

4.0. Academic Regulations

4.5. Attendance, Retention and Support Policy

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Version Control Statement

Ver sion	Date	Changes	Reason	Author	Next review
1	29/11/18	Replaces the attendance policy and merges with confirmation of commitment to retention and student support. Includes procedures for identifying at-risk students	New Policy	Head of HE	July 2019
2	30/07/19	Minor additions and clarifications. External References and related policies added	Annual Review	Head of HE	July 2020
3	July 2020	- Changed follow up schedules for non-attendance to weekly, removing specific meeting days. Marking of registers has been revised to include requirements for online classes. - Travel abroad has been revised to include conditions for students attending scheduled online classes - Corrected grammar, spellings, and punctuations	Annual Review	Head of HE	July 2021
4	July 2021	Roles revised in line with current structure and university guidance	Annual Review	Head of HE	July 2022
5	July 2022	Roles revised in line with new structure. Deferral from sick note change from 4 weeks to 2 weeks. The removal of physical attendance to digital. Assessment Officer responsible for Extenuating Circumstances rather than Head of HE.	Annual Review	Head of HE	July 2022
6	April 2024	A general review has been completed, and a few sentences are restructured for clarity. Few points have been identified for the responsible officer to address.	QA review	Senior Quality Assurance Officer	July/Aug 2024
7	September 2024	Minor amends for clarity of reading	Annual Review	QA Lead	August 2025

8	September 2025	Minor amends for clarity of reading	Annual Review	QA Lead	August 2026
9	September 2025	Updates and review	Annual Review	Head of Registry	September 2025

External Reference Points

- QAA Enabling Student Achievement Guiding Principles

Internal References

Affects all other policy documents. This document should however be read together with the following documents:

- Tutorial Policy
- Academic Regulations
- Student Code of conduct

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Attendance, Retention and Support Policy

Introduction

Waltham International College is committed to maximising the achievement of all its students. It has a duty of care to do all it reasonably can to support students to complete their programmes of study and attain the best possible academic outcomes. The College encourages students to engage with all aspects of their programme and puts systems in place to monitor that they do so.

Learner Registration and Certification

All individual learners are registered to the correct programme within one month of enrolment, and that valid learner certificates are claimed within the agreed timescales. It also aims to construct a secure, accurate, and accessible audit trail, ensuring that each learner's registration and certification claim can be traced to the certificate issued.

To achieve this, the centre will:

- Register each learner in accordance with awarding body requirements.
- Provide a mechanism for programme teams to check and verify the accuracy of learner registrations.
- Ensure that all learners are made aware of their registration status.
- Notify the awarding body promptly of any withdrawals, transfers, or changes to learner details.
- Ensure that all certificate claims are submitted in a timely manner and are based solely on internally verified assessment records.
- Submit certificate claims for all passed modules following the Assessment Board Meeting for that trimester.
- Assign the responsibility for certificate claims to the Assessment Manager/Officer.
- Conduct audits of all certificate claims submitted to the awarding body.
- Audit the certificates received from the awarding body to ensure their accuracy and completeness.
- Ensure that students collect their original certificates in person. Original certificates are handed over to students, and a copy is securely retained by the college. Students must sign a register upon receipt of their original certificate.
- Maintain all related records securely and in compliance with the required legal retention period post-certification.

External Reference

In line with Leeds Trinity University's Student Registration Policy, learners must ensure they register within the published deadlines each academic year. Students are responsible for the accuracy of their registration information, and registration must be completed both with the College and the awarding body. Learners cannot access teaching, learning, or assessment opportunities until they are fully registered. Failure to complete registration may result in withdrawal from the programme.

Defining at-risk students

Although national research shows that the reasons students leave college are many and varied, WIC recognises that failure to engage is the first sign that the student has a high risk of dropping out and therefore non-attainment. This can be in the form of absence from scheduled classes, failure to participate with learning activities or resources, failure to submit work, or failure to achieve satisfactory grades, especially where the student has not sufficiently received, or reflected upon, formative feedback during preparation of their assignments.

WIC believes that the effects of non-attendance, non-participation, non-submission and lack of engagement during the preparation of assessment work are cumulative.

This policy is designed to enable staff to detect these first signs of risk and to give guidelines on the appropriate and timely action to take, with a key element being student support. However, continued non-engagement makes non-progression and withdrawal inevitable: the policy outlines a process that escalates intervention processes to ensure all possible ways of retaining a student are explored before withdrawal procedures can be considered.

The College recognises success for students as a set of achievements in a wide range of areas, including personal development and progression into the labour market, business or further learning.

Student attendance and participation is key to the student's continued progression, achievement and success.

The second key to student success involves the retention of all students. Retention is about students remaining with the College and alongside their peers and completing their programme of study within the specified timeframe.

Mitigating against risk factors

The primary approach WIC uses to mitigate against the risk of students dropping out is relentless student support based on early-warning systems.

There is, therefore, need for proactivity, intervention and responsiveness across functional working that can reach out to individual students, especially at key transition points. One of these transition points is the student induction (this reflects the need for giving new students extensive information that shapes the right expectations on their course at the start of their programme and at appropriate points throughout the first year). The information provided at inductions is also updated and shared with students at the transition points between the stages/levels.

At WIC, students are partners in their learning. In developing this policy, the College emphasises the importance of this learning partnership and applies it to the shared responsibility for achieving success. Thus, although it is the responsibility of all members of staff to reduce the risk of students dropping off their studies, students are invited to work with the College, through participation in regular reflection on the delivery of the whole student experience, from recruitment through to award and in giving feedback, suggesting solutions and helping support fellow students.

Crucially, the College believes that developing a sense of belonging through life-cycle support, and the establishment of a learning community with a strong cohort identity geared to the promotion of autonomous learning, lies at the heart of a successful, resilient and self-confident student body.

Identifying at-risk students

Non-attendance

WIC expects all students to attend all scheduled classes including practical workshops, online classes, placements, and off-site visits.

The College has an attendance recording system, which all students are expected to understand. This is as follows:

Recording attendance

For all physical classes:

1. Student attendance is recorded onto an electronic register by the tutor.
2. Electronic registers close 1 hour after the start of the lesson.

3. Students who turn up within the first 1 hour get full attendance.
4. Thereafter, students lose a full hour for each section of an hour they are late.
5. Electronic marking of the registers for students who turn up later than 45 minutes is carried out by the Registry department on the notes of the lecturers.

During online classes, tutors record as “present”, all students who log in and participate in class.

Monitoring non-attending students

1. After each class the Attendance Officer checks the electronic system and sends text messages to students who are absent.
2. Students with any issues are required to contact the Registry Team and explain what issues they have.
3. The Student Support Officer / Student Welfare Officer signposts students with issues to the appropriate person/organisation from where they can get support.
4. The electronic recording system calculates attendance records as percentages and assigns colour codes for each record, depending on each student's attendance pattern as follows:

Percentage attendance	Colour	Person responsible	What happens
A drop in attendance to 80%		Personal Tutor.	If the student is still absent, the student will be called. If student is present, the personal tutor invites the student for a discussion to explain the importance of attending regularly. Students who have issues should be referred to the Student Support Officer/Student Welfare Officer who decides the next steps
60% to 79%		Registry team/ Academic Student Support Officer	An Academic letter is sent, whether the student is present or absent. This is noted on Student Management committee tracker
50% to 59%		Attendance Officer	Calls/meets the student and confirms the call discussion with a letter and a note on the Student Management committee tracker system.
Below 50%		Attendance Officer	Call/send a final warning letter to the student and arrange a meeting to explain what happens from this point onwards. A meeting can be set up with the Academic Lead or the Head of HE with the student.

Follow-up of non-attending students

For students who do not respond to the calls or invitations to meetings:

- Once a week the Attendance Officer compiles a list of percentage attendance records from the electronic system and distributes the lists of students in each category to the responsible member of staff as described in the colour coding system
- The responsible officers take the appropriate action as soon as the attendance statistics become available and should have completed the process with detailed notes on the progress made in following up each student.
- The responsible officers attend the weekly Student Management Committee where they present their reports and discuss the students every week, starting from week 2 of commencing on their studies.
- The Student Management Committee meets to discuss the status of students in each category.
- At the meeting, the history of the student is scrutinised, discussed and appropriate action decided
- It is to be noted that funded students who submit any evidence of sickness, injury or reasons for planned long-term absences (exceeding 2 weeks) to be advised to contact the Student Loans Company to defer their studies
- Students who do not respond to any of the calls or support arrangements will be recommended to the awarding institution to be placed on suspension and reported to the Student Loans Company regarding this change in the student's circumstances.
- Those who respond but still cannot attend after two weeks will also be suspended from the College and the report to SLC appropriately made to notify the change in the student's circumstances
- In case of students studying under an awarding university provision the student is reported to the university partner systems as "withdrawn".
- Students who return after 2 weeks will be placed on a support system with appropriate Individual Plan for Academic Success.

Travelling Abroad During Term Time

All students on full-time courses are strongly advised not to travel or book holidays for travel during term time. In emergencies, students who wish to travel should notify SLC and the College. For students who do not return to college after 2 weeks including those on emergency travel, the condition requiring placing them on suspension applies.

The conditions relating to travelling apply to all students at any time including for online classes. The College understands the fact that students can attend online classes from anywhere in the world. However, this cannot be used as an excuse to undertake any travel which is likely to interfere with their scheduled classes, and for not advising the College and SLC of their plans.

Non-Participation in learning activities or resources

Engagement in teaching sessions, learning activities and resources (VLE)

Attendance in class does not automatically indicate participation in learning. WIC academic colleagues are central to developing appealing lesson plans and engaging learning activities that reflect the curriculum and programme outcomes. These plans include pre-lesson preparation, in class individual and group activities, and post-lesson reflection. Much of these activities are directed by the academic colleague in person, however a significant and useful number of resources are accessible on and through the programme and module VLE pages.

WIC believes monitoring students' in-class participation plus VLE access enable the registry teams to have a deeper understanding of students' overall participation in their studies and potential opportunity for success. Access to and analysis of awarding partner's VLE utilisation data is key to this approach and the overall support for students who may be at risk of non-progression and achievement.

Non-Submission of assignments

Submission requirements and recording

Students are required to submit completed assignments on specified dates throughout the academic year. They might also be required to complete some other form of assessed work, for example, to give a presentation. Based on sector evidence, students who submit such work and reflect on feedback from their tutors are likely to progress more and achieve higher grades than those who do not receive or reflect such formative feedback.

These interim assignments are known as formative assessments may form part of the students' final (summative) assessment. Students who do not make the summative submission work, or who submit poor quality work but receive low grade, are unlikely to be able to achieve an overall pass grade.

Monitoring students not submitting work or at-risk of failure

The College records the submission and non-submission of work by students. This information is made available to staff who teach and support students. Where students do not submit work, or where they submit work but receive a referral (or fail) grade, a monitoring mechanism similar to the attendance monitoring system is applied as follows:

Submission status	Colour	Person responsible	What happens
Students who have not submitted work two weeks before the final (summative) deadline for submission.		Subject Tutor	Tutor calls student to discuss formative feedback and advice on formative submissions, made to allow for adjustment of summative assessment if needed
Students who have not submitted work two weeks before the final (summative) deadline for submission, have submitted work within this timeline and but are unlikely to achieve the minimum (pass) grade and have not responded to calls to receive formative feedback.		Module Leads and Personal Tutors	The module leader and personal tutors work together to call all such students and discuss the options available
Students who do not submit work by the summative deadline and have not applied for any waiver of this deadline		Programme Lead/ Academic Student Support Officer	Calls/meets the student and confirms the call/discussion with a letter. A note should be placed on the on the student's file with a copy of the letter.
Students who do not respond to any calls to submit work or for resubmission if first submission is a referral after the results are published		Programme Manager	Call/send a letter to the student and arrange a meeting to explain what happens from this point onwards.

Follow-up of students who have not submitted work or have failed to achieve a pass grade

1. Normally late submissions and resubmissions are discussed and authorised during Assessment Boards formally approved by the University partner.
2. Students who have issues that cause disruptions to their studies or cause them to fail to submit work should discuss these issues with the Student Support Officer or their appropriate Programme Manager at the first instance.
3. At this point students with issues that cause disruptions to their studies or cause them to fail to submit work will be signposted to all the appropriate channels they can take, which include applying for extenuating circumstances, or in more serious situations, deferring their studies.
4. Extenuating circumstances and extensions requested are also considered during Assessment Boards: The Assessment Officer is given the right to approve Extenuating Circumstances, which should be presented to the Assessment Board for ratification.
5. During the Student Management Committee meetings, non-submissions, late submissions, and referrals that have been authorised by the Assessment Board are discussed and appropriately categorised.

6. For completeness, student attendance is compared with the non-submissions/late-submissions/referrals

Student Support

If a student believes that there are good reasons why they have not been able to meet deadlines for the submission of their work, they should discuss these issues as soon as possible with the personal tutor or their appropriate Programme Manager in the first instance. Raising an extenuating circumstances request at the very earliest opportunity is greatly advised wherever possible. More information is available in the extenuating Circumstances Policy.

Other than Extenuating circumstances and extensions, the college has the following support arrangements for students:

1. Students have access to their Tutors for support in class. This allows the Tutors to identify and offer help to at-risk students.
2. Students are encouraged to also seek advice from their class representatives, who are constantly involved at meetings where student welfare is discussed. There is ample individual and group support available to students within the student body.
3. The Student Support Officer is also available to offer advice and guidance to students
4. The Student Welfare Officer, Programme Managers and module leads are also available to offer confidential help to students with personal, health, and other pastoral issues
5. They can recommend and advise on students who are struggling, need additional support or at Risk considering other risk factors

IPAS

In cases of Academic failure, the College operates the Individual Plan for Academic Success (IPAS). This system allows the College to offer a range and different levels of differentiated guidance and support to meet the needs of individual students and the demands of the programme.

The Programme Manager places students on IPAS, normally those who return after long absences, are struggling with participation with learning activities or assignment submissions or whom the Student Management Committee have placed at risk. The IPAS students will be monitored directly by the programme managers and individualised support tailored to the student's circumstances is developed and agreed.