**ACADEMIC DILIGENCE – FAILURE TO ATTEND AND/OR SUBMIT COURSEWORK**

**Introduction**

This document sets out the procedure for dealing with all taught students who fail to perform satisfactorily in terms of failing to attend or submit coursework for their programmes.

The priority in dealing with students who are not attending or are not submitting coursework is to ensure that, wherever possible, struggling students are identified early and offered sufficient support to help them to re-engage with their studies. The provisions in this document are not intended to replace the identification of students who may be in danger of failing and the provision of support for such students. The provisions below are intended to be used to re-engage students and to set out suitable steps to be taken to move towards termination of registration where appropriate.

This procedure will be followed by all Faculties to ensure equity and consistency for all students of the University.

**The Procedure**

Students are expected to attend all timetabled classes and hand in all course work on time[[1]](#footnote-1). Schools will monitor attendance and submission of coursework each week. This does not preclude an individual School undertaking monitoring at a higher level, or encouraging good academic diligence early in the students’ academic study, for example in Stage 1 of their programme. “Authorised absences” will only be recorded if the reason for the absence is listed in the “Authorised Absence Policy” and the supporting evidence is both timely and credible.

* The threshold for intervention for reasons of attendance is any unauthorised[[2]](#footnote-2) student absence of either:
	+ more than one calendar week, or
	+ with less than 75% attendance over a year or, over a period set by the School and widely published in advance to students. Schools setting an alternative threshold should note that this cannot be less stringent than the benchmark already set in this policy.
* The threshold for intervention for reasons of non-submission of coursework will be the non-submission of any single significantly weighted piece of work or an accumulation of lesser weighted pieces of work by the due date and time in the absence of appropriate concessions. Schools may set an alternative threshold but should note that this cannot be less stringent than the benchmark already set in this policy and must be widely published to students in advance.

The procedure has three stages with an appeal allowed after Stage 3.

Stage 1 – First Written Warning by the Senior Tutor or equivalent

Stage 2 – Final written warning by the Head of School

Stage 3 – Decision to withdraw registration by the Faculty Dean or their nominee

Appeal - Senate Academic Review Committee

**Stage 1**

If a student exceeds the thresholds above the Senior Tutor will contact the student to arrange a meeting with them to take place within one week. If in the interim the student provides a reasonable explanation and evidence the meeting may be cancelled, unless it is thought the meeting would be useful. A link to this policy should be included with the meeting invitation.

**The Student Attends the Stage 1 Meeting**

* At the meeting, the Senior Tutor will determine the reason for the student’s failure to meet the thresholds set out in the procedure. Through discussion at the meeting, further information may be disclosed by the student which may lead the Senior Tutor to signpost the student to available support mechanisms within the University e.g. concessions procedure, Fitness to Study policy, Student Support and Wellbeing.
* Should the Senior Tutor determine there is a requirement for the student to demonstrate improvement in their academic diligence, a **first written warning** will be issued detailing the steps the student needs to undertake, with a timeframe of ***two weeks[[3]](#footnote-3)***, to demonstrate improvement. The warning will also make clear to the student that if they do not undertake the necessary steps the consequence will be a referral to the Head of School and that Stage 2 of this procedure will be invoked. The letter should include an appointment for the student to meet with the Senior Tutor for a review meeting at the end of the two week period.

The letter should be sent to all known email addresses and current term time address.

**The Student Does Not Attend the Stage 1 Meeting**

* If the student does not attend the meeting or makes no contact with an acceptable explanation for not attending the meeting, the Senior Tutor will issue a **first written warning** letter including details of the steps that the student needs to undertake to improve their academic diligence. The timeframe for taking these steps should be two weeks. The warning letter from the Senior Tutor should also make clear that if the student does not take the necessary steps the consequence will be a referral to the Head of School and stage 2 of these procedures will be invoked. The letter should include an appointment for the student to meet with the Senior Tutor for a review meeting at the end of the two week period.

The letter should be sent to all known email addresses and current term time address.

**Stage 1 review meeting**

After two weeks, the Senior Tutor will meet again with the student as previously agreed. This meeting provides a further opportunity for the student to disclose details of their circumstances or issues affecting them and for the Senior Tutor to signpost the student to available support mechanisms and processes.

**The Student Attends the Stage 1 Review Meeting**

If, upon meeting with the student again the Senior Tutor determines that the student has not made adequate improvement in their academic diligence and progress, and there is no evidence of confirmed extenuating circumstances, Stage 2 of the process will be invoked.
Where the student has demonstrated sufficient improvement they should be advised that if they exceed the thresholds again in the next 12 months, and there is no evidence of confirmed extenuating circumstances, Stage 2 of the process will be invoked. This advice should also be sent in writing by email after the meeting.

**The Student Does Not Attend the Stage 1 Review Meeting**

* If the student has not provided a reasonable explanation for failure to attend the Stage 2 review meeting, Stage 2 of the procedure should be invoked.

**Stage 2**

Students who have failed to meet the requirements of Stage 1 as set out above will proceed to Stage 2 of the process and the Head of School will issue a **final written warning.**

The final written warning will require the student to demonstrate improvement to their academic diligence, and will set out the steps the student needs to undertake to achieve this, over a period of two weeks. A date at the end of the two weeks should be diarised for a meeting with the Senior Tutor and/or Head of School, the details of which should be included in the warning letter. The warning should also make clear that a consequence of not meeting these requirements will be a recommendation from the Head of School that the student be withdrawn and their studies terminated and Stage 3 of these procedures will be invoked. The letter should be sent to all known email addresses and current term time address.

**Stage 2 Review Meeting**

**Student attend the meeting**

* If, upon meeting with the student again it is determined that the student has not made adequate improvement in their academic diligence and progress, and there is no evidence of confirmed extenuating circumstances, or if there has been no contact from the student, stage 3 of the process will be invoked.
Where the student has demonstrated sufficient improvement they should be advised that if they exceed the thresholds again in the next 12 months, and there is no evidence of confirmed extenuating circumstances, Stage 3 of the process will be invoked. This advice should also be sent in writing by email after the meeting.

**The Student Does Not Attend the Meeting**

* If the student has not has not provided a reasonable explanation for failure to attend the Stage 2 review meeting, Stage 3 of the procedure should be invoked.

**Stage 3**

If, after two written warnings (from Senior Tutor and Head of School) and following 4 weeks of monitoring since the first warning being issued, the student has not achieved an adequate level of academic diligence and progress, the Head of School will make a formal recommendation to the Dean of Faculty or their nominee for the students registration to be terminated.

The determination of the extent to which a student has fulfilled the necessary requirements for engagement and progress shall be an academic judgement undertaken by the School Senior Tutor and the Head of School. The formal recommendation will be supported by copies of all relevant documents and communications confirming the student’s non-compliance and sent with the formal recommendation to the Faculties Support Office.

The Faculty Dean or their nominee will consider the recommendation and, if appropriate, inform the student in writing that their registration has been terminated for lack of progress. The letter will be sent to all known addresses.

If the recommendation is not supported by the Dean or their nominee, the Head of School will be asked to review the case and set further targets for the student to achieve. The process will revert to Stage 2 of the procedure. This may, in the future, lead to a further recommendation for withdrawal at Stage 3 by the Head of School.

Note: This process applies on a rolling 12 month basis, schools may move from one stage, or point in a stage, to the next step across 2 academic years. For example, a student may be at Stage 1 of the process in the final weeks of the Spring term (or academic year) and if they do not meet the requirements they may be advised, at that point, that Stage 2 is being invoked with the necessary monitoring to take place in the early weeks of the next academic year. In such cases the relevant letters should be sent immediately and a reminder, with a copy of the original letter, being sent at the start of the next academic year before the monitoring period take place.

**Appeal**

The student has the right to appeal the decision to terminate their registration to the Senate Academic Review Committee. Additional information and evidence of extenuating circumstances produced in support of an appeal should be in accordance with Annex 9, Section 2 of the Credit Framework – Concessions Applications.

**Authorised Absences Policy**

The University expects all students to attend timetabled classes. University regulation III.2 states:

**III Regulations Governing Registration, Programmes of Study and Examinations**

**……….**

**2. Attendance at Seminars, Supervisions, Examples Classes, Laboratory and Other Practical Classes and Lectures**

All students must attend such seminars, supervisions, examples classes, laboratory and other practical classes and lectures as may be individually required of them. Any student who wants to miss a compulsory class should obtain prior permission using the system in place in their school without delay.

When recording attendance at timetabled classes, the student will be either marked present or absent. If a student is absent but believes that they have a legitimate reason for not attending, then they can apply for the absence to be recoded as an authorised absence. An authorised absence will be recorded if the student’s reason fits within one of the categories set out in the table below **and** the student provides timely and credible evidence for their absence. Timeliness will be defined as within 5 working days of the absence. Credibility of the evidence will be judged by the authenticity, detail and legitimacy of the provider of the evidence.

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| **Medical**  | The evidence required to support absences in these categories is set out in the Credit Framework Annex 9 <https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex9.html>  |
| **Bereavement**  |
| **Personal**  |
| **Interview** | Students, particularly Final Year, may be required to attend job interviews/assessment centres for postgraduation employment. The same may apply to students seeking placements  |
| **Other**  | For events such as transport strike , religious holidays, etc, a pragmatic decision will be made about the legitimacy of these events and if there were reasonable alternatives which would have avoided the absence  |

1. <https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/taught/regs_taught.html> and <https://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/Regulations%20Booklet/generalregs.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Authorised absence policy below. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In circumstances where the following 2 weeks do not provided sufficient events for effective monitoring Schools may select 2 weeks (not necessarily consecutive) which provided a more suitable opportunity for the student to demonstrate improvement. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)