

ENGAGEMENT & ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Effective date	September 2024
Date for review	August 2026
Policy owner	Chief Executive
Reference points	Office for Students: <i>Student Engagement and Consultation – Effective Practice</i> https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/equality-of-opportunity/effective-practice/student-engagement-and-consultation/ UK Quality Code: <i>Advice and Guidance – Student Engagement</i> https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/advice-and-guidance-student-engagement.pdf
Audience/handling notes	Student Services, Students, External, Public
Dissemination and implementation plan	This Student Attendance and Engagement Policy is an externally facing public statement and is published on NHAM's website. Academic and Student Services staff will receive training in how to apply this policy and its procedures. They will also be directed to where it is published. The A c a d e m y M a n a g e r will be responsible for the dissemination of the policy and procedures to academic and support staff through the Education Committee and for monitoring student engagement and attendance at NHAM. Students will be made aware of this policy and its implementation in the Student Handbook and at induction.
Linked Policies, Procedures and Forms	Student Handbook, Student Disciplinary(Policy), Extenuating Circumstances(Policy), Deferral of Assessment(Policy), Adjustments Needed, Disability Disclosure(Policy), Assessment(Policy).
Date approved	September 2024

1 Introduction

The Notting Hill Academy of Music (NHAM) is committed to fostering an environment in which students can engage fully with their learning and achieve their potential. High engagement measured through both attendance and active participation, is positively linked to student success.

This policy:

- Sets expectations for engagement and attendance across all programmes.
- Outlines support mechanisms for students whose engagement falls below acceptable levels.
- Ensures compliance with OfS, UK Quality Code, and contractual obligations with validating partners.
- Recognises that poor attendance can be an early indicator of welfare concerns, requiring a supportive response.

NHAM will always aim to work with students to remove barriers to engagement before considering withdrawal.

2 Definitions of Engagement

Attendance is one measurable indicator of engagement but is not the only one. Engagement may include:

- Attending scheduled teaching sessions (in-person or online).
- Submitting formative and summative assessments.
- Accessing the student portal and learning resources.
- Attending tutorials, supervisions, or support service appointments.
- Participating in compulsory programme activities (workshops, rehearsals, placements).

The specific engagement requirements for each programme will be published in programme handbooks.

3 Attendance Standards

- 100% attendance is expected.
- Minimum acceptable attendance: 85% of scheduled sessions (rolling basis).
- Attendance is formally reviewed every 4 weeks.
- If attendance falls below 70% in any review period without approved absence, the formal non-engagement process will be triggered.
- Persistent attendance below 70% for two consecutive months may result in withdrawal, subject to the process in section 8.

4 Responsibilities

- Students must attend and engage with their programme and inform the Academy promptly of any barriers.
- Staff must record attendance accurately and take early action when concerns arise.
- Programme Leaders must monitor engagement, ensure interventions are timely, and liaise with support services.
- The Academy must accurately report engagement to validating partners, OfS, and the Student Loans Company, where relevant.

5 Authorised and Self-certified Absence

- Students may self-certify absence for up to 5 consecutive calendar days in a 4-week period.
- Beyond this, absences must be authorised and supported by evidence (medical or other).
- Patterns of repeated self-certification will be reviewed.
- Examples of authorised absence include: medical appointments, bereavement, significant travel disruption.
- Holidays during term time are not authorised.

6 Sickness

- Sickness of up to 5 days: self-certification.
- Sickness over 5 days: requires authorised absence and evidence from a registered healthcare professional.
- Long-term illness (over 30 days) may require interruption of studies.

7 Engagement Monitoring Process

The process is support-focused and operates in three escalating stages:

Stage 1 – First Support Meeting

- Trigger: attendance below 70% or other engagement concerns.
- Meeting with Personal Tutor or designated academic staff to explore causes and agree an action plan.
- May result in referral to support services or voluntary interruption.

Stage 2 – Final Support Meeting

- Trigger: continued low engagement after Stage 1.
- Meeting with Programme Leader or senior academic.
- Formal warning that further disengagement may lead to withdrawal.

Stage 3 – Potential Withdrawal

- Trigger: continued non-engagement after Stage 2.
- Programme Leader compiles engagement profile (attendance, assessment submission, learning platform activity).
- Governance Committee reviews case; decision referred to Withdrawal Panel.
- Withdrawal only confirmed if all reasonable support avenues have been exhausted.

8 Appeals

Students may appeal a withdrawal decision if:

- There was a material procedural error.
- New, valid extenuating circumstances have come to light.

Appeals must be lodged in writing within 10 working days. Appeals are heard by an independent panel of senior staff. If unsuccessful, students may escalate to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

9 Review and Monitoring

- The Chief Executive oversees compliance with this policy.
- Attendance data is reviewed at programme and Education Committee level.
- Policy reviewed biennially to ensure alignment with OfS and sector best practice.