

Royal Northern College of Music
Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy
Policy & Procedure
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- 1.1 This Policy is in the spirit of the College's commitment to provide a supportive learning environment which seeks to enable all students to achieve their full potential. The College recognises the substantial investment that students make when they choose to study music and has a responsibility to monitor attendance, act on non-attendance and support students to complete their programme of study. The monitoring of attendance is also important in supporting the health and wellbeing of students as non-attendance can be an indicator of a student experiencing personal difficulties.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Policy is to provide clarity for students and staff on the expectations relating to student attendance.
- 1.3 The Policy applies to all enrolled taught students at the College.
- 1.4 The College also has a statutory duty to comply with the stipulations of the Home Office under its Sponsorship licence which requires the accurate tracking of attendance of students subject to visa restrictions.
- 1.5 Whilst this Policy applies to all timetabled learning and teaching sessions, the principles laid out within it also apply to orchestral, operatic and choral events and activities as part of a professional code of conduct.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 Attendance is a vital component in student retention, progression, achievement and employability. Regular attendance is closely linked to achievement - students with a record of persistent non-attendance are more likely to fail to achieve the required learning outcomes during assessment and receive lower grades or fail modules than those who attend regularly. Attendance monitoring allows timely intervention and to facilitate a dialogue between staff and students to ascertain the reasons underpinning poor attendance so that support can be offered if necessary.
- 2.2 The College will take reasonable measures to ensure that the student is able to attend scheduled classes (classes encompass all timetabled learning opportunities, for example: individual one-to-one lessons, lectures, seminars, tutorials, rehearsals, practical classes that contribute to a module for which credit is awarded) that form part of the programme of study.
- 2.3 Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and to take responsibility for their own learning.
- 2.4 Students must arrive on time for classes and remain for the duration of the session. Late arrival at, or early departure from sessions is disruptive, discourteous, unprofessional and unfair to other class members and tutors.
- 2.5 The College is based on a community of learning and as such students are expected to contribute to their fellow students' learning experience within a holistic learning environment. This is particularly the case when engaging in assessed group work or performance activities where non-attendance at any stage in the learning process can impact adversely on others' experience.

3 Planned and Unexpected Absences

- 3.1 The College understands that students may face difficulty in attending all sessions, and as such recognises that there will be cases of both planned and unexpected absence. A student may only be excused from attending timetabled classes in the case of:

- a. **Illness / other extenuating circumstances:** Short-term illness, accident or injury, medical appointments where rearrangement is not possible, the death or serious illness of a close family member or dependent or adverse personal or family circumstances may result in absence. The student should, wherever possible, inform the School Administrator via email and log details of any absence on ASIMUT before the class occurs. It is a requirement that any prolonged (more than 5 days) period of absence due to illness be confirmed with a medical note.
- b. **Authorised Absence:** A student may apply for authorised absence for exceptional performance or other opportunities/events. All such absences in term-time, including examination periods, must be authorised by way of an Approved Absence Agreement to the absence must not be assumed. Students must submit an Absence Request Form for every period they are absent from College during term time as far in advance of the expected start of the absence as possible. This includes external professional work and competitions or family commitments. Absence Request Forms can be found on Moodle. Absence requests for missed classes will be approved by the Head of School. Absence requests for missed performance assessment will be approved by the Head of School and Deputy Principal (Performance & Programmes).

Absences over 5 consecutive working days will be sent to the relevant Course Leader for approval. Absence requests for missed Academic Studies examinations or coursework deadlines will not be authorised for absences of up to 5 consecutive working days; students with approved absences of up to 5 consecutive working days must attend all examinations and submit all coursework by the published deadlines. Students with approved absences of 6 consecutive working days or more, for career-enhancing opportunities/events, may request deferred assessment for Academic Studies examinations or coursework deadlines. Full details of the professional engagement(s) must be submitted when requesting deferment for an assessment, normally no later than two weeks prior to the expected start date of the absence. Requests for deferred Academic Studies assessments will be approved by the Head of Undergraduate Programme, Head of Graduate School, Head of Popular Music and/or Director of Programmes (or their nominees).

4 Monitoring Attendance

- 4.1 The College will maintain records of attendance for all scheduled academic classes. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they sign the register (where applicable) for every scheduled class they attend. Attendance will be monitored by the relevant Programme and Assessment Coordinator/s.
- 4.2 Attendance of classes not recorded on ASIMUT will be monitored by the relevant Tutor or School Administrator.
- 4.3 Attendance for all corporate performance (orchestras, ensembles, choirs and chamber music) is compulsory reflecting the importance placed on reliability by the profession. Unauthorised absence will be treated very seriously and penalties may be imposed for any unsatisfactory attendance. Students may be excluded from the College external list and subsequent references may include reference to poor attendance.

5 Unsatisfactory Attendance

- 5.1 Due to its integral importance to student learning, the College will pursue all cases of recorded persistent unsatisfactory attendance. It is the responsibility of the student to

inform the relevant Programme and Assessment Coordinator of any reasons behind non-attendance.

Taught Programmes

5.2 Unsatisfactory attendance is deemed to be when a student's recorded attendance on scheduled academic classes falls below 70%, as recorded on ASIMUT, and does not have valid reasons for non-attendance within the reporting period. Once concerns are raised, attendance/engagement points/records may also be checked such as principal study lessons, room bookings and ID card use.

6 Attendance Monitoring on Taught Programmes

6.1 Prolonged or persistent sickness recording and/or unsatisfactory attendance will be followed up by the Programmes and Assessment Team and Student Wellbeing Advisors, who will signpost any relevant support.

6.2 Where it is identified that attendance is unsatisfactory for classes recorded on ASIMUT, the Programme and Assessment Coordinator will contact the student by email (sent to their College email address) to request they make contact to explain the absence. If required, advice regarding support services will be provided.

6.3 Where further instances of unsatisfactory attendance are identified, or if attendance does not improve, the student will be required to meet the Head of Undergraduate Programmes, Head of Popular Music, Head of Graduate School or Head of School and/or their nominee to discuss how their attendance can be improved and to identify any further support that may be required.

6.4 Non-attendance of classes not recorded on ASIMUT will be followed up by the relevant Head of School, Tutor or School Administrator as appropriate.

Research Programmes

7 Unsatisfactory attendance is deemed to be when a student misses three or more contact points with their primary supervisor or another member of their supervisory team, or fails to engage in an annual review of progress or formal assessment of progress.

7.1 Prolonged or persistent sickness recording and/or non-attendance will be followed up by the Student Wellbeing Advisors, who will signpost any relevant support.

7.2 Where it is identified that attendance is unsatisfactory the Programme and Assessment Coordinator will contact the student by email (sent to their College email address) to request they make contact to explain the absence. If required, advice regarding support services will be provided.

7.3 Where attendance does not improve, the student will be required to meet the Associate Director of Research and/or Academic Registrar (or Deputy) to discuss how their attendance can be improved and to identify any further support that may be required.

8 Consequences of Unsatisfactory Attendance

8.1 Continued non-attendance may be reported to the Student Loan Company (SLC) (or equivalent) as appropriate, which may affect a student's funding position. Before contacting the SLC (or equivalent), students will be invited to a meeting with their Head of Programme and the Deputy Registrar to discuss significant dis-engagement.

- 8.2 Persistent or recurrent non-attendance, may, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, be taken into consideration when considering whether a student should proceed on the programme.
- 8.3 In accordance with current UK immigration law, a report will be made to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) authority if an international student holding a Student visa does not engage with the College or its staff for a period of 60 days without authorisation. The College may also choose to notify the UKVI earlier, should it be necessary. This decision will be communicated with you, with an explanation in writing, prior to the notification being made.
- 8.4 The College will make a determination on a case by case basis on non-engagement but will consider attendance for scheduled activity, use of practice rooms and communication with staff.

9 Student Engagement Monitoring

- 9.1 The Student Engagement Monitoring Group meets every month in Semester 1 & 2 and is chaired by the Head of Student Disability and Wellbeing Services. The group collates engagement information, in accordance with the requirements of this policy and identifies students who may benefit from support. The group is focussed on pre-emptive action to support student success, preserving studentships and harm prevention but may also make recommendations regarding referrals to the Academic Programme Team for academic advice or referral/ reporting to an external organisation, including UKVI or Student Finance.
- 9.2 The group includes Programme and Assessments team staff, Wellbeing Advisors, Deputy Registrar and the Academic Registrar and seeks input from Orchestras & Ensembles, as well as Schools. The group also oversees ID collection and document checking at the start of the year, ensuring all new students arrive in college and monitors non submission of assessment, throughout the year, as a further indicator of engagement.

10 Compliance with Statutory Requirements

- 10.1 Should statutory bodies or other external organisations, such as UKVI, amend their monitoring requirements, the College reserves the right to amend the RNCM attendance monitoring policy. Any amendments to the policy will be clearly articulated and published to staff and students.