ATTENDANCE MONITORING POLICY

The University’s Retention and Progression Strategy (approved by Senate in May 2014) commits Academic Schools to monitoring attendance. The relevant extract of the Policy is as follows:

There is also a clear correlation between poor attendance and/or failure to submit assignments on the one hand, and poor retention and progression on the other, and strong evidence that effective monitoring arrangements allied to prompt intervention can have a very positive impact on rates of retention and progression. All Schools should therefore ensure that they have in place rigorous monitoring procedures, and respond quickly to evidence of disengagement. In view of the importance of this issue, the Retention and Progression Committee has agreed that all Schools should be encouraged to monitor attendance at all teaching events, including lectures, in the first year at least.

This Strategy was drawn up before the restructuring of the University, our One Dundee approach, and Business Transformation, which commits us to a single way of doing things across the University. The time is therefore now right to revisit this with a view to agreeing a common policy and operating procedure for adoption across all Schools. Following extensive discussions between Business Transformation, School Managers, Registry and VP Learning and Teaching, and discussion at the Learning and Teaching Development Forum in February 2016, the following is therefore proposed for adoption.

REVISED ATTENDANCE POLICY

The University is committed to supporting students to complete their programmes of study and attain the best possible academic outcome. As part of this, it is important that student engagement with all aspects of their programme is encouraged and monitored so that any difficulties can be identified and supported.

The University is also committed to providing a positive learning environment for all students and extends this commitment to ensure an appropriate response in circumstances where a student’s level of attendance is a concern. Wherever possible, the University will provide support mechanisms for those students with difficulties in attending, including through appropriate and timely referrals to relevant support services.

The University will consider flexibility in attendance requirements for students in protected groups, including making reasonable adjustments for disabled students, in line with its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010). Such flexibility will take account of students’ individual circumstances and any supportive evidence provided.

Students should contact their School as soon as possible should they anticipate any difficulties in meeting attendance requirements.

Attendance and Monitoring Requirements:

1) Students are required to attend all scheduled teaching events in all years of study, unless flexibility in attendance has been approved for an individual student as part of their individual learning plan by their School.

2) Schools will diligently monitor attendance at all teaching events (including lectures) across all years of study. This is already a requirement for the professional Schools (Dentistry, Education, Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences), is already in place in some other Schools (e.g. Art and Design) and there is a strong case for adopting a single approach which reinforces the importance for all students of a professional approach to study.

3) A common procedure for responding to failure to attend has been developed by School Managers in concert with Business Transformation and the VP Learning and Teaching, and
will be adopted by all Schools from September 2016. For non-professional Schools the threshold for intervention will be where attendance drops below 80%, with an agreed separate but common approach to be developed and adopted in the professional Schools. Such intervention will include directing students to appropriate sources of support, including that available through the Support Hub, Academic Skills Centre and DUSA.

School Managers (or their nominees) will be responsible for overseeing the attendance monitoring arrangements in their Schools and will advise academic staff on how attendance monitoring is to be conducted. This policy should be adopted for the 2016/17 academic session.

Whilst it is recognised that there are resource implications in monitoring attendance, once this policy is being consistently implemented and attendance data is able to be captured in university systems it will be possible to move away from the current additional regime for monitoring of overseas students, ending the current differential treatment of overseas students. School Managers, Business Transformation and Registry will continue to work together to ensure that the implementation of this policy is carried out as efficiently as possible.

Karl Leydecker
Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching)
Approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee, May 2016