

## Student Engagement Policy

Name of Policy Writer/Amendments	Date Written & agreed / Amended	Approved by	Review Date
F. McCarthy & E de Broise	September 2023	Academic Board	July 2024

## 1. Introduction

The School's mission is to provide inspirational learning, enabling aspiring contemporary dance artists and dance professionals, regardless of background, to shape the future of dance.

NSCD provides world class contemporary dance training, and we expect the highest standards from our students. As such we expect students to commit to attending all timetabled sessions where this is in the student's best interest. As training professionals, the expectation of attendance replicates the professional world in which you are present unless there are circumstances that prevent this, such as illness or personal problems. In these instances, it is expected that the reason for any absence will be communicated as quickly and clearly as possible.

The School considers attendance for all taught sessions, tutorials, rehearsals, performances and practical assessments compulsory. Regular attendance supports the development of individual professional practice and is one indicator of how effectively a student is engaging with their training and education. Where a student is not meeting the expectation of attending all scheduled sessions, it is important the School understand why, and considers, alongside the student, what support can be put in place to help the student better engage with their curriculum. Registers are taken for all classes and attendance is carefully monitored by the HR, Curriculum & Quality Officer.

## 2. Attendance Reporting and Notifications

Attendance is monitored termly through attendance meetings between the HR, Curriculum & Quality Officer, Head of Undergraduate/Postgraduate Study and the Student Support & Wellbeing Manager, and students are expected to achieve at least 90% attendance throughout each term. Attendance will also be checked at the half term point and students contacted informally to notify them of any attendance issues that could be rectified in the second half of term, with support from the School. Attendance records are then re-set at the start of each new term.

Attendance reports contain the full profile of each student whose aggregate attendance is below 90% at that point in time, allowing us to review any patterns that may appear across different elements of curriculum. Authorised absences do not affect attendance levels, and mitigation and reported absences are taken into consideration where appropriate.

After the termly attendance meetings, students who are below the expected attendance level receive a notification via email with a formal attendance action from the 3 stage procedure.

Each student is responsible for their own attendance and may request to know their current attendance percentage at any time by contacting the HR, Curriculum & Quality Officer.

Final attendance reports are reviewed at the end of the academic year to consider those cases where students have not met the attendance expectation for the full year. If a student has not met the attendance expectation for the year they may be placed on a supportive action plan at the start of the next academic year.

### 3. Student Absence

Students who at times cannot participate physically are expected and actively encouraged to engage creatively in class.

If a student is experiencing personal problems or illness which is impacting on their studies they should seek help with a member of staff as soon as possible to enable us to provide timely, appropriate support.

Students should familiarise themselves with the student support provision at NSCD and submit Mitigating Circumstances where appropriate.

Students should report absence via the [Moodle Absence Form](#) on each day of illness or absence, where possible. If a student is absent for more than 5 consecutive days NSCD will attempt to contact the student. If we cannot contact the student, NSCD will contact the named secondary contact to ensure the health and wellbeing of the student. After two weeks if a student has not formally reported an absence or expected return date, we will assume a student has withdrawn from the course.

Students can self-certify for 5 days but may be expected to provide evidence for an absence of more than 5 days.

If a student misses a scheduled assessment due to illness or other circumstances, they will usually be required to complete a mitigating circumstances form and may need to present evidence from a doctor or appropriate practitioner, to be considered by the Mitigation Committee.

#### 3.1 Student Absence – students under 18

Students who are under the age of 18 must ensure that Student Services have been notified before 9am on every day they are absent from school, via the [Moodle Absence Form](#). If the student is absent without notifying the school a member of the Student Services team will attempt to contact the student. If they cannot be contacted, Student Services will contact the student's Parent or Carer.

#### 3.2 Student Absence – students on a Tier 4 visa

The attendance levels of overseas students studying in the UK on a Tier 4 visa will be monitored weekly. NSCD is required to report non-attendance to the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) which could potentially revoke a student visa. A student can request leave in advance under certain conditions via the [Moodle Absence Form](#).

#### 3.3 Authorised Absences

A student may request to be authorised for a period of absence, providing they have met the 90% attendance expectation and have given two weeks' notice for the request to be considered.

Requests can be made by BA2 and BA3 students for professional development opportunities and by Cert HE and BA3 students for auditions. BA1 students are not usually eligible for authorised absences and absences for professional opportunities will not be authorised for assessment dates.

If a student knows they are going to be absent on certain dates, they should inform the school by completing the [Moodle Absence Form](#).

Students are encouraged to speak to their tutors and consider their current attendance levels before applying for an authorised absence for professional development opportunities, to determine how an absence would affect their learning.

Requests should be submitted before a student commits to taking part in an opportunity and not in retrospect. When applying, students should give as much detail as they can in regard to how the opportunity will benefit them and how they will make up for lost learning.

## 4. Procedure for students not meeting the attendance expectation

The HR, Curriculum & Quality Officer, Head of Undergraduate/Postgraduate Study and the Student Support & Wellbeing Manager will monitor student attendance and will meet each half term, issuing the following actions at the end of each **full** term, as appropriate:

**Stage 1:** If a student's attendance falls below 90%, without appropriate communication, mitigation or absence reporting for the **first** time, the Student Review Board (SRB) will issue the student with a **Raise of Concern**. An attendance notification will be sent to the student highlighting that their attendance is below the expected threshold. The student will be reminded of support mechanisms available to them.

**Stage 2:** If a student's attendance falls below 90% without appropriate communication, mitigation or absence reporting for a **second** time, the SRB will issue the student with an **Action Plan for a period of time as defined by the Student Support & Wellbeing Manager (liaising with tutors as appropriate)**.

The specific terms of the action plan will be discussed between the student and Student Support & Wellbeing Manager and relevant Head of Faculty. Action plans are likely to include measures focused on supporting the student to re-engage with their training and will often be monitored through regular catch-ups with the Student Support and Well-being Manager.

The action plan will be reviewed at the end of the clearly defined period and if the terms have not been met a student may move to Stage 3 of the process.

**Stage 3:** If a student's attendance consistently continues to fall below 90% without appropriate communication, mitigation or absence reporting despite of supportive Action Plans, the School will follow one of the following courses of action:

1. The student may be invited to a meeting with the Student Support and Well-being Manager and relevant Head of Faculty to discuss the persistent issues the student is experiencing with their engagement with studies. Additional support measures will be explored, alongside discussion around possible alternative routes such as intermission of studies, course transfer and/or withdrawal from studies.

2. The student may be invited to a meeting with the Vice Principal, or elected representative to further explore whether withdrawal from studies might be the most appropriate course of action.
3. The student may be invited to a meeting with the Principal to discuss ongoing engagement challenges. A possible outcome of this interview may be that the student is asked to leave the course., in line with procedure detailed in the [Support through Studies Policy](#). This meeting will be minuted as a record of the discussion and agreed action.

The School reserves the right to delay the progression to the next stage if appropriate, or in the case of substantial absence to move to any stage of this process.