

UCL Student Attendance Policy 2021-22

1 Introduction

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide detailed information and guidance on the process and management of the student attendance system '**RegisterUCL**' for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught programmes, and Professional Doctorate students. Other Postgraduate Research students should refer to the [Doctoral School's Code of Practice](#) which outlines research students' responsibilities.
2. Research¹ indicates a strong correlation between regular attendance and retention, progression, wellbeing and academic achievement. Therefore, by regularly reviewing student attendance, UCL can offer additional support and guidance to those students who may need it.
3. Having an appropriate attendance recording system will ensure not only that UCL fully discharges its duty of care to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all students, but that it is also able to meet its reporting obligations to external bodies and agencies on a prompt and timely basis; these include government funding organisations such as the Student Loans Company, third party sponsors, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies and the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).
4. This policy has been developed as part of UCL's commitment to provide a supported learning environment in which students are encouraged to develop knowledge, understanding and the range of skills and attributes that will be useful to them during their time at UCL and beyond. UCL aims to encourage active participation in all learning activities through regular attendance.

2 Aims and Principles

2.1 Aims

1. Promote academic attainment, standards and progression.
2. Help support students' health and well-being.

¹ Examples include Bevitt, D., Baldwin, C., & Calvert, J. (2010). Intervening early: attendance and performance as a trigger for first year support in the biosciences. *Bioscience Education*, 15(1), 1-14 and Newman-Ford, L., Fitzgibbon, K., Lloyd, S., & Thomas, S. (2008). A large-scale investigation into the relationship between attendance and attainment: a study using an innovative electronic attendance monitoring system. *Studies in Higher Education*, 33(6), 699-717.

3. Maximise and enhance the student experience.
4. Satisfy external reporting/accreditation requirements and legal obligations, for example, in relation to the UK's immigration authorities or certain professional bodies.

2.2 Principles

1. Fairness - All students will be treated equally in relation to attendance requirements as far as possible.
2. Support and Wellbeing - High levels of student attendance and engagement have been linked to high academic achievement . The policy recognises that not all students who are struggling either personally or academically will show a pattern of behaviour that includes reduced attendance. However, it is important for UCL to measure attendance (as a proxy for engagement) in order to identify and offer additional support to students who may have personal circumstances or health issues that are affecting their studies. Thus, UCL's primary response to non- or low attendance will be centred on student wellbeing.
3. Student Ownership - UCL is committed to providing a supportive learning environment. However, students are expected to take responsibility for their own attendance in relation to meeting their department's minimum attendance requirements.

3 Definitions

Attendance	The activity of attending scheduled academic sessions. Face-to-face and/or online attendance at scheduled teaching and learning events is a core component of student retention, progression and achievement.
Engagement	The activity of students participating fully in their programme of study, engaging actively with learning opportunities and taking responsibility for their learning. Students are further expected to consistently and proactively contribute to all aspects of their programme of study.
Teaching event	This term refers to any teaching and learning session. It includes such things as lectures, seminars, tutorials, practicals, workshops, laboratory sessions and studio sessions.

4 Scope

1. The policy is relevant to all staff responsible for reviewing attendance and all taught students enrolled at UCL. 'Staff' includes any individual working at or for UCL. This includes, but is not limited to temporary, honorary, visiting, casual, voluntary, emeritus and agency workers, students employed by UCL and its suppliers.
2. This policy covers in-person and/or online attendance at all timetabled events. It does not apply to students who are on industrial placements or those who are studying abroad as part of their degree programme.

5 Attendance Expectations

1. UCL expects students to attend all the scheduled learning events which appear on their timetable as this gives students the best chance of academic success. This includes all events set out in the programme handbook or those provided to students during a module, including personal tutorials. Students should familiarise themselves with specific programme or module attendance requirements and must ensure that they engage with the method of recording attendance which is required by UCL. Students are responsible for ensuring that their attendance is recorded.
2. It is important that students attend teaching events punctually so as not to disrupt the learning of others. For some subjects, it will be vital that students arrive on time so that they are present for information that may be given at the start of a session, for example, health and safety instructions. Please note that the RegisterUCL system will record time of arrival and if a pattern of lateness is observed, the department may wish to explore the reasons for this with the student concerned.

6 Recording In-Person Attendance

6.1 Using the Card Readers

1. In order to record attendance accurately, card readers have been installed in all the main teaching spaces across UCL.
2. RegisterUCL is linked to UCL's timetabling system. To be marked 'present' at a timetabled teaching event, the student must tap in with their UCL ID card on the card readers placed inside or outside the teaching room. This can be done at any time from the start to the end of a timetabled event.
3. Students must tap in to each individual timetabled event even where they have back-to-back events in the same room.
4. UCL asks students to keep their student ID card safe and that they carry their ID card with them at all times while on UCL premises. As well as providing proof of identity and controlling access to UCL buildings, this ensures that students have the ability to record their attendance at all timetabled sessions.
5. Students will be marked 'absent' if they do not tap the card reader sometime between the start and end of a scheduled teaching event, if they have an issue with their card that they do not report to a member of staff promptly or if they do not have an explanatory note added to their record stating why they did not tap in.

6.2 Student Dashboards

1. All students will be able to see their own attendance data via the online Student Dashboard.

6.3 Fraudulent Attendance

1. The use of a student ID card is personal to the individual to whom it is issued and students must not allow their card to be used by any other individual. If students are found to be fraudulently using the system, either by tapping in on others' behalf or allowing others to tap in on their behalf, they may be subject to the procedures in Chapter 6, Section 8: Disciplinary Code and Procedure in Respect of Students.

6.4 ID Card Failures

1. If a student is not able to register their attendance by tapping into a session, they should contact their department administrator for support. Staff may then add an explanatory note online for the timetabled session record in question.

6.5 Lost or Stolen ID Cards

1. Lost or stolen ID cards must be reported to [UCL Security](#) as soon as possible so that the old card can be deactivated. Students should contact the Security Team to obtain a replacement ID card.

6.6 Room Changes

1. Where possible, all room changes will be amended on UCL's timetabling system and communicated to students in advance of the session. If a room change is required at the last minute for any reason, the relevant member of staff will make alternative arrangements. Students will then be required to tap into the new room to ensure their attendance can be recorded.

6.7 Cancelled Teaching Events

1. Similar to room changes, where possible, cancelled teaching events will be communicated to students in advance of the session. The department will ensure that RegisterUCL is updated accordingly.

6.8 Who has access to the student data held within the system?

1. Please refer to the Privacy Notice below. Students will have access to their own attendance data. In relation to the wider student body, attendance data will be collected and processed primarily by UCL staff (access to individual students' personal information is limited to staff who have a legitimate need to see it for the purpose of carrying out their job at UCL.). However, UCL may have to share students' attendance data with the parties set out below for the purpose of statutory and legal reporting:

- UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)
- Student Loans Company
- Third party sponsors
- Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

7 Recording Digital Attendance

1. Information for students about RegisterUCL can be found on the [Student Attendance webpage](#).
2. Students must log into the virtual platform which is hosting their timetabled session (Blackboard Collaborate/Zoom/MS Teams) using their UCL email address in order to record their attendance at an online synchronous or asynchronous teaching and/or other learning event. The department will then input the attendance data into RegisterUCL. Once a student has logged in, their attendance will be counted.
3. All students sharing a device to view or access an online teaching and/or other learning event, must log into their timetabled session individually using their UCL email address in order to record their attendance.
4. Monitoring of online attendance will include but is not limited to the following:
 - Logging on to Moodle
 - Logging in to Blackboard Collaborate/Zoom/Microsoft Teams
 - Watching a lecture via Lecturecast
 - Submitting coursework online
5. If students are not able to register their attendance at an online event, they should contact their department administrator for support. They must provide the details of the date/time of the event in their timetable, details of the activity they accessed in Blackboard/Zoom/MS Teams and the approximate date/time they accessed it so that this can be investigated further by the RegisterUCL team.

8 Absences

1. UCL understands that absences are sometimes unavoidable. In such cases, it is up to the student to notify their department of the reasons for the absence at the earliest opportunity (ideally in advance, but, if this is not possible, within 48 hours of the start of the absence). Please refer to the [Student Attendance webpage](#) for details of how to notify absences. All absences will count towards students' overall attendance figures. If a student falls below the minimum attendance threshold set by their faculty (see Section 9), then the department should review the reasons for absence that the student has given and follow up as appropriate.
2. If a student is absent from a summative assessment due to illness or other Extenuating Circumstances they must notify their Department as soon as possible following the procedures in Chapter 4, [Section 6: Extenuating Circumstances](#). Absences recorded in

- RegisterUCL will not count as notification of ECs.
3. Disabled students or those with a long-term medical or mental health condition are advised to contact [Student Support and Wellbeing](#) who can put in place reasonable adjustments for specific learning requirements. Students with a Summary of Reasonable Adjustments (SORA) still need to meet the minimum attendance requirements set by their Faculty.
 4. A student may wish to consider [interrupting their studies](#) if there is an ongoing period of absence that may result in their needing additional time to complete their degree programme. Students should discuss their requirements with their Personal Tutor or Programme Leader in person. Students may wish to seek advice from Student Funding via [AskUCL](#) about any potential impact on their Student Loan if they are considering an interruption. Student visa holders should also discuss their options with the Student Immigration Compliance Team via [AskUCL](#) , as an interruption of studies may affect their Student visa status.
 5. Students who repeatedly fail to attend timetabled teaching events without having notified their department of their absence will be moved through a staged process as highlighted in the section below.

9 Consequences of Repeated Non- or Low Attendance

1. Individual faculties are responsible for deciding the minimum attendance requirements for the departments in their faculty. These can be found in Section 12: Faculty Escalation Process and in the module handbook or related programme literature. This means that some programmes may have stricter attendance requirements than others and their timelines for managing non-attendance may be shorter. UCL expects students to familiarise themselves with their department's specific attendance requirements.
2. Students who are taking modules outside of their home faculty will be subject to the attendance requirements of the teaching faculty.
3. Each department will run attendance reports via RegisterUCL on a regular basis. The data will be used to identify any students whose attendance has fallen below the faculty's minimum attendance requirements and the department will then decide how to follow up with students whose attendance has become a cause for concern. Depending on the circumstances, low or non-attendance may trigger a sequence of follow-up contacts with the student to check whether any support or further advice are required. At each stage, the faculty policy will determine the timescales within which the student must respond. The stages are as follows:
4. **Stage 1** – once a student has missed the first minimum attendance threshold, they should receive an email from their department to check if they are well, advocating that the student returns to their timetabled teaching events and signposting them to sources of support. This email will be copied to the Personal Tutor.
5. **Stage 2** – if the student does not contact their department after the Stage 1 email and their low or non-attendance continues, they should receive a second email asking them to get in touch with their Personal Tutor or Programme Leader to discuss the reasons for non-attendance. They may be signposted to appropriate support where required.
6. **Stage 3** – if the student has not been in contact with their department after the Stage 2 email

and their attendance continues to cause concern, they must attend a meeting with the Departmental Tutor to discuss the situation and what support the student may need to improve their attendance. This meeting may include a discussion about whether or not a [Learning Agreement](#) is an appropriate course of action. A Learning Agreement is a written agreement which sets out what UCL will do to support the student as well as the conditions which the student agrees to meet. This may include the student agreeing to a higher attendance requirement than the normal minimum attendance requirement for the remainder of the term or the academic year.

7. **Stage 4** – if the student has not been in contact with their department after the Stage 3 email and their attendance continues to cause concern, the Faculty Tutor may contact the student for a mandatory [Faculty interview](#). If such a meeting is arranged, failure to attend could result in the student being withdrawn from their programme.
8. At any stage of the process, the department may refer a student to Student Support and Wellbeing through the [Student of Concern referral process](#) if they are concerned about their safety or wellbeing.
9. If the student meets with their department at any stage in the process and agrees a plan of action which they then fulfil, they may move back to the previous stage of the process.
10. If a student has progressed to Stage 4, UCL may decide to take one or more of the following courses of action:
 - Barring the student from assessment [please note: the Barring policy is currently suspended for the 2021-22 academic session]
 - [Suspending the student from their studies on the grounds of academic insufficiency](#)
 - Or, as a last resort, [terminating the student's registration](#).
11. All students have a right to make a complaint as per UCL's [Student Complaints Procedure](#) if they have any concerns about the disciplinary measures associated with low attendance. Students may also contact the Student Union Advice Service.
12. International students with a **Student visa** may find that their visa status is impacted if their studies at UCL have been terminated, suspended (due to academic insufficiency) or interrupted (for the duration of the interruption). The law means that UCL must inform the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) of any changes to a student's status.
13. Students who are on a Student visa must read the Student visa responsibilities guidance which provides information about the visa requirements: www.ucl.ac.uk/students/immigration-and-visas/tier-4-visas/tier-4-responsibilities. If students need any Student visa advice, they should get in touch with the Student Immigration Advice and Compliance Team who can assist: www.ucl.ac.uk/students/askucl-student-enquiry-system.

10 Privacy Notice

1. The personal information UCL may process about its students includes attendance information, such as attendance at different teaching events, number of absences and changes in student status. Academic staff, teaching administrators, department/programme administrators and Student and Registry Services staff will have access to the student attendance data. The attendance system complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and a full Data Protection Impact Analysis has been completed.
2. The Student Privacy notice applies to the personal data UCL collects from students and

personal data which is passed to UCL by third parties. Please read the following carefully to understand how UCL processes students' personal data: www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/student-privacy-notice.

3. Who UCL shares students' attendance data with:

- i. Students' personal data will be collected and processed primarily by UCL staff, but UCL may have to share students' data with relevant third parties for the purpose of statutory and legal reporting, such as:
 - UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)
 - Student Loans Company
 - Third party sponsors
 - Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.
- ii. UCL requires all third parties to respect the security of students' personal data and to treat it in accordance with the law. UCL does not allow its third party service providers to use students' personal data for their own purposes – UCL only permits them to process students' personal data for specified purposes and in accordance with its instructions.

11 Useful Links

- Wellbeing and Mental Health: www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/wellbeing
- Disability Support: www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/disability-support
- Student Psychological and Counselling Services: www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/student-psychological-and-counselling-services
- Financial Support from UCL: www.ucl.ac.uk/students/funding/financial-support
- Student Immigration Advice: www.ucl.ac.uk/students/immigration-visas/tier-4-visas/tier-4-immigrationadvice
- Students' Union Advice Service UCL: <https://studentsunionucl.org/help-and-advice/advice-service>

Faculty Escalation Process

Faculties	Departments	Threshold Trigger 1	Threshold Trigger 2	Threshold Trigger 3
Arts & Humanities	All	Attendance dropping below 50% overall and/or for any individual module over a 14 day period.	Attendance dropping below 50% overall and/or for any individual module over a 28 day period.	Attendance dropping below 50% overall and/or for any individual module over a 42 day period.
Bartlett (Built Environment)	All	One full week of 50% non-attendance at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance with a student needing to respond within 5 days	A second full week of 50% non-attendance at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance with a student needing to respond within 5 days	A third full week of 50% non-attendance at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance with a student needing to respond within 5 days
Brain Sciences	All	70% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 14 day period. (Some professionally accredited programmes will require 100% attendance.)	70% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 21 day period. (Some professionally accredited programmes will require 100% attendance.)	70% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 28 day period. (Some professionally accredited programmes will require 100% attendance.)
Engineering Sciences	All	Attendance dropping below 50% for Teaching Events over a two week period.	Attendance dropping below 50% for Teaching Events over a three week period.	Attendance dropping below 50% for Teaching Events over a four week period.
Institute of Education	IOE	3 teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 14 day period.	6 teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 28 day period.	9 teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 42 day period.
	Centre for Languages and International Education	3 teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 14 day period.	6 teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 28 day period.	9 teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 42 day period.
	UCL Summer School	1 full day of attendance missed over a three week module.	A second full day of attendance missed over a three week module.	A third full day of attendance missed over a three week module.
Laws	All	A first absence in any scheduled event from those that contribute to a student's overall attendance.	A second absence in any scheduled event from those that	A third absence in any scheduled event from those that contribute to a student's overall attendance

			contribute to a student's overall attendance.	OR A second absence in a scheduled event in a module within which a first absence has already been recorded.
Life Sciences	Division of Biosciences (BIOSC_LIF)	Attendance dropping below 50% over a three week period at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.	Attendance dropping below 50% over a six week period at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.	Attendance dropping below 50% over a nine week period at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.
	School of Pharmacy (PHMCY_LIF) MPharm degrees (UMPPHMSING01 and UMPPHMSREG01)	Attendance dropping below 70% over a three week period at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.	Attendance dropping below 70% over a six week period at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.	Attendance dropping below 70% over a nine week period at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.
Mathematical & Physical Sciences	All	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 14 day period. OR no attendance of teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance at all over a 7 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 28 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over a 42 day period.
Medical Sciences	Medical School (MBBS)	3 episodes of unexplained absence (not defined by a specific timeframe).		
	Medical School (postgraduate)	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 28 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 42 day period.
	Division of Medicine	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 28 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 42 day period.
	Division of Infection & Immunity	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 28 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 42 day period.

	Cancer Institute	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 28 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 42 day period.
	Surgery & Interventional Science	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period.	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period.
	Eastman Dental Institute	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period. (Some programmes will require 95% attendance to meet Royal College requirements)	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period. (Some programmes will require 95% attendance to meet Royal College requirements)	50% of all teaching events that contribute to a student's overall attendance missed over 14 day period. (Some programmes will require 95% attendance to meet Royal College requirements)
Population Health Sciences	GOSICH	1 full day of attendance missed over a one week module	A second consecutive full day of attendance missed over a one week module	A third consecutive full day of attendance missed over a one week module
	All	One full week of non-attendance at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.	Two full weeks of non-attendance at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.	Three full weeks of non-attendance at events that contribute to a student's overall attendance.
Social & Historical Sciences	All	Attendance dropping below 50% overall and/or for any individual module over a 14 day period.	Attendance dropping below 50% overall and/or for any individual module over a 28 day period.	Attendance dropping below 50% overall and/or for any individual module over a 42 day period.
Short Courses	Short modules/workshops (up to 5 days or sessions)	1 absence during a short module or workshop.	A second absence during a short module or workshop.	A third absence during a short module or workshop.
	Longer modules/courses (more than 5 days or sessions)	As per faculty policy.	As per faculty policy.	As per faculty policy.