



Attendance and Engagement Policy Blended Learning Delivery

Introduction

Arden University is committed to providing the highest quality student experience and a key component of this is promoting and encouraging student attendance and engagement with all aspects of the learner experience. Our experience is that those students who engage fully with their studies and make the most of the opportunities offered by the University are the ones who are most successful.

Student attendance and engagement is monitored for the following reasons:

- To aid student retention and progression through the early identification of students at risk and allow timely academic and personal support interventions
- To enable notifications of withdrawals/suspensions to be made on time ensuring all stakeholders are informed in a timely manner
- To meet any requirement to report absences to employers or other sponsors where they are funding/co-funding course fees.
- To comply with the requirements of the Student Loan Company who require confirmation of attendance on a regular basis for those students who are in receipt of financial support.
- To comply with visa conditions and undertake any necessary reporting to the relevant authorities (where applicable).

Key Principles

Attendance and engagement apply to both online participation (via iLearn) and attendance at scheduled study centre sessions.

Expected Online Engagement

- Key engagement indicators within the induction module:
 - undertaking induction module lessons and activities
- Key engagement indicators within the module:
 - completing weekly lessons
 - completing weekly learning activities
 - contributing to discussion forums
- Completing and submitting assessments.

Expected Attendance:

- Attendance at all sessions of face to face induction.
- Attendance at all timetabled / classroom sessions.
- Attendance for assessments (presentations, exams, etc.) that take place at the study centres.

Induction and Late Enrolments:

- The induction process is designed to prepare students for study and comprises both an online and face to face induction.

- Online induction opens approximately 2- 3 weeks before teaching begins. Students gain access to online induction once they are enrolled on their course.
- Face to face induction will normally take place during the week prior to teaching and students will be expected to attend.
- Late enrolments may be accepted up to the start of teaching.
- Students enrolling late who may have missed all or part of the face to face induction will be briefed/provided copies of all relevant information separately by their Student Support Co-ordinator.

Attendance

- Arden University recognises the importance of good attendance and expects all students to attend 100% to all timetabled sessions.
- Attendance to all timetabled sessions will be recorded and monitored.
- Online engagement will also be monitored and will be taken into consideration when evaluating overall attendance.
- Where it has been identified that a student requires additional sessions in relation to skills development, they will also be expected to attend these sessions.

Lateness

- Students are expected to be punctual for all classes.
- A student will be recorded as late if they arrive after the timetable start time.
- If a student arrives after 30 minutes, they will not be permitted to join the class at that time but will need to wait until first break to join in and will be marked as late
- If a student arrives after the first break, they will not be permitted to join the class at all and will be marked as absent for that session.
- Registers will be taken at several intervals throughout each session. Students who are not in attendance for the full session will also be marked as absent/arrived late or left early
- Students who are consistently late disrupt both their own education and that of others and so a meeting between the student and the Student Support Co-ordinator will be convened where persistent lateness gives cause for concern.

Absence

Arden University appreciates that occasionally absence will occur due to unforeseen circumstances, for example illness.

Students should email attendance@arden.ac.uk in the event that they are going to be absent.

- For the first two classes of your absence we operate a self-certification process. Any absence of more than 2 consecutive classes would require evidence (for example a medical note from your doctor) If you are given warnings at any time over your attendance, then we may require you to provide evidence for all absences.

Extensive or persistent absence affects a student's ability to continue studying and may result in withdrawal from the course and notification to external authorities.

Mitigating Circumstances/Leave of Absence/Fitness to Study

- Where a student's ability to study or take assessments is in any way affected the Mitigating Circumstances Policy/Leave of Absence/Fitness to Study process may be applicable.
- Where a student is impacted by long term sick leave the Leave of Absence process may also be applicable. Leave of Absence can be actioned by Arden if required.

Details can be found in the Student Handbook and students may also seek further guidance from their Student Support Co-ordinator.

For international students, a Leave of Absence will be subject to visa extensions being granted by local immigration authorities.

Holidays

Holidays during scheduled classes and assessment periods (including re-assessment periods where applicable) are not permitted.

Attendance Monitoring

Student attendance will be monitored in order to take remedial action where a student's engagement is not at the required level.

- In class, Module Tutors will record attendance in a register at all sessions. This will enable analysis and oversight of individual student attendance at both module level and overall course level.
- Formative and summative assessment submission including examination attendance (where applicable) will also be monitored.
- Data will be analysed and monitored by staff. It is expected that academic members of staff will also benefit from this information which will enable them to make positive steps towards absenteeism.

Initial Contacts and Minimum Attendance

Within the first 2 weeks of the student's intake, Arden University expects that students have achieved the following milestones:

- Student is enrolled and registered.
- Student has completed Online Induction.
- Student has engaged online, for example, completing lessons, activities and participating in discussion forums.
- Student has attended face to face Induction.
- Student has paid or has approved student finance funding in place for study.
- Students must attend all lessons in the first two weeks

Failure to achieve the above milestones may result in the student being withdrawn from their course.

Ongoing Contacts and Minimum Attendance

Arden University will initiate contact with a student where:

- The student fails to register/enrol.
- The student fails to complete the Online Induction or face to face induction
- The student has repeated absence resulting in attendance below 80% (over a 3-week period).
- The student fails to complete key engagement indicators within a module.
- The student fails to submit assessment or attend a scheduled examination.
- The student is consistently late/left early (over a 3-week period)

Where poor attendance/inadequate participation is a cause for concern the University will discuss any issues with the student and agree arrangements for adequate participation.

Two-week Milestone Process

End of week 1

The student is reminded of the attendance and engagement requirements of their course by telephone and/or email. The student will also be directed to any support services where appropriate.

End of week 2

If the student's attendance and engagement has not improved to satisfactory levels the student will be withdrawn from their course.

Stage 1

The student will be advised in writing (email and letter) that their poor attendance/inadequate participation is a concern and should be improved immediately.

If the student's participation remains inadequate a stage 2 meeting will be arranged.

Stage 2

The student will be invited to attend a meeting (face to face or via the telephone) with their Student Support Co-ordinator to further discuss their attendance and agree arrangements for adequate participation. A formal written warning will be sent to the student setting out the requirements of the student for adequate participation and outlining consequences if the situation does not improve significantly.

If the student fails to attend the scheduled meeting without prior good reason or if a student's participation remains inadequate the student will move to stage 3 of the process.

Stage 3

The student will be required to attend a meeting with a tutor and/or a senior member of staff to further discuss their attendance and agree arrangements for adequate participation.

UK students with student finance will be informed that failure to improve attendance will lead to withdrawal by the University and notification to the Student Loan Company.

International students will be informed that failure to improve their attendance will lead to withdrawal by the University and notification to the local immigration authority. It is important that international Attendance and Engagement Policy – Blended Learning

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students are reminded that their visa and residence permit is granted for the specific purpose of study and will become invalid if they are withdrawn from their course. It will be the responsibility of international blended learning students once they are withdrawn to contact their local immigration authority to apply for a change in residence status and await authority decision.

Stage 4/Stage 5 (if a student is withdrawn)

If the student fails to attend a scheduled meeting without prior good reason or if a student's participation remains inadequate the student will be considered by the withdrawal panel for withdrawal from their course. The University will then proceed with official notification of withdrawal to the student and all external authorities.

Appeals Against Withdrawal

In the event that a student is withdrawn from their course the student has the right to appeal against that decision through the complaints process (Complaints Procedure).