



BURNLEY COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY COURSES

# Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring Policy (SEAM) *(Revised September 2024)*

**Building Futures Changing Lives**  
We are committed to Equality and Diversity and to selection



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## 1. Introduction

- i. Burnley College University Courses' (BCUC's) overall approach (in collaboration with our partner Universities/awarding bodies) to recording and monitoring student attendance is one of providing support to students through their studies in order that they engage and achieve to attain their qualification as well as develop personally and professionally. Attendance is one of several ways in which students engage with their studies, and the recording and monitoring of attendance should provide staff with information to support students towards successful completion. The approach to monitoring students' attendance is not punitive; BCUC understands that sometimes, students experience difficulties during their studies which prevent them from engaging fully with their course.
- ii. This Policy is designed to explain this approach and how academic and professional services staff will use the systems and processes in place to record, review and monitor students' attendance and, where appropriate, seek to support students to overcome any difficulties which are affecting their engagement with their course.
- iii. Regular attendance at scheduled teaching and tutorial activities improves students' performance and outcomes in their studies. Recording students' attendance as part of monitoring their engagement and supporting them in their studies improves continuation, completion and progression.
- iv. BCUC has legal obligations to record student attendance and monitor engagement in order to comply with various statutory reporting requirements including Student Finance England (Student Loans Company), professional accrediting bodies and the government's funding councils.
- v. Students' unauthorised absence from studies compromises their opportunity to learn, may impair their performance and achievement and, in some circumstances, may also compromise the opportunity for others to learn. Student absence may mean that either BCUC and/or the student is in receipt of funding to which they are no longer entitled.
- vi. BCUC therefore records and monitors student attendance to support good student retention, successful outcomes for students and to meet statutory requirements. Monitoring students' engagement, which includes attendance at scheduled learning is a supportive interaction to help students overcome any difficulties they may have in meeting the attendance requirements of their course.
- vii. Notwithstanding the general principle that dealing with a student's poor attendance should not be a disciplinary matter, students on relevant professional courses must comply with all fitness to practise requirements which include any which relate to attendance.
- viii. BCUC recognises and is supportive of the legal requirements to make reasonable adjustments and/or allowances under the terms of the Equality Act, 2010. Where a student has disclosed that they have verifiable circumstances which may adversely affect their attendance, Divisions will take account of this and will implement reasonable adjustments to the Policy as appropriate, having taken advice from Tutors, Programme Leaders, Curriculum Managers, Assistant Principal, HE Coordinator.

## 2. Scope of the Policy

i. The Policy complements and builds on the Academic Regulations of our partner Universities/awarding bodies for students which state student attendance at timetabled learning activities of courses and modules is required. The Academic Regulations of our partner Universities/awarding bodies apply to all students enrolled on BCUC taught courses.

ii. This Policy applies to all BCUC students studying on taught courses, where local processes for attendance recording and monitoring will be put in place.

iii. Separate arrangements exist for recording and monitoring students on work placements and study placements which form part of their course. Within a common administrative framework, designed and maintained by the partner University's Academic Registry, Divisions are responsible for ensuring there are effective mechanisms in place to record and monitor students' attendance on work placements and study placements to ensure that BCUC can comply with its statutory reporting duties as well as to support students to achieve successful outcomes.

## 3. Attendance Recording and Monitoring Policy Statement

Overall student attendance and engagement will be monitored at course/programme level. Monitoring students' engagement with their course will take account of attendance data as well as other indicators of engagement, such as that evidenced on the Tutorial system or other interactions.

## 4. Attendance Recording

i. Students are expected to attend timetabled learning activities and scheduled supervisory meetings. Good attendance leads to better outcomes for students.

ii. Attendance at all scheduled events will be recorded. A scheduled event is defined as an event that is timetabled as mandatory (rather than optional) via the BCUC timetabling system. Such events include lectures, seminars, workshops, practical sessions and laboratory sessions.

iii. Student attendance data will be captured in the BCUC Timetabling and Attendance systems which staff complete on a sessional basis.

iv. BCUC's Tutorial system is deployed to record engagement with other activities including dissertation/supervisory meetings.

## 5. Attendance Requirements

i. Within a University education context, BCUC accept that different subject disciplines may require different attendance levels for learning activities. However, in order to encourage good levels of attendance across all subject areas, all courses should expect at least 90% overall attendance levels by students to give them the best opportunity of succeeding in their qualification. This indicative threshold will be referenced during monitoring of a student's overall engagement on their course, either in determining any supporting, or in evaluating how far the student is meeting the academic requirements of the course.

ii. In accordance with BCUC's approach to teaching and learning, and in response to professional body requirements, some individual modules/courses, where approved and for good pedagogic reasons, may incorporate a specific attendance requirement as part of the assessment criteria for successful completion of the module/course. Any specific module/course attendance requirements and the mechanisms for monitoring attendance must be drawn to the attention of students by the relevant Division through relevant course handbooks and other student-facing course materials. Additional attendance requirements must be drawn to the attention to students during introductory talks and induction communications. Only where formally

approved, will it be acceptable to introduce specific attendance requirements as part of the formal module assessment criteria.

iii. Failure to fulfil module/course attendance requirements may result in the student's academic progress being deemed unsatisfactory by the relevant Assessment Board which would result in termination of studies.

iv. Attendance requirements at module level for part-time students are the same as for full-time students studying the same modules, at least 90% overall attendance.

## 6. Attendance/Engagement Monitoring

i. Responsibility for monitoring students' engagement with their studies and for taking appropriate action with students who are not engaging appropriately rests with Divisions.

ii. Our HE Support and Safeguarding Teams provide support in Divisions which includes supporting students in their engagement with their studies by delivering specialist and targeted advice and guidance including the following areas:  
Disability (HE Support)  
Student funding and financial support/hardship (HE Support)  
Health and well-being (Safeguarding)  
Care leavers (Safeguarding/HE Support)  
Students with caring responsibilities (Safeguarding/HE Support)

iii. Divisions will investigate any unauthorised absence and/or poor attendance that a student incurs and will actively follow the three stages below where there is indication that a student is not engaging appropriately. Where appropriate, advice may be sought from HE Support and students may be signposted to the relevant service. Often, early intervention with specialist services can prevent students reaching the end of formal processes prematurely and can prevent circumstances becoming acute. Divisional Staff who are engaged in following up non-attendance with students should do so compassionately,

sensitively and with the primary aim of supporting the student back into attending regularly.

iv. The tone of correspondence and meetings with students will be supportive and clear with the aim of encouraging students to improve their attendance levels.

v. Any attendance/progress review meetings will be conducted in a supportive manner, attempting to explore with the student the reasons for non-attendance/unauthorised absence and put in place measures to support them in their academic progression. Attendance and progress review meetings with students are not disciplinary meetings and do not fall under the Student Disciplinary Procedures, but the Academic Regulations of our partner Universities/awarding bodies. Wherever possible, these interventions and meetings should be recorded in the Tutorial system.

Stage one – initial indication and preliminary intervention

PL Letter

Any unauthorised absence or attendance patterns which suggest that the student is falling below the minimum threshold of 90% for the course or a specific module within a two-week period will be followed up sensitively with the student by the Programme Leader and the student will be asked to respond immediately. This intervention will contain an informal reminder to the student of the attendance requirements;

Stage two – informal and supportive intervention with Curriculum Manager (CM)

CM Letter

If the student fails to respond or their attendance remains unsatisfactory, the student will be referred to the student's Curriculum Manager who will attempt to make contact with the student and invite him/her to a meeting. This intervention will contain strengthened advice to the student that if they fail to respond/or do not make an improvement in their attendance, continuation in their studies is at risk;

Stage three – formal and supportive intervention with the Assistant Principal (AP)

#### AP Letter

If the student continues not to respond or their attendance levels do not improve, the Division will invite the student to a meeting with the Assistant Principal for Adult and University Education. This intervention will contain a final warning to the student that the Assistant Principal could recommend termination of studies to the Assessment Board of our partner Universities/awarding bodies if their attendance does not improve.

Two attempts will be made to contact the learner. Failure to attend will lead to withdrawal from the course. The learner will have the right to appeal through the complaints process.

vi. All contacts with students regarding their attendance will be made to their BCUC email account and by letter. The Tutorial process/system will be deployed to initiate and conduct interventions with students regarding their attendance.

vii. Where the Programme Leader, Personal Tutor, or Module Leader, have concerns over a student's attendance levels or lack of engagement in their studies, they will refer them to the Divisional Curriculum Manager. Divisions are responsible for exploring with students the reasons for poor attendance and lack of engagement and supporting them, wherever possible, to improve.

viii. Where a student's attendance falls below the levels deemed acceptable for them to make satisfactory academic progress on their course, and in accordance with the Academic Regulations of our partner Universities/awarding bodies, the Assessment Board may terminate studies.

ix. Any appeal by the student against such a decision by the Assessment Board may be submitted under the academic appeal procedures of our partner Universities/awarding bodies.

x. Where a student's personal, financial or health circumstances prevent them from attending classes at a level which allows them to make satisfactory academic progress, they are entitled to request an interruption to studies using the established procedures of our partner Universities/awarding bodies. This allows a break in studies during which fee liability is suspended and the student is not required to attend or make progress.

## 7. Implementation and Review of this Policy

i. This Policy will be communicated to all staff by the Compliance Officer.

ii. Advisory guidance on attendance requirements will be provided to students in handbooks, BCUC strives for all students to have at least 90% attendance records.

iii. The Policy will be revised every two years to incorporate any changes to statutory obligations placed on BCUC and will be reviewed fully in 2026.