Engagement Policy

Table of Contents

Version Control

Version	Date	Changes	Reason	Author
1	07/21	None	New Policy	Head of QA
2	07/22	Minor changes	Annual Review	Head of QA
3	10/23	Minor changes	Annual Review	Head of QA
4.1	07/24	Major changes	Annual review considering DfE Guidance on Engagement	Head of QA and SMT

This Engagement Policy will be reviewed annually in July/August by our Head of Quality. Any amendments require the approval of our College Oversight Board.

1   Introduction

Brit College has a duty of care to do all it reasonably can to support students to complete their programmes of study and attain the best possible academic outcomes. As part of this, it is important that student engagement with all aspects of their programme is encouraged, facilitated and monitored.

Retention for Brit College is about students remaining with the College and completing their programme of study within the specified timeframe. The College recognises success for students as a set of achievements in a wide range of areas, including personal development and progression into the labour market, business or further learning.

Engagement and retention go hand in hand and success involves the full and equitable participation in and progression through your course. This policy recognises that student attendance is key to their continued participation and success in their studies.

2   Purpose and Scope

2.1   Purpose

This Policy is a student-facing document. Its primary aim is to provide clear information to students on the importance of attendance and engagement for academic success, personal development, and the quality of both the student experience and that of their peers. The Policy also outlines how we record and monitor engagement.

2.2   Scope

The scope of this policy is to:

      a.   enhance the student learning experience and outcome

      b.   encourage students to develop a professional attitude to work and study

      c.   support a learning partnership between students and staff and the shared responsibility for achieving success

2.3   Communication

This policy is communicated to students:

      a.   during admission interviews

      b.   at induction

      c.   in the Student Handbook

      d.   through website

      e.   through our student VLE

3 Definitions

3.1 Engagement

At Brit college we have adopted Kuh's (2009)[1] definition of student engagement:

> *the time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes of college and what institutions do to induce students to participate in these activities.*

This definition encompasses many activities beyond attendance in scheduled classes. It also includes:

a. submission of assessments

b. maintaining regular contact with the College

c. engagement in classes

d. engagement in curriculum design

e. engagement in extra-curricular activities

f. engagement in governance

However, this policy focusses on attendance (including lateness and early departure from class), submission of assessments, engagement in classes, and maintaining regular contact as the primary indicators of engagement.

4 Attendance Requirement

4.1 Mandatory Attendance

Students are required to attend all timetabled classes (face to face or online). Student attendance is taken by Tutors by completing the electronic register.

During online classes you are expected to have your camera on. If you do not have your camera on, your tutor may ask you why. If you do not reply, your tutor will ask you again at a later stage in the lesson. If you fail to respond, you will be marked as absent for that class.

4.2 Excused Absence

The College understands that at times, due to various factors such as illness, care duties, or other commitments, students may not be able to attend class. In such situations students should email **attendance@britcollege.ac.uk**. The email should state which class/classes are going to be missed and why, and evidence attached. Appropriate evidence must be

---

[1] Kuh, G.D. (2009) 'What Student Affairs Professionals Need to Know about Student Engagement'. *Journal of College Student Development*. 50 (6), pp. 683–706.

independent documentary evidence i.e. medical appointment confirmation or a sick note from your doctor. The College determines what evidence is appropriate.

Any excused absences **will be recorded as excused absence (EA).** Please note that for our monitoring purposes, any EAs will still **count as an absence.** However, it is important that you tell us about such absences as we will consider these in any discussions about concerns with your attendance and engagement. It is really important that you maintain contact with us whenever you are having problems engaging with your studies, for whatever reason.

For illness up to 7 consecutive days (**Please note**: this does not mean 7 days of classes), you can 'self-certify' using the form in **Appendix A**. This form can be accessed through Moodle. Students should email the self-certification form to **attendance@britcollege.ac.uk**. If the illness lasts longer than 7 days, then independent evidence e.g. a letter from your GP Surgery or counsellor to confirm your illness is required. The letter should be current and indicate the period affected with precise dates.

You must email us (attaching the self-certification form when appropriate) by the end of the each of the days on which you are absent.

To request excused absence for a non-medical issue, please provide relevant supporting evidence, which will be assessed by the College.

4.3 Late Arrival

If you **arrive later than 15 minutes after** the scheduled start of the teaching session, your attendance will be recorded as **late arrival (LA)**. If you arrive after half of the teaching session has already taken place, you will be recorded as absent.

4.4 Early Departure

If you leave the session **more than 15 minutes early**, you will be recorded as **early departure (ED)**. If you depart before half of the teaching session has taken place, you will be recorded as absent.

4.5 Unexcused Absence

If you are absent, and do not contact us to let us know why, your attendance will be recorded as unexcused absence (**UA**). Unexcused absence will usually result in a more serious outcome of any discussion about concerns with your attendance and engagement.

5 At Risk Students

Wherever possible, the College will try to provide appropriate and timely support to students experiencing difficulties in attending and/or engaging.

The College applies a traffic light system to identify and monitor at risk students. An on-line report of such students is automatically generated from our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

5.1 Attendance Traffic-Light System

We operate a simple traffic-light system for monitoring your engagement:

Risk Level	Colour Code	Action
Low		No Action
Medium		Call/email to support and advise
High		Internal suspension and Action Plan

Decisions are made holistically by the SMG based on attendance, submission of assessments, punctuality, your engagement in class (including Moodle), and how well you maintain contact with us.

We monitor:

1. Punctuality (lateness and early departure)

2. Attendance (including whether it is excused or unexcused)

3. Submission of assessments

4. Engagement in class (including engagement with materials on Moodle)

5. How you maintain contact with us during absence

Based on these five engagement points, we decide if you are at risk, and to what extent. There is no 'fixed formula' for how many absences, late arrivals/early departures, non-submissions or how bad class engagement is that triggers the traffic-light system. We look at your engagement **wholistically** and then decide what, if any, action and or support are required.

5.2 The Student Management Group (SMG)

Our SMG records all the at risk students with detailed notes on actions to reduce their risk. SMG also discusses and categorises non-submissions, late submissions, and referrals that the Assessment Board has authorised. SMG Meetings are minuted for audit purposes.

The SMG meets each month to:

a. Apply the traffic light system to monitor engagement.

b. Decide if any at risk students need to be suspended.

c. Monitor Action Plans (see Appendix 2) for at risk students.

The SMG also meets a few weeks before the beginning of each new term to review students' engagement over the previous term. If any students' engagement places them in the high risk category, then these students might be suspended before the beginning of new term.

5.3 Engagement Monitoring

We monitor attendance for each session of every class and then review it at the end of each week.

We will contact you if:

- You miss any classes

- Your attendance falls into the low, medium, or high-risk categories.

- You repeatedly arrive late or depart early from class.

- You do not respond to previous contact regarding your attendance.

If you fail to get in touch with us to discuss any engagement issues, it could ultimately result in you being suspended and then withdrawn from your course.

To contact us and let us know what is happening, email: **attendance@britcollege.ac.uk**

6 Related Regulations, Policies and Procedures

6.1 External Reference Points

    a. Higher Education Providers - Attendance Management, Department for Education (June 2024)

    b. UK Quality Code for HE Advice and Guidance: Student Engagement (2018)

6.2 Internal Policies and Procedures

    a. Terms and Conditions (Link)

    b. Extenuating Circumstances Policy (Link)

    c. Complaints Policy (Link)

    d. Student Disciplinary Policy (Link)

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix A: Self-certification form

Self-Certification of Absence Form

Please note:

1. This form should be used to notify the College of any absence up to 7 consecutive working days (not 7 scheduled classes).

2. The form should be completed by the **end of the working day** of the last class that you are absent from.

3. The form should be emailed to **attendance@britcollege.ac.uk**

4. The College will keep a record of absences and monitor the frequency of self-certified absences.

First Name:

Surname:

Student Number:

Absence Start Date:

Absence End Date:

Reason for Absence:

7.2 Appendix B: Action Plan for At Risk Students

Student Name:

Student ID:

Cohort No.

Tutor Assigned:

Units Affected:

Reasons for Action Plan (tick all that apply) and Level of Risk:

Issue		Level (L, M, H)
Punctuality	☐	
Attendance	☐	
Assessment submission	☐	
Engagement in class	☐	
Maintaining contact	☐	

Action	Detail	Deadline	Progress	Signed
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				