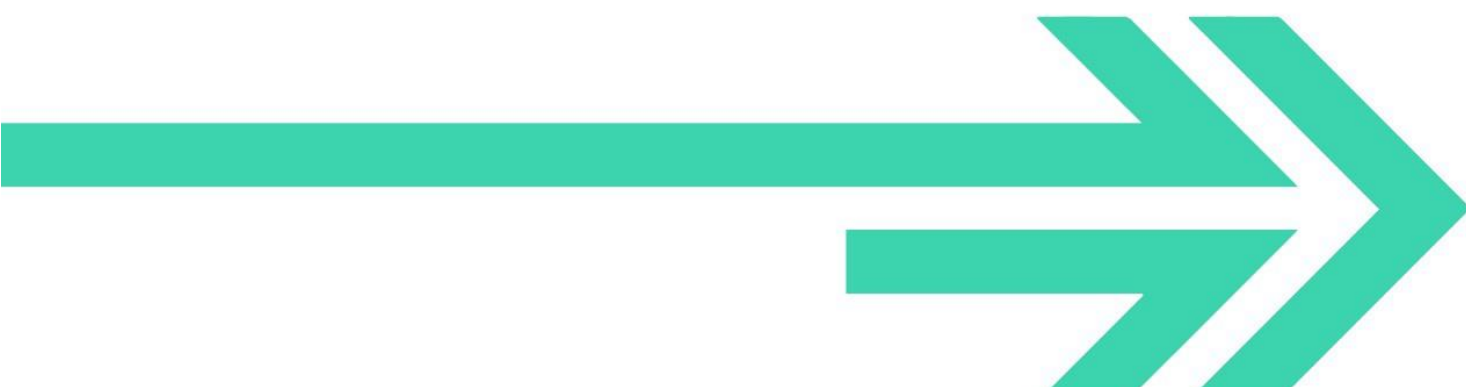




Ulster University International Students Attendance Policy



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Version 1.0	01/12/2021	Lorraine Walsh	01/11/2023
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Introduction

The International Students Attendance Policy has been developed as part of QA Higher Education's commitment to provide a supportive learning environment to enable students to achieve their full potential, and to ensure we meet our sponsorship duties. This policy outlines attendance and engagement requirements for Ulster University 'Student' permissions, previously known as Tier 4 permission.

Attendance is a key component in student retention and progression and, in our experience, regular attendance and engagement is closely linked to improved academic achievement. QAHE will take account of relevant legislation such as the Mental Health Act, Equality Act and the general rights and expectations of a student with respect to confidentiality.

Attendance and Engagement

The International Students Attendance Policy requires that enrolled 'Student' permission students are punctual and regular in their attendance and engage with timetabled classes or other forms of instruction as may be prescribed, this includes where attendance has been requested at meetings or appointments.

Attendance and/or engagement will be regarded as unsatisfactory in any of the following circumstances:

- ❖ Failure to attend weekly contact points
- ❖ 4 weeks of non-attendance or engagement during a semester
- ❖ Failure to attend pre-notified appointments/meetings
- ❖ Non submission of assessments
- ❖ Non-attendance at examinations

Absence notification

Students must notify qahe.attendance@qa.com of any absence. Where the absence is for a period of more than five working days, and/or caused by illness which may affect the student's studies, the student shall arrange for a medical certificate to be presented and submitted to the Attendance team. Records of this communication will be noted onto the student's record for review and may be taken into consideration at any time.

We are unable to mitigate any of the following absences:

- ❖ Travelling to/from work
- ❖ Working
- ❖ National Insurance Number appointments
- ❖ Holidays during term-time period

Emergency leave

Students should seek prior approval for emergency leave from the Compliance team. Emails, together with evidence, should be submitted to ulstercompliance@qa.com.

Emergency leave can only be considered under medical grounds, bereavement of an immediate family member, your marriage or the marriage of an immediate family member.



Where a student will be out of studies for more than 60 days and/or they will no longer be able to complete their programme within the timeframe of their visa there is a requirement that 'Student' permission sponsorship is withdrawn.

In these instances, a student may be eligible for a new CAS subject to prior attendance, engagement, and financial standing. Students may be required to leave the UK prior to further CAS issuance.

Leave of Absence

Students may apply for permission to interrupt their studies on personal grounds in line with the relevant University regulations. However, where a student will be out of studies for more than 60 days and/or they will no longer be able to complete their programme within the timeframe of their visa, there is a requirement that 'Student' permission sponsorship is withdrawn.

Academic and Progression Board

The Awards and Progression board may withdraw the registration of a student where there is a lack of academic progress or productivity at any time as stated in the University's regulations.

What happens when attendance or engagement levels become unsatisfactory?

Where a student's attendance or engagement is unsatisfactory, one or more of the following actions may be taken by QAHE:

- ❖ Send an email to the student detailing the contact points missed, requesting an explanation for their non-attendance
- ❖ Require those students whose have missed 4 contact points during a semester to attend a meeting with a member of the Compliance team to discuss their continuation on the course
- ❖ Initiate the student withdrawal process (see below) and inform the UKVI of withdrawal of sponsorship

Student Withdrawal Process

If you miss up to 3 contact points during a semester, you will receive an email to your university email after each missed contact point, requesting a response and reason for your absence.

If student misses a 4th contact point, a meeting would be arranged for the student with a member of the Compliance team. This would give the student an opportunity to present evidence of mitigating circumstances, if any. Failure to attend this meeting would lead to withdrawal of sponsorship.

Any further missed contact points after the 4th contact point will lead directly to sponsorship withdrawal. At this stage UKVI sponsorship and University registration will be withdrawn.



In addition to the above points, continued failure to submit assessed work without explanation may result in the student withdrawal process being initiated.

Student Permission Sponsorship Withdrawal

In addition to withdrawal of sponsorship for absences or non-engagement, where a student is out of studies for more than 60 days, excluding defined holiday periods, could result in withdrawal of sponsorship. For example, when a student has retakes for semester 2 alone, and does not have any learning to undertake during semester 1.

In these instances, a student may be eligible for a new CAS subject to prior attendance, engagement and financial standing. Students may be required to leave the UK prior to further CAS issuance.

ⁱ Immediate family is defined as parent, siblings, spouse, child