Click here to enter text.

Course Year: Click here to enter text.

Module Title: Click here to enter text.

Date: Click here to enter text.

Dear Click here to enter text.

Notification of poor attendance (stage 1 of attendance procedures)

As you will be aware, the University attendance policy (included with this e-mailed letter and as set out in the terms and conditions of enrolment, available on the [Key Information Page](#) of the University website) requires preparatory and first year undergraduate students to attend **all** scheduled class sessions, except in those instances where a student has provided either:

- **acceptable medical evidence to their Course Tutor.** Acceptable evidence includes, for absences of less than seven days, an email notification to their Course Tutor outlining nature of ailment, treatment and specifying on which dates they could not attend or, for absences of seven days or more, a note from an independent medical authority, such as a GP. This evidence should be provided as soon as possible but, at the latest, by the date study resumes. The Course Tutor will advise relevant Module Tutors or Academic Guidance Tutors of absences because of illness, without divulging the details of the illness;

or

- **an explanation of other reasonable grounds for their absence**, as set out in the University Attendance Policy, by notifying both the Module Tutor or Academic Guidance Tutor and the Course Tutor by email in advance of the scheduled taught session(s).

Your attendance record indicates that you have now missed at least two scheduled classes in this module, for which no acceptable explanation has been provided. If you fail to attend classes, you miss the critical support of academic staff which is normally necessary if you are to succeed in the module and on your course. It is your responsibility to ensure that you make good use of the support available to you during scheduled classes.

As a consequence of your absence from class, you are now required to meet with your Course Tutor, *Insert name here.*, **within seven days of the date of this e-mail.** Please note that it is **YOUR** responsibility to arrange this appointment. This meeting will focus upon your reasons for poor attendance and determine an appropriate action plan to address any difficulties that you may be experiencing. Please note that failure to make reasonable attempts to arrange a meeting will result in your situation being escalated to stage two of the attendance procedures.

In the meantime, I trust that you will take steps to ensure that you do not miss any further classes within this module. If you have legitimate, ongoing reasons for not being able to resume attendance at classes (i.e. medical or other reasonable grounds), please be sure that your Course Tutor is aware of your circumstances.

Module Leader

Copy: Course Tutor

Preparatory / First Year Students – Notification of Formal Review of Poor Attendance

Student Name: Insert student's full name (first and family name) here.

Title of Course: Click here to enter text.

Course Year: Click here to enter text.

Module Title(s): Click here to enter text.

Date: Click here to enter text.

Dear Click here to enter text.

Formal review of poor attendance (stage 2 of attendance procedures)

Despite previous letters from Module Leaders or Academic Guidance Tutors regarding your poor attendance and our meeting to review this, your attendance record indicates that you are continuing to miss scheduled classes without satisfactory explanation. Accordingly, you are required to attend a formal review meeting with your Course Manager, Insert name here., and myself. The meeting is scheduled for Click here to enter date. at Click here to enter time. in Click here to enter location.. In preparation for this formal meeting you are required to submit to your Course Manager a written statement outlining your reasons for poor attendance at least 48 hours before the meeting for discussion during the meeting. The discussion will also address the likelihood that, unless your attendance levels improve, the next formal stage of the poor attendance policy will be initiated, as detailed in the attached policy and outlined in the terms and conditions of enrolment, available on the [Key Information Page](#) of the University website

Please also note that until your attendance pattern is acceptable or we have approved any legitimate reasons for poor attendance, as a course team, we will withhold other support of you, for example, for reference requests for job interviews, university or course transfer requests or scholarship applications. Of course, if you are now experiencing difficulties that are affecting your attendance, we shall direct you to advice and guidance to support you.

In the meantime, I trust that you will ensure that you do not miss any further classes. If you have legitimate, ongoing reasons for not being able to resume attendance at classes (ie medical or other reasonable grounds), please make immediate contact with me to ensure that I am aware of your circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

Course Tutor

 Insert direct line here.

 Insert email address here.

Copy: Course Manager, Student file in Registry, Insert module tutor(s) or academic guidance tutor who has notified of poor attendance.

Enc: Attendance policy