

Responsible Person	Head of Student Support and Administration
Approving Body	Academic Board
Date of Original Approval	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2022
Date of Effect	September 2023
Updated	August 2023
Next Review Date	Every four years unless otherwise required
Queries	<a href="mailto:quality@metfilm.co.uk">quality@metfilm.co.uk</a>

## Contents

1 Introduction & Scope .....	1
2 Policy .....	2
3 Student Responsibilities .....	2
4 International Students .....	3
5 Demonstrating Engagement .....	3
6 Authorised absence.....	4
7 Withdrawal for non-attendance and/or engagement.....	5

## 1 Introduction & Scope

The purpose of this policy is to promote the importance of student attendance and engagement on all accredited courses at MetFilm School (the School).

The School is aware of and promotes to all students the importance of attendance and engagement and how these can affect academic outcomes. Evidence supports the links between good attendance and good results.

The Policy also sets out monitoring requirements for students sponsored by the School under the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) Student Route in accordance with the School's statutory obligations under its UKVI Sponsor license and the [Immigration Rules](#) as set out by the UK government.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the [Student Handbook](#) as well as the [Student Disciplinary Policy](#).

## 2 Policy

All students are expected to attend classes and planned events that make up their programme of study.

Students are expected to arrive punctually and to attend for the full duration of learning sessions that comprise their course of study. Late arrival to classes is disruptive and unfair to other class members.

Late entry to a class may not be possible and is at the reasonable discretion of the lecturer leading the session.

Persistent lateness may be treated as a disciplinary matter under the [Student Disciplinary Policy](#)

Students are expected to inform the School of any absence and must ensure they cover any missed work.

Students are expected to monitor their MetFilm School emails regularly and respond when required to email communications from the School.

### How is this Policy Applied?

This policy is in force throughout the academic year. Attendance is continually monitored and students whose attendance and engagement are unacceptable may be withdrawn at any point of the academic year.

MetFilm School will contact any student whose attendance drops below acceptable levels or whose attendance drops off suddenly. This is to allow the School to offer additional support or signpost specialist services if required to assist the student to return to productive patterns of study.

Where students whose attendance and engagement, as articulated in this policy, is deemed to have fallen below satisfactory levels the School may withdraw students from the programmes as agreed by the Dean and Registrar. All cases are considered on individual merit.

The School will make reasonable adjustments or allowances in the case of disability-related non-attendance in line with the Equality Act (2010). Each case will be treated on its individual merits and we will seek to make proportionate decisions that are in the student's best interests.

## 3 Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Comply fully with this policy.

- Regularly check the timetable for class times and locations.
- Take advantage of all activities, planned and un-scheduled, to enhance their learning opportunities.
- Advise the School promptly of any circumstances that may impact on their attendance and engagement.

Absence due to illness or other unavoidable emergency issues should be notified to the School as outlined in the [Student Handbook](#).

Students must seek permission in advance for any planned absences during term time. Authorised absences will be approved by Programme Leaders or Deputy Programme Leaders on a case by case basis.

## 4 International Students

Under the Immigration Rules, MetFilm School has a duty to monitor the attendance and engagement of its visa students as a condition of its UKVI Sponsor License. Students that do not comply with this policy will be withdrawn from their programme of study and their visa sponsorship revoked. Any withdrawal of visa must be reported to the UKVI, consequently affecting the student's immigration status in the UK.

International students, on a visa sponsored by MetFilm School, in breach of the attendance policy will not be offered the right of appeal, as breaching this policy equates to a breach in their visa terms and conditions.

Any student studying on a Student Visa that is to be withdrawn will be reported to UKVI as per the School's obligations. The student will usually have 60 days to return to their home country or arrange for a different sponsor.

Information on the rights and responsibilities of international students can be found on the [International Student Support pages](#).

## 5 Demonstrating Engagement

### What information is used to determine whether a student is engaging?

Students are expected to attend and engage with their studies. MetFilm School assesses attendance and engagement through a range of data sources, including:

- Class registers
- Access to the VLE
- Usage of the VLE
- Assessment submission records
- Patterns of lateness
- Interactions with tutors and Programme Leaders (and their nominees)
- Attendance at project tutorials

Registers are taken by tutors during every teaching session via Celcat.

Engagement data is collected and monitored on an ongoing basis by the Registrar's office.

The Registrar's office, in conjunction with the Programme or Deputy Programme Leaders, will assess whether attendance is satisfactory.

Attendance monitoring data is also used to assess whether students are meeting attendance requirements for their relevant funding body, such as Student Finance England etc.

Where a student is not attending at a census point they may be withdrawn, and this will be reported to the funding body who will cease payments.

## 6 Authorised absence

All absences should be reported to the School using the process outlined in the [Student Handbook](#).

This list is not intended to be exhaustive and the School will take account of the inherent reasonableness of any case, the number of absences taken by any one individual, repetitions of the same excuse and any supporting evidence.

The following are examples of authorised absence, which would be considered as being acceptable:

- A MetFilm School organised educational visit or activity
- A hospital or specialist medical appointment (if supported by an appointment card or hospital letter). General medical appointments should be arranged outside of timetabled study hours where possible
- Emergency childcare
- Unexpected caring responsibilities
- A religious holiday up to 4 days per academic year
- Attendance at a funeral
- A job interview or other career related appointment
- Professional engagement that is relevant to the programme of study

The following reasons would not be acceptable as authorised absence:

- Holidays
- Part-time work, which is not part of the student's programme of study
- Leisure activities
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Driving lessons

Short-term absences due to illness do not need to be authorised, but it is advised that students contact the relevant course team to inform them if they are not able to attend scheduled sessions, or individual meetings that have been pre-arranged.

Students should not normally be absent, unless agreed with the relevant course team, for a period of more than 5 working days.

Students absent due to illness for more than 5 working days are required to provide a medical note to that effect.

Instances of illness or other extenuating circumstances that affect an assessment or examination should be reported to the School. Students undertaking assignments affected by illness or other factors should utilize the exceptional circumstances rules as outlined in the [Student Handbook](#)

Students are permitted to apply for temporary leave, suspension of studies, or intermit their course of study for personal or medical reasons. Guidance and advice on these processes can be found in the [Student Handbook](#) and via the School's Student Support team or Registry team.

Students interrupting or pausing their studies for health reasons may be placed on a Fitness to Study plan as set out in the MetFilm School [Fitness to Study Policy](#).

International students studying on a Student visa are not permitted to pause or interrupt their studies where the interruption means they cannot complete the course of study within their existing visa permission.

In exceptional circumstances, visa sponsored students may pause their studies for up to 60 days. Interruptions are reviewed on a case by case basis and **must** be approved by Registry. The requesting student must provide evidence to support the request (such as medical evidence). The student must be able to complete their programme within their existing visa permission.

If an interruption of more than 60 days is required and/or the student cannot complete their programme within their existing permission the School must withdraw sponsorship of the student and report this to the UKVI.

The School will normally seek to support the student to return to study where the interruption was due to exceptional circumstance. Students will be required to apply for a new visa at their cost. The decision to support a student's return is dependent on the length of interruption, the University of West London [Academic Regulations](#) and will be clarified on an individual basis with each student concerned.

## **7 Withdrawal for non-attendance and/or engagement**

Students demonstrating poor attendance and/or engagement with their course of study will be deemed in breach of this policy and subject to sanction under the MetFilm [School Disciplinary Procedure](#).

Where informal attempts to re-engage a student fail, including where they are no longer attending and submitting assignments the following sanctions are available:

- Placing the student on report with strict attendance monitoring requirements
- Written warnings
- Withdrawal from course of study

## Appeals

Students who are withdrawn from their programme of study have the right of appeal against that decision.

Appeals against withdrawal decisions are normally dealt with by the University of West London, our Academic Partner, in line with its appeals processes. Students should reach out to [complaints@metfilmschool.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@metfilmschool.ac.uk) in the first instance, to get advice and guidance on the relevant process to follow.

International students, on a visa sponsored by MetFilm School, in breach of the attendance policy will not be offered the right of appeal, as breaching this policy equates to a breach in their visa terms and conditions.