

## **Student Affairs: Student Administration**

### **Guidance for Personal Tutors – Managing student attendance**

#### **Attendance meetings between Personal Tutors and All Students (Home/EU/Overseas)**

The [Student Engagement and Participation Policy](#) states that:

'The Student Engagement and Participation Policy recognise the importance of monitoring levels of student engagement and participation. Monitoring is carried out via the Student Attendance System (SAS) which records attendance for on campus, students at all of their timetabled teaching sessions.

Where the attendance of students falls below the required level for their academic programme, interventions from staff will be triggered. These interventions are not intended to be punitive and are focussed on ensuring the wellbeing of students, responding in an appropriate and supportive way when students are having personal or academic difficulties and raising the overall level of student attendance.'

According to the Policy, one of the interventions (Level 4) is the Personal Tutor meeting; 'This meeting is designed to ensure that students can discuss any problems of an academic or personal nature that they may have, in a safe and supportive, one to one, environment. Personal tutors will want to ensure that students leave these meetings with an agreed action plan in place'.

Action plans should be followed up to ensure that the student's is complying with the agreed points from the Personal Tutor meeting. It is often found that when a student has follow-up meetings to check progress, the student's attendance improves.

The Student Engagement and Participation Policy states:

'Where a School wishes to progress more quickly in terms of interventions, based on their knowledge of the student and previous responses to supportive interventions, then Schools can take the decision to move directly to levels 5 or 6 where intervention is more formal.'

The personal tutor may also wish to signpost students to the Advice team (within the Student Support Centre) or the Wellbeing team who are able to counsel students on a whole range of issues that may be affecting the student's ability to study/attend classes.

#### **Additional notes for meetings between Personal Tutors and Tier 4 visa students**

It should be noted though that whilst Personal Tutors may wish to meet on a one-to-one basis with their students to discuss attendance, for Tier 4 visa students, the Tier 4 Compliance team are happy to attend the meeting to provide assistance and discuss the Tier 4 visa compliance requirements of the Home Office. To contact the Tier 4 Compliance team to attend a personal tutor meeting please email [tier4visa@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:tier4visa@lincoln.ac.uk)

For Tier 4 visa students, Personal Tutors would need to record the reason for absence given by the student, the agreed action plan and also a justification of the reason why they wish to retain the student on the course of study. The justification could be based on the reason the student provided for their absence, their academic performance or previous attendance record. The reason a justification is required for Tier 4 visa students is that, from experience, the Home Office does review the reason for retaining a student whose attendance has been poor and the University's reasoning for retaining poor attendees.

For a Tier 4 visa student who has given a reason for their absence that could be considered as authorised absence (i.e. due to personal illness, illness of immediate family member, bereavement, pregnancy related absence, paternity/maternity leave) the Personal Tutor would need to ask for evidence of this.

The justification for retaining a student and the agreed action plan should be kept within the School's student files so (a copy of) the paperwork must be sent to the relevant School administrator.

If the Personal Tutor does not feel that they are able to provide a justification for retaining the student or the student is not attending the arranged Personal Tutor meetings then they could raise the intervention level to the next stage which is the Head of School (or appointed nominee) meeting.

It is important to note that if a Tier 4 visa student has issues concerning their visa or visa conditions that they disclose during their personal tutor meeting which is affecting their attendance, signpost the student to the International Advice team as they are the only people within the University that are able to provide immigration advice.

There is an information drop-in service ran by the International Advice team Monday to Friday from 12pm – 2pm at the Student Support Centre.

### **Other sources of information and support**

- A template Non-attendance Interview Record is also available on the [Personal Tutors Hub](#).
- The Student Engagement and Participation Policy and other university academic policies are available on Secretariat's website: <http://secretariat.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/academic-policies-2/>
- For more information, please contact the Tier 4 Compliance Team in Student Administration: [tier4visa@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:tier4visa@lincoln.ac.uk)