



Kingston University UKVI Sponsored Student Attendance & Engagement Monitoring Policy

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Owner: Rebecca Blake, Associate Director of International Student Recruitment
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Policy Version Tracking:

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kingston University courses are designed with attendance as a key learning factor. Learning activities that require attendance have been carefully designed so that you will learn through action and in-person interaction with your tutors and peers, and benefit from campus-based facilities. They are aligned with the learning outcomes and assessment strategies of the course.
- 1.2 All activities will benefit your learning and allow you to recognise learning opportunities within your life experiences, enhancing your ability to apply received knowledge and skills to unique situations, and improving your degree outcomes.
- 1.3 The University monitors engagement and attendance for all students in line with [Policies and Regulations – How the University works](#)
- 1.4 The University acts as a sponsor for international students on a Student Visa under the immigration rules laid down by the government.
- 1.5 As a UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) licensed sponsor the University must comply with specific duties laid down by the government. This includes ensuring that sponsored students are academically engaging throughout the period for which they are being sponsored.
- 1.6 A student is engaging academically if they are actively and consistently following their course of study.
- 1.7 The UK Visas & Immigration requires the University to have systems in place to record and monitor international student engagement and make this information available to them for inspection if requested.
- 1.8 The University is required to report all instances where students fail to enrol or re-enrol, fail to attend, or engage with their studies, or otherwise fail to comply with the terms of their visa.
- 1.9 Students who fail to comply with the terms of their Student Visa will have their sponsorship withdrawn by the University and will be required to exit the UK.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 'Attendance' is defined as being present at all timetabled activities (i.e., those that are shown on SEAtS).
- 2.2 'Engagement' is defined as a student's active participation in all aspects of their studies this may include such activities as defined by UKVI as: attending required lectures, seminars or tutorials, undertaking required laboratory work, undertaking research or fieldwork, submitting essays, assignments, attending examinations and attending supervision meetings.
- 2.3 'SEAtS' is an online software platform that Kingston University uses to monitor student engagement and attendance.
- 2.4 'Checking-in via SEAtS' is defined as the process for registering your attendance at timetabled teaching activities by either tapping your student ID card onto the reader located in the room where the activity is taking place, or by logging into the system via the SEAtS App using your mobile device.

- 2.5 'Canvas' is Kingston University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) used by staff and students to support your modules and courses. The VLE is a key learning resource and you will access it frequently throughout your course to: Access learning resources including reading lists and course work. Participate in learning activities. Submit assignments. Receive feedback and marks. Communicate with peers and lecturers. Access your timetable.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all international students subject to UKVI requirements, regardless of mode or level of study. This includes students on Study Abroad (both inbound and outbound) or work placement.
- 3.2 Some courses may have additional specific attendance requirements to meet professional body requirements. Where this is the case, this will be clearly stated in the programme specification. Students on courses with an attendance requirement for professional registration must adhere to any absence processes given by the faculty to ensure that absences are recorded correctly.
- 3.3 Students registered for a course delivered wholly or in part at a Partner Institution (i.e., not delivered on a Kingston University campus) will be subject to the attendance requirements of the Partner Institution for those periods they are taught by the Partner Institution.
- 3.4 For more information contact the CAS & Visa Compliance Team at: ukvi@kingston.ac.uk

4. Expectations

- 4.1 We expect you to attend all your timetabled teaching activities.
- 4.2 If you are unable to attend your timetabled session, you should report this as soon as possible, with an explanation, via the SEAtS App. The University expects students to behave in a professional manner when absent and this replicates expectations in the workplace.
- 4.3 For research degree students your supervision meetings must be recorded on Canvas.

5. Registering your attendance on the system

- 5.1 You need to register your attendance ('check-in') at each timetabled event by holding your KU ID card against the reader positioned inside each learning space. Alternatively, you can 'check-in' by logging into the system via the SEAtS App using your mobile device.
- 5.2 You must not 'check-in' for another student or ask another student to 'check-in' on your behalf. Disciplinary action may be taken if it is identified that such behaviors have taken place.
- 5.3 You should regularly check your published timetable as, on occasion, changes may occur.

5.4 There are 800 SEAtS card readers and beacons across all campuses so if you cannot check in via one method, you must use the other. On the rare occasion that both are not working you can report this via the “add absence” function in the SEAtS app. Please allow up to 30 minutes for your swipe to update in the app.

5.5 If you forget to Check In while you are on campus, please let us know by emailing KUCheckIn@kingston.ac.uk

6. Absence

6.1 We understand that things happen, and you may not always make it on to campus. If you know in advance that you won't be able to make it, just let us know which of the timetabled teaching activities you can't attend by going to "Add an Absence" within the SEAtS app and we'll make sure it's noted on your student record. If you miss a session without letting us know, there is no need to worry, but you may hear from us to find out how you are getting on.

6.2 If you are experiencing any difficulties which are impacting your ability to attend classes, whatever they may be, including but not limited to difficulties surrounding disabilities and mental health, finance etc., please get in touch with the Student Engagement Team via email at: engagement@kingston.ac.uk, who will be able to advise and support you appropriately or refer you to the relevant department so you can get the right support.

6.3 Our aim is to ensure that you succeed in your studies, and we are here to support you in achieving this.

6.4 If you miss several timetabled activities, and have not advised us of your absence, the University will follow the 6-stage process as outlined below:

7. Actions Taken Where Engagement is low

7.1 Stage 1

7.1.1 The CAS & Visa Compliance Team will contact you by email, reminding you of the requirement and importance of attending timetabled sessions and reporting absences.

7.2 Stage 2

7.2.1 If you continue to be repeatedly absent from timetabled activities and/or do not engage with Canvas and you have not informed us of any reasons for this, the Visa Compliance Team will contact you again by email and SMS message to remind you of the requirement to attend all your timetabled activities.

7.3 Stage 3

7.3.1 If your engagement has not improved your personal tutor will be notified and the Visa Compliance Team will contact you to arrange a meeting to discuss your non-engagement and/or non-attendance.

7.4 Stage 4

7.4.1 Where poor attendance continues and/or you have not responded to the communications sent to you, the Visa Compliance Team will send you a final reminder confirming a mandatory requirement to attend a face to-face meeting with Visa Compliance Team including SMS text confirming date and time.

7.5 Stage 5

- 7.5.1 If you remain disengaged after stage 4, the University will notify you of your options in line with the general regulations to:
- a) Interrupt studies.
 - b) Withdraw from your course

Students who are withdrawn may be entitled to a statement of credit for any passed modules and possible consideration for an intermediate award.

- 7.5.2 The outcome of stage 5 will determine the appropriate compliance action taken for stage 6.

7.6 Stage 6

- 7.6.1 The University will report to UKVI the change in your student status within 10 working days.

- 7.7 Email to student to confirm Sponsorship has been withdrawn.

- 7.8 Stages 1 to 6 will happen within an eight-week period to ensure that we remain compliant with UKVI requirements and do not exceed 60 days of inactivity.

8. Changing / transferring your course

- 8.1 You must seek advice from the CAS, Visa and Immigration Team before requesting a transfer by contacting immigrationadvice@kingston.ac.uk

- 8.2 If the course change is permitted under Student Visa regulations, the Visa Compliance Team will inform the Home Office of this change within 10 working days.

- 8.3 Depending upon the change of circumstances, this may affect the length of leave on your visa and in some cases.

- 8.4 If the new end date is after the Student Visa expiry date, you will need to request a new CAS to extend your visa.

- 8.5 If you have any questions about a course change and how it may affect your visa status, email UKVI@kingston.ac.uk

- 8.6 Student Visa holders cannot transfer to part-time study.

9. Authorised Absence (AA)

- 9.1 If you need to be absent during term time, you must request an Authorised Absence (AA) letter from your Faculty and provide relevant documentary evidence, e.g., medical certificate/doctor's note. The relevant academic member of staff must approve the request and letters will then be prepared by your Faculty Course Support and Administration team.

- 9.2 If you are simply travelling for a holiday, you must arrange such trips during official holiday periods.

- 9.3 Any authorised absence must not affect your studies or become the reason for a future visa extension.

9.4 Reasons could include:

- a. a family emergency/bereavement
- b. illness
- c. applying for a visa extension overseas

9.5 The time you will be absent must only be for a period of up to two weeks at any one time.

9.6 If the time you are away becomes longer than the agreed period, the case must be reassessed and may result in you being placed on a break and your visa cancelled.

9.7 It is important that you have the Authorised Absence letter with you when travelling back to the UK after your trip. If you do not have it with you, you may be detained for questioning whilst the Home Office contacts the university for clarification.

10. Absence for overseas field work

10.1 If you need to leave the UK to undertake essential work as part of your course, you must obtain a letter from your Faculty. Reasons could include:

- a. conducting research for your dissertation or thesis
- b. studying abroad for a short period
- c. working abroad for a short period

10.2 You can present this letter as evidence of permission to be absent to anyone who questions why you are not in classes during term time (e.g., to Border Force).

11. Returning home to complete studies

11.1 If you are an undergraduate or postgraduate student and request permission to leave the UK and complete your course/submit work remotely, this could affect your student visa sponsorship. It may not be possible to retain your student visa permission and your remaining student leave curtailed by UKVI.

11.2 You should only intend to leave the UK if you do not need to return to meet supervisors/access resources/complete any outstanding academic work.

12. Research Degree students (PhD, Masters by Research, MPhil, and Professional Doctorates) holiday period

12.1 As a research degree candidate, you may request a holiday period if you want to take time off, as this is not automatically granted. Any holiday period must be agreed with the research degree supervisor in advance and formally authorised in writing. During an approved holiday period, you can work full-time.

13. Pregnancy/Maternity (PhD/research students only)

13.1 Research degree students can take up to one year of maternity leave, this is allowed by the Postgraduate Research Regulations. You will need to take a break from your programme and leave the UK. To return, you will need to request a new CAS and begin the visa application process again.

13.2 If you wish to take a shorter period of leave (up to six weeks) to cover the birth of your baby, you must request an Authorised Absence.

13.3 For full details, please refer to the University's Pregnancy and Maternity Policy for Student Visa Holders: [Policies and Regulations – How the University works](#).

14. Other changes you must tell us about that may affect your attendance

14.1 To protect your student and immigration status you must inform us if you:

- a. complete your course early
- b. defer or take a break (more than 60 days) from your studies
- c. claim/are awarded mitigating circumstances*

14.2 In all cases, you must speak to your Faculty/School in the first instance. The CAS & Visa Compliance team will take the appropriate action and liaise with the Faculty and UKVI as necessary.

14.3 *Please note: award of mitigating circumstances does not guarantee that you will be eligible for further sponsorship under the Student Route visa.

15. Suspension for non-payment of tuition fees

15.1 Students who are suspended from their course due to Poor Financial Standing (Academic) will be considered non-compliant with UKVI requirements as per University [policies and regulations](#).

16. Dissertation and thesis writing up periods

16.1 During dissertation periods or where the student has no taught elements to attend, students will maintain engagement through monthly assignments as assessed part of the course.

16.2 These will be uploaded via Canvas and monitored through SEAtS.

17. Work Placements

17.1 You can work full time on a work placement provided that you will not spend more than 50% of your course doing a work placement/s.

17.2 The employer will monitor your attendance in conjunction with the faculty and remain responsible for you during the work placement.

17.3 Part-time employment is permitted during the work placement period.

18. Work Placement Monitoring

18.1 Students undertaking a work placement as an integral and assessed part of their course will be monitored through monthly assignments set up within their Canvas work placement module.

18.2 Each month students will complete an assignment based around their work placement activities and will upload monthly engagement updates to Canvas.

18.3 This will also apply to study-abroad programmes.

18.4 Placement visits will be arranged and scheduled during the placement period.

19. Transferring off Postgraduate Work Placement

19.1 If you decide not to complete your placement, or are unable to complete the placement year, please contact your placement team / Placement Officer in the first instance.

19.2 You will be withdrawn from the placement module and course and be awarded an appropriate exit award.

19.3 The Compliance team will report your change of course to the Home Office after you have been transferred off the placement route and inform you by email.

19.4 If you complete your course early the Compliance Team will report this to the Home Office and your remaining visa sponsorship will be shortened to reflect early course completion once you have been awarded and informed by email.

19.5 The Home Office will then cancel your student visa to + 4months from your new, early completion date and send a curtailment letter with a new visa expiry date to your email address that you stated on your student visa application form.

19.6 You must check your email address regularly that you entered on your student visa application including your spam/junk folders. We cannot say when you will receive this letter.

19.7 If you miss the letter and your visa expires, you will then become an overstayer and ineligible to apply to the Graduate Route.

20. Early Completion

20.1 If you complete your programme earlier than expected we will make a report to the Home Office and the end date for your visa will be brought forward.

21. Change in enrolment status

21.1 If you decide to interrupt or withdraw from your programme, you must inform your Faculty as soon as possible. We will inform the Home Office if:

- a. You are required to repeat without attendance
- b. You interrupt your studies
- c. You withdraw, or are withdrawn, from your programme.

21.2 This means the Home Office will curtail (cancel) your Student Visa. You should therefore arrange to leave the UK at the first available opportunity. Once your visa is curtailed you will receive notification from the Home Office.

22. Switching to different visa category and your immigration status changes

22.1 If you switch visa categories (obtain a different visa type) you must inform the CAS & Visa Compliance team as soon as possible, so that we can report the change to the Home Office

23. Enrolment

- 23.1 Enrolment is the process you need to complete to become an official Kingston University student.
- 23.2 International students are required to complete online enrolment and attend a compulsory physical check-in appointment when they arrive on campus. This is the second part of enrolment. Once you have successfully completed online enrolment, you will receive an email from our admissions team inviting you to book your check-in appointment.
- 23.3 We are required to verify that you have a valid visa to study at Kingston University and to keep a copy of your passport and Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) on file. You must bring your original passport and BRP to on campus check-in so that a staff member can verify and scan these documents.
- 23.4 If you applied for your Student Visa outside the UK you will need to collect your BRP before you attend on campus check-in. You must complete all stages of enrolment to become a student at Kingston University.
- 23.5 The specific enrolment deadline will depend on your course, and you should contact your Faculty if you are unsure of the deadline date. If you do not register within the deadline, we are legally obliged to report this to the Home Office, who will then take action to curtail (cancel) your immigration permission.

24. Re-enrolment

- 24.1 All returning/continuing Kingston University students are required to re-enrol (online) each academic year. As you pass from one academic stage to the next, you will be invited to enrol again for the subsequent stage of your course.
- 24.2 You will receive an email telling you when you are required to enrol.
- 24.3 Re-enrolment must be completed within the strict deadline given. You will be emailed directly with detailed information about re-registration.
- 24.4 Students who do not complete re-enrolment are deemed not to be students and are not permitted to continue on their course. We will then report this to the Home Office who will take action to curtail (cancel) your visa.

25. For further information/advice:

UKVI Compliance

UKVI@kingston.ac.uk

SEAtS/check-in queries

KUCheckIn@kingston.ac.uk

Immigration Advice

immigrationadvice@kingston.ac.uk

26. Annex A: Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

Understanding and adhering to the conditions of your Student Visa
Attending and engaging fully with your studies
Registering your attendance on SEAtS by checking-in at all classes, lectures, seminars, and other academic events that are a compulsory part of your programme.
Keeping your email, address, and telephone number contact details up to date.
Responding to emails from the CAS & Visa Compliance team and your Faculty regarding attendance
Informing your Faculty at the earliest opportunity if you are unable to attend or engage with your studies
Providing evidence for any periods of absence
Completing and submitting an Authorised Absence request where relevant
Completing and uploading via Canvas monthly assignments (Research and work placement students only).

Module Tutors and Research Degree Supervisors are responsible for

Reminding students of the importance of regular attendance and engagement.
Keeping alert on student progress.
Flagging up a period of absence or pattern of absence to the Programme Leader and Personal Academic Tutor.

Personal / Academic Tutors are responsible for

Clarifying their role in relation to support, retention, and management of attendance/engagement;
Checking their tutees' attendance records if absence issues have been identified
Referring international students sponsored under the Student Visa Route to the CAS & Visa Compliance Team.
Referring tutees to other sources of support that may be available to them e.g., Student Liaison Officers, Disability Service staff, counselling, financial advice;
Issuing Attendance and Engagement Warnings;
Keeping alert on the tutee's progress once the student is attending again.

Programme Leaders are responsible for

Ensuring that students are informed of the importance of regular attendance of, and engagement, in scheduled sessions - through programme induction (new and continuing students), and by referring to this policy and information in Programme Handbooks, Module Guides and other programme documentation.
Authorising notified absences

CAS & Visa Compliance Team are responsible for

Ensuring that the University is fully compliant with Home Office's regulations.
Contacting you periodically regarding your immigration records and the conditions of your visa
Noting and attending absence concern meetings
Notifying the UKVI of withdrawn students in accordance with Home Office regulations at the time of withdrawal
Following up on attendance concerns identified by Personal Academic Tutors; Issuing Attendance and Engagement Plans and Warnings; Advising Heads of Schools of students who need to be withdrawn.

Deans / Heads of School are responsible for

Authorising the withdrawal of students who have failed to attend.
Ensuring teaching staff are aware of the Attendance and Engagement Policy and are promoting it to students and implementing it appropriately.