International Student Engagement Policy

Responsibility for Policy:	Registrar and Chief Operating Officer
Relevant to:	All LJMU Students, Staff and Academic Partnerships
Approved by:	Registrar and Chief Operating Officer, July 2021
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
Next Review Date:	July 2022

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- UKVI Sponsor Guidance
- Academic Regulations

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

- Student Handbook
- International Student Guide
- Your Tier 4 Responsibilities
- PGR Handbook

International Student Engagement Policy 2021/22

1. **Scope of Policy**

This policy applies to all international students who have entered the UK under the Tier 4 (General) Student or Student 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 of study. As monitoring the engagement of international students studying under as a Tier 4 (General) Student or Student is a requirement of the UKVI, the university has a system of formal engagement monitoring.

2. **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 start students.

Contact Point	Date	Evidence
Enrolment	Within period specified within offer letter and on CAS	Passport, visa etc.
Census Point	October	Student Engagement
Census Point	November	Student Engagement
Census Point	December	Student Engagement
Census Point	January	Student Engagement
Census Point	February	Student Engagement
Census Point	March	Student Engagement
Census Point	April	Student Engagement

2.1 Enrolment

Tier 4 (General) Student or 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/re-enrolment letter. Any student who fails to enrol by their deadline will be reported to UKVI. Academic Registry manages international student enrolment. Academic Registry 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 Tier 4 (General) Student or 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's either face to face or online delivery.

· Attending for the purposes of assessment.

· Submitting work.

· Attending meetings with academic tutors either face to face or online.

· Attending research events, writing-up seminars or doctoral workshops 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 at students' immigration status in the UK.

3 Authorised absence

It is the responsibility of international students to advise the University if they are to be absent for any period 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.

4 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 the UKVI:

· any Tier 4 (General) Student or Student visa student failing to enrol or complete engagement verification.

· any Tier 4 (General) Student or Student visa student who withdraws.

· any significant change in Tier 4 (General) Student or Student visa student circumstances.

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

5 Communications

All relevant information regarding the International Student Engagement Monitoring Policy will be made available to Tier 4 (General) Student or Student visa students via the University website. In addition, Academic Registry/Faculties will individually contact

students with dates of enrolment (via the offer/re-enrolment letter).

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

6 **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.

UKVI requires a consistent, full auditable process which allows LJMU to monitor the following:

- engagement of all FT INT PGR students including those who are writing-up in the UK on Tier 4 (General) Student or Student visas;

- students' engagement with their programme of research and their academic progress;

- that students' passports, visas and current address details are valid and up-to-date and recorded correctly on LJMU systems;

- that any authorised absences from the university are approved in advance by the student's Lead Supervisor and that these are reported to Academic Registry and

- recorded on LJMU systems and reported to UKVI where necessary;

- that any 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;

- that students' requests for suspension of registration and withdrawals are

- processed promptly and reported to UKVI as required.

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 is recorded on eDoc through supervisory meetings logs and participation in Progress Reviews. The Doctoral Academy will monitor engagement via the **'Visa Monitoring' dashboard within eDoc**.

Any student who has not engaged with eDoc for a period of four weeks will raise an amber flag on the Visa Monitoring dashboard. An amber flag will trigger a communication to both the PGR student and Lead Supervisor to follow up. If there is no further engagement by eight weeks, a red flag is raised and the PGR student will be advised that their registration may be terminated. A report will be forwarded to the Academic Registry for reporting to the UKVI.

[1] This policy does not cover students with short term study visas or International students in the UK under an immigration route other than Tier 4 (General) Student or Student visa. Queries concerning the scope of this policy should be directed to the Academic Registry.

Revised July 2021