

Engagement and Attendance Monitoring and Leave of Absence Policies School of Informatics Updated 22/06/16

The University's Tier 4 Attendance and Engagement Policy stipulates that each school must identify a minimum of ten points of contact throughout the academic year (at no greater than 60 day intervals), which must involve a mixture of both '*attendance*' and '*engagement*' points. Attendance points are those created by central services, engagement points are created by the School.

Therefore, the following contact points will now be recorded and monitored for all Tier 4 PGR:

Contact point	Month	Description	Event Type	Recorded by
1	September	IGS Check-in	Engagement	School - IGS
2	October	Census	Attendance	Student Administration
3	November	Meeting with supervisor	Engagement	School - Supervisor
4	January	Census	Attendance	Student Administration
5	February	Meeting with supervisor	Engagement	School - Supervisor
6	March	Census	Attendance	Student Administration
7	April	Meeting with supervisor	Engagement	School - Supervisor
8	June	Meeting with supervisor	Engagement	School - Supervisor
9	July	Census	Attendance	Student Administration
10	August	Meeting with supervisor	Engagement	School - Supervisor

NB: The engagement points may be undertaken by face-to-face contact or via electronic media (e.g. Skype, emails, electronic submissions), if required.

Recording responsibilities

An email will be sent on the 1st of the month with a reminder that an engagement point must be entered into EUCLID by the 28th of the month. This will be entered into EUCLID via the "Engagement" tab by either the Informatics Graduate School (IGS) or the Principal/Co-Lead Supervisor and the following will be recorded:

- Event type (meeting or other);
- Event description (the name of the engagement point, as above);
- Event date;
- Organiser (supervisor or IGS);
- Engaged (yes, no or exempt); and,
- Notes

The 'notes' field must contain a minimum of two sentences explaining the details of the engagement point. Supervisors must not report or upload any confidential information/documents.

Reviewing attendance and escalation

The School previously operated a two-stage escalation process, with the Graduate School Office following up on the first missed engagement point before escalating to the Deputy Director of Graduate School for the second. However, it has been noted that the School had not responded to problems in a timely manner and had not recorded escalation procedures followed on the student's record, contravening the Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy.

Therefore, we will now:

- ensure that all actions taken to follow up with missed engagement points are recorded on the student's EUCLID record
- add a third escalation point including the Director of Graduate School in this process to ensure that our monitoring processes are robust and transparent, and that firm action can be taken when needed without delay.

The School will therefore follow the procedure outlined below for monitoring and following up on missed engagement points.

- Attendance information recorded by Student Administration and engagement information entered by IGS/supervisors into EUCLID will be refreshed daily in the BI Suite.
- A nominated Administrator within the Graduate School Office (with support from other members of the team where required) will run a report on the 1st of each month to combine the information about attendance and engagement points met by each Tier 4 student in the previous month and identify any missed contact points.
- If an engagement point has been missed, an email will be sent to student and supervisor, notifying them that they have missed a compulsory engagement point and requesting that either the student reports to the Graduate School Office or the student and supervisor arrange a supervision meeting at the earliest opportunity, as appropriate. The Graduate School Office will add a note to the student's record to confirm that a reminder has been sent.
- If two consecutive engagement points are missed, an email will be sent to the student, supervisor and Deputy Director of Graduate School to request a reason and to explain the implications of missing engagement points. The Graduate School Office will add a note to the student's record to confirm that this has now been escalated.
- If three consecutive engagement points are missed, an email will be sent to the student, supervisor and Director of Graduate School to outline that the School has concerns and that they should meet urgently to discuss on-course engagement. It will be highlighted that the student will be reported for non-engagement if action is not taken. The Graduate School Office will add a note to the student's record to confirm that this has been escalated further.
- If it is then deemed that a student is no longer engaged with their programme and/or attending the University, the School will follow the College procedures for reporting Non-Attendance.

NB: This escalation process is subject to change, in alignment with any future changes to the University and College escalation process.

Leave of absence

In addition to recording attendance and engagement, for tier 4, the School is also required to report any changes to location of studies for all students and therefore it is important that procedures are in place within the School to keep accurate records of approved leave of absences.

For periods of absence of less than two weeks, the School requires the student to agree the leave with their supervisor and the supervisor must send a leave of absence request form to the Graduate School Office to keep on file.

For absences of 2 weeks to 15 months, supervisors must submit a leave of absence request form with the relevant details for approval by the Deputy Director of Graduate School. Once this request has been approved, the Graduate School Office writes out to the student and supervisor to confirm. The School will undertake to reinforce this procedure by communicating this again to all supervisors and including this in supervisor briefing sessions. Supervisors will also be reminded that engagement monitoring is expected to continue during any leave of absence. Additionally, students and supervisors will now be advised that any claims for expenses incurred during a period of leave will be reviewed by the Graduate School Directorate if a leave of absence was not approved prior to the student leaving Edinburgh.

The School will ensure that any approved leave of absence requests of 30 days or more are recorded on the student's record and to this end the Graduate School Office will submit a programme change request with the details via the applicant hub on EUCLID upon receipt of an approved request.

There are additional requirements for PhD students undertaking a placement during their studies, which must be followed in order to comply with UKVI regulations. These are explained in the School's policy on PhD placements for Tier 4 students.

If the requested leave of absence is for 15 months or longer, the School will follow the College procedure for requesting leave of absence.

Period of leave	Action
Up to 2 weeks	Approved by supervisor
2 weeks to 30 days	Must be approved by the Deputy Head of Graduate School
30 days to 15 months	Must be approved by the College Postgraduate Studies Committee

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