

Tier 4 Engagement Monitoring: Temporary policy in response to Covid-19

Introduction

This policy sets out temporary concessions on Tier 4 engagement monitoring in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. Please note that UKVI have confirmed that these concessions will be kept under review and will be withdrawn once the situation returns to normal. However UCL has received confirmation from UKVI that these concessions apply to all Tier 4 students studying blended/distance learning in the 2020-21 academic year.

UCL takes its Tier 4 sponsorship duties very seriously and is committed to ensuring that those duties are adhered to. One such duty is the requirement to effectively monitor the engagement of those students who are sponsored on a Tier 4 visa. In order to comply with UKVI requirements, UCL must maintain robust evidence of Tier 4 student engagement records to demonstrate that engagement is recorded and that non-engagement is acted upon. Evidence should demonstrate academic engagement with the programme and as such it is not expected that superfluous activities are created.

In addition to statutory requirements, UCL is committed to maintaining academic integrity and monitoring student engagement supports both student academic success and student welfare and wellbeing, which fosters a positive student experience.

It is expected that this policy will be replaced once circumstances allow for face-to-face teaching to resume.

Engagement

Where possible, departments are expected to be able to evidence weekly engagement for those who are registered on a Taught programme (i.e. a bachelors or masters degree). However during the masters dissertation period, monthly confirmation of engagement is permitted.

Where possible, departments are expected to be able to evidence graduate research student engagement at least every 30 days in line with the UCL Doctoral School Code of Practice.

Academic departments will confirm academic engagement to the Student Immigration Compliance Team via the UCL Portico engagement monitoring task and will retain evidence of engagement within the department.

Acceptable evidence

Acceptable evidence of a student's academic participation with their programme at a scheduled teaching event or meeting whether in-person or through remote means.

Types of acceptable evidence include:

- Logging on to an online learning portal
- Online submission of coursework (i.e. via Turnitin/Moodle etc.)
- Evidence of attendance at virtual lectures, seminars and tutorials
- Confirmation of an academic meeting from personal tutor/departmental tutor/module convener
- Confirmation of an academic meeting from the student's supervisor or secondary supervisor
- Attendance at upgrade meeting
- Attendance at UCL Skills Development and Training events

- Records on the academic e-log to record supervisory meetings
- Annual progress reviews
- Viva
- Evidence of Skype or email engagement.

Non-engagement

UCL is required to demonstrate to UKVI that non-engagement is acted on swiftly and effectively. As such students should make every effort to ensure they engage with all scheduled teaching events/meetings. Any Tier 4 student who fails to engage with their scheduled classes or meetings, without authorised absence or extenuating circumstances, risks their Tier 4 visa being withdrawn. Students should therefore contact their department if they are not able to attend scheduled teaching events or meetings. Should a student be unable to engage with their studies due to Covid-19, they must inform their department as soon as possible. UCL will not seek to withdraw Tier 4 sponsorship of any student who is not able to engage with their programme due to Covid-19. Departments must maintain records of students who are absent for this reason.

Any Tier 4 student who does not engage with their studies and their absence is not related to Covid-19 risks their visa being withdrawn. Faculties and/or departments will notify the Student Immigration Compliance Team if they believe that the 60 day limit may be breached and the absence is not due to Covid-19.

Any student found to have breached the 60 day limit with no extenuating circumstances will receive no further sponsorship from UCL; their Tier 4 visa will be withdrawn and they will be de-registered from their programme.

Links to UCL Support Services

Wellbeing and Mental Health: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/wellbeing>

Disability Support: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/disability-support>

Student Psychological and Counselling Services: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/student-psychological-and-counselling-services>

Financial Support from UCL: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/funding/financial-support>

UCL Covid-19 FAQs: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/coronavirus/>

Immigration advice and Covid-19: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/immigration-and-visas/immigration-advice-and-covid-19>

Tier 4 Immigration Advice: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/immigration-visas/tier-4-visas/tier-4-immigration-advice>

Students' Union UCL: <http://studentsunionucl.org/>

Queries

Student queries: contact the Student Immigration Compliance Team via [AskUCL](#)

UCL staff queries: contact the Student Immigration Compliance Team via visacompliance.staffquery@ucl.ac.uk