



## TIER 4 SPONSORED STUDENTS - ENGAGEMENT WITH ACADEMIC STUDIES POLICY

### 1. Purpose

This document is intended for all international students who have been issued with a Tier 4 visa to study at the University of Brighton, and for all staff in the university who support them. The university is committed to supporting all our students to successfully complete their studies. This may include contacting you if there is a concern about engagement with your studies. In addition as a Tier 4 sponsor, the university is required to meet certain Home Office sponsorship duties including monitoring student engagement with expected contact points.

This policy sets out the responsibilities of all relevant students and staff of the University of Brighton to meet the following duties:

1. to ensure that the university supports students appropriately to engage with their studies; and
2. to ensure that the university fulfils its sponsor duties for monitoring engagement of sponsored international students with their studies;

### 2. Definitions

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| ENGAGEMENT EVIDENCE | Evidence to demonstrate engagement with studies including a description or identifiers of interactions, and scanned evidence document eg register where appropriate                 |
| ENGAGEMENT POINTS   | Learning activities and interactions which provide evidence that students are actively engaging with their courses.   |
| HOME OFFICE         | The UK Government department responsible for immigration.   |
| REVIEW PERIOD       | A period of one calendar month during which engagement will be monitored depending on the nature of the student's teaching and learning environment.                                |
| TIER 4              | The visa category in the Points Based Immigration System under which UK educational institutions holding a Tier 4 sponsor licence can sponsor students to come and study in the UK. |
| UKVI                | UK Visas and Immigration department within Home Office.   |

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all students who are holding a Tier 4 visa under the Points Based Immigration system in order to study at the University of Brighton in the UK, including those on work placement which is a formal part of their course, and all university staff who interact with these students.

Students are expected to comply with this policy and cooperate with university staff in order meet the requirements, including attending meetings on request or provide evidence as required. Active engagement with studies, including appropriate attendance, will be recorded as set out in the Policy, and used as evidence for audit purposes including Home Office audit visits. This Policy relates to the monitoring of engagement only. Please see the 'Tier 4 – International Student Sponsoring Policy' for the university's policy on sponsoring international students.

#### **4. Student engagement and relevant attendance**

All students are expected to engage with, and actively participate in, the learning activities for their course. All staff are expected to support students' to successfully complete their studies, and take appropriate action to support a student where an engagement or related attendance concern is identified. Some of these expected engagement points will be monitored in line with Home Office requirements.

Learning activities and interactions which provide evidence that students are actively engaging with the university and their studies. These could include:

##### **Online engagement points**

- a. Confirmation of personal details online (re-enrolment)
- b. Submission of formative or summative coursework via an online submission system (for example studentcentral assignment tools, TurnItIn, ePortfolio, MapleTA)
- c. Online elective module selection

##### **Other engagement points**

- d. In-person enrolment
- e. In-person submission of coursework
- f. Examinations, test or other form of assessment
- g. Attendance at tutorial, seminar, clinic or lab
- h. Record of meeting with supervisor, personal tutor, Student Support Guidance Tutor (SSGT) or other relevant member of teaching or administrative staff
- i. Record of research training or research panel meeting
- j. Oral examination or viva
- k. Placement engagement
- l. Application for coursework extensions
- m. Submission of mitigating circumstances
- n. Authorisation of absence request
- o. Participation in an organised field trip

The university will monitor students' active engagement with their studies and it is the responsibility of all teaching staff, research supervisors and other student-facing support staff to intervene at the earliest opportunity to help any student who may be experiencing difficulties with their studies, and to support the student to re-engage with their studies. If this is not possible the university is required to report to the UKVI when sponsored students are not actively engaged and are therefore deemed to have withdrawn from their course (which will lead to the curtailment of the student visa). The university has an obligation to monitor student engagement effectively and has determined that this will be via monthly review periods. The table below outlines the number of engagement points which will be used to monitor student's active engagement with their studies and are dependent upon the teaching and learning environment for the particular category of student.

| Type of student                                    | Formal engagement Points   |
|--|--|
| Undergraduate (including integrated masters)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be a monthly review period from the start of the course until the completion of the course.</li> <li>• Within each review period a minimum of 2 formal engagement points (where there are expected engagements) will be monitored and logged.</li> <li>• Where the student is on year-long sandwich placement a minimum of 1 formal engagement point per review period/month will be monitored and logged.</li> <li>• Formal vacation periods will be noted and logged.</li> </ul> |
| Postgraduate, taught and research (including PGCE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be a monthly review period each year from the start of the course until the completion of the course.</li> <li>• Within each review period a minimum of 1 formal engagement point (where there are expected engagements) will be monitored and logged.</li> <li>• Formal vacation periods will be noted and logged.</li> </ul>   |

## 5. Engagement responsibilities

### 5.1 Students' responsibilities

The [Student Contract](#) sets out the responsibility of all students to appropriately engage with their studies via all learning activities which form part of their course.

Any student studying at the university with a visa issued under Tier 4 of the Points Based Immigration System should note that engagement in their studies will be monitored and logged. Students are expected to:

1. Confirm contact details at enrolment and confirm or update the university with any changes during termly re-enrolment (confirmation of personal details). Student can update the university with any changes to contact details at any time via studentcentral
2. Comply with the terms set out in the Student Contract by engaging appropriately with all learning activities, and with the additional requirements set out in this policy;
3. Seek authorisation from the Course Leader, appropriate School Office staff or Student Support Guidance Tutor for any unforeseen absence due to illness or other circumstances

In the event of missed engagements, the student will be contacted (via their university email account) by their appropriate School Office to discuss their circumstances, any concerns and if any support is required.

Any student who, in the view of the academic school, is not satisfactorily engaging with their studies as set out in the Student Contract, will be deemed to have withdrawn from the university. Tier 4 sponsorship will be withdrawn at this stage, the UKVI will be notified and the student's visa will be curtailed.

### 5.2 University-wide responsibility

Responsibility for the management and implementation of this Policy (and any associated documentation) lies with the Registrar and Secretary (who is the University's Authorising Officer). All staff working with students sponsored under Tier 4, both academic and administrative, are responsible for adhering to this Policy and associated good record keeping practices.

### 5.3 Academic school responsibilities

In brief, it is the responsibility of the academic schools to:

- determine for each course the expected formal monitored engagement points within review periods;
- log details of engagement in the university’s student records system;
- upload appropriate engagement evidence for each engagement point;
- Authorise any unforeseen absence as appropriate;
- Monitor student engagement with a placement where applicable, and upload appropriate engagement evidence;
- inform the Student Visa Compliance Team of student placement periods, locations and any subsequent changes;
- via the Student Maintenance Process, inform the Academic Services if the student has withdrawn, intermitted or transferred course;
- contact students in line with this policy, where engagement points are missed;
- identify patterns of missed engagement points, investigate as appropriate including ensuring that students can access appropriate support; and
- undertake any other activities relating to engagement monitoring as required.

#### 5.4 Student Visa Compliance Team (SVCT - Academic Services)

In brief, it is the responsibility of the SVCT to:

- notify the UKVI of any changes as set out in the Home Office sponsor duties;
- undertake sample checks of Tier 4 engagement monitoring records within particular schools to ensure that records are being updated and acted upon appropriately;
- update all staff on changes to engagement monitoring or other relevant information as notified by UKVI and be the primary point of contact for any policy queries (both internally and externally); and
- provide clear and consistent information and advice (online and paper copy) to all students and staff on matters relating to UKVI engagement requirements

#### 6. Related documents

- Student Contract – [terms and conditions](#)
- [Records Retention Policy](#)
- Tier 4 Sponsored Students – Tier 4 Engagement with Academic Studies Practice Manual (for staff) including SITS e:Vision manual
- Tier 4 Sponsored Students - CAS Issuance policy and procedures

#### Document management and control

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|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Date of first draft:</b> | 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2017 |
| <b>Date of final draft:</b> |                            |
| <b>Approved by:</b>         | Registrar and Secretary    |
| <b>Next review date:</b>    |                            |
| <b>Reviewed by:</b>         |                            |