

**International Student Engagement Policy**

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| **Responsibility for Policy:** | Registrar and Chief Operating Officer |
| **Relevant to:** | All LJMU Students, Staff and Academic Partnerships |
| **Approved by:** | Registrar and Chief Operating Officer, May 2019 |
| **Responsibility for Document Review:** | Head of Registry Services |
| **Date introduced:** | August 2002 |
| **Date(s) modified:** | August 2016, May 2017, July 2018, May 2019, July 2020, July 2021, July 2023, July 2024 |
| **Next Review Date:** | July 2025 |

# **RELEVANT DOCUMENTS**

* UKVI Sponsor Guidance
* Academic Regulations

# **RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS**

* Student Handbook
* International Student Guide
* Your Student Visa Responsibilities
* PGR Handbook

**International Student Engagement Policy**

**2024/25**

1. **Scope of Policy**

This policy applies to all international students who have entered the UK under the Student route UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) regulations [1]. LJMU is a student sponsor which the University is committed to retaining and will engage full and robust processes to ensure full compliance with the terms of the licence. The University has a duty of care to ensure that international students are engaged with their studies throughout the duration of their programme. As monitoring the engagement of international students studying as a student is a requirement of UKVI, the university has a system of formal engagement monitoring.

This policy includes FT students at LJMU (including dissertation periods) as well as students in the following categories:

* on a work placement.
* on a study abroad programme (outward from the UK).
* whilst undertaking an official role as a Student Union Sabbatical Officer.

1. **How LJMU meet UKVI requirements**

In order that engagement by international students can be effectively monitored, the University requires confirmation in line with the following schedule for September/October & January start taught students.

*NB: PGT students on a 240 credit masters are not subject to monitoring requirements in their first summer vacation period. In the second summer they will be studying FT on the dissertation and will be subject to monitoring requirements.*

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| **Study Level** | **Contact Point** | **Date** | **Evidence** |
| UG, PGT | Enrolment | Within period specified within offer letter and on CAS | Passport, visa etc. |
| UG, PGT | Census Point | October | Student Engagement |
| UG, PGT | Census Point | November | Student Engagement |
| UG, PGT | Census Point | December | Student Engagement |
| UG, PGT | Census Point | January | Student Engagement |
| UG, PGT | Census Point | February | Student Engagement |
| UG, PGT | Census Point | March | Student Engagement |
| UG, PGT | Census Point | April | Student Engagement |
| PGT | Census Point | May | Student Engagement |
| PGT | Census Point | June | Student Engagement |
| PGT | Census Point | July | Student Engagement |
| PGT | Census Point | August | Student Engagement |

*2.1.* ***Enrolment***

Student visa holders are required to enrol within 10 working days following the commencement date of their programme of study as specified on their offer letter/re-enrolment email. Any student who fails to enrol by their deadline will be reported to UKVI. Academic Registry manages international student enrolment. Academic Registry also manages reporting to UKVI. Extensions to this enrolment period may only be granted under exceptional circumstances and need to take into consideration study requirements.

*2.2.* ***Census points***

On a monthly basis, Faculties will be required to monitor the engagement of Student visa students and advise Academic Registry of any student who is not actively engaging with their programme of study. For this purpose, the term ‘student engagement’ covers, but is not limited to, the following examples of student contacts:

* Engaging with lectures, tutorials, seminars, and practical sessions, delivered either face-to-face or online.
* Attending for the purposes of assessment.
* Submitting work.
* Attending meetings with academic tutors either face-to-face or online.
* Attending research events, seminars, or doctoral workshops, delivered either face-to-face or online.

Faculties will write to the student in the first instance regarding unsatisfactory engagement. Persistent unsatisfactory engagement will be reported to Academic Registry and further action may be taken that could affect the student’s immigration status in the UK.

1. **Authorised absence**

It is the responsibility of international students to advise the University if they are to be absent for any length of time. For example, student illness which impacts upon engagement for more than one week must be notified to tutors. In extenuating circumstances, periods of authorised student absence may be agreed up to a maximum of 4 weeks. Periods of authorised absence must be reported to the Academic Registry and logged on the central system. Where necessary, Academic Registry will report absences to UKVI.

1. **Reporting, Audit and Data Quality**

International student enrolment and formal UKVI engagement verification processes will be recorded on the central student system. Academic Registry has the responsibility for reporting to UKVI:

* any Student visa student failing to enrol or complete engagement verification.
* any Student visa student who withdraws.
* any significant change in a student visa student’s circumstances.

In addition to the central recording of enrolment, and engagement verification, copies of any additional relevant documentation will be securely archived by Academic Registry. Academic Registry will manage the processes and determine the schedule of reporting.

1. **Communications**

All relevant information regarding the International Student Engagement Monitoring Policy will be made available to Student visa students via the University website. In addition, Academic Registry/Faculties will individually contact students with dates of enrolment (via the offer letter/re-enrolment email).

Any student requiring advice should be directed to the International Student Advice Team in the first instance. Faculty staff requiring advice or guidance regarding UKVI regulations should contact Academic Registry.

1. **Monitoring of postgraduate research students**

The process for monitoring PGR students enrolled/registered on MPhil and PhD programmes is designed to cover the UKVI requirements in a consistent way for all LJMU PGR International students, taking into account differences in their programmes of research.

PGR students are required to complete their re-registration on the anniversary of their initial registration. Failure to do so can have implications on their immigration status in the UK.

Full-time PGR students are expected to be engaged on their research degree programme for a minimum of 35 hours per week over 45 weeks of the year. This is in accordance with the University’s Research Degree Regulations and the HEFCE definition of PGR programmes as a ‘long course’.

Monitoring will take place at designated points throughout the academic year which will include:

* Enrolment (see 2.1 above)
* PGR progression monitoring within eDoc

PGR engagement must be recorded on eDoc through supervisory meetings logs, participation in Progress Reviews and attendance at Researcher Development Programme events. The Doctoral Academy will monitor engagement via eDoc in line with the relevant checklist point throughout the year.

PGRs who have not demonstrated engagement during the month, will be sent a communication copied to the Lead Supervisor to remind them of the need to record their engagement with the programme of study. Following this, if no activity is recorded for the required month, the PGR’s engagement will be recorded as ‘Missed’ and Academic Registry notified for appropriate action to be taken.

Authorised absences from the university are approved in advance by the student’s Lead Supervisor and these are reported to Academic Registry, recorded on LJMU systems, and reported to UKVI where necessary.

Unauthorised absences from the university are reported to Academic Registry so that they can be followed-up as appropriate and reported to UKVI as required.

Students’ requests for suspension of registration and withdrawals are reported to Academic Registry, recorded on LJMU systems, and reported to UKVI where necessary.

1. **Monitoring of Study Abroad students**

Each student is allocated an International Mobility Co-ordinator who will monitor the student’s engagement. Each School within LJMU and each mobility co-ordinator will undertake the monitoring dependant on the needs of the programme. The Go Abroad Team will have oversight to ensure all LJMU processes are followed. The School is responsible for reporting the students’ details to Registry Services. The UKVI Compliance Officer is responsible for reporting a Change of Circumstances to UKVI via SMS.

1. **Monitoring of international students on work placement**

Students are monitored whilst undertaking a work placement in line with LJMU’s Placement Learning Code of Practice. Any students not fulfilling their placement responsibilities will be reported to the UKVI Compliance Officer who will report to UKVI as necessary.

1. **Monitoring of international students undertaking Student Union Sabbatical roles**

There is direct contact between the UKVI Compliance Officer and JMSU to monitor international sabbatical officers.

[1] This policy does not cover students with short term study visas or international students in the UK under an immigration route other than Student. Queries concerning the scope of this policy should be directed to Academic Registry.

Revised July 2024