

## POLICY NOTE ON STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

This policy note must be read in conjunction with the General Regulations for Students and the Attendance Policy.

1. An underpinning principle of the regulatory frameworks for taught awards is that credit is an indicator of the associated expected volume of study, whilst the mark for the module indicates achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
2. Severe and/or persistent cases of non-attendance or non-engagement should be dealt with not by the refusal of permission to sit examinations or permission to sit an examination or by mark penalisation, but by the disciplinary route.
3. Where a member of staff identifies severe or persistent non-attendance or non-engagement they shall refer the matter to the nominated academic colleague in the College for possible action under the Procedures for Relating to Attendance, Engagement and Progress.
4. The College, in common with the British Higher Education sector as a whole, is committed to the principle that assessment must be firmly bound to identified learning outcomes. In this context it is not permissible to penalise non-attendance through the deduction of marks which have been awarded for positive achievement of learning outcomes elsewhere in the module. Instead we may actively reward engagement where it demonstrates successful achievement of explicit learning outcomes.

Thus, for example, a module that is taught in part through seminars or tutorials designed for discussion might spell out among its intended learning outcomes some which depend on engagement, the demonstration of which is not possible without attendance. Examples of such learning outcomes might include:

- participation in group discussion, at a minimum through regular listening, at best through regular active participation;
- evidence of ability to organise work schedule;
- sound time-keeping;
- good citizenship.

Any and every contribution to a seminar or tutorial should be assessed where such contributions contribute to the learning outcomes of the module. It is not permissible to set a minimum threshold for attendance before marks will be awarded for engagement, nor to deny marks for achievement of some of the stated intended learning outcomes on the basis that others have not been achieved.

5. Where, then, 'academic engagement' is a desired learning outcome of a module, the following principles should apply:
  - the learning outcome(s) should be clearly stated and be compatible

## Student Engagement Policy note

with Equal Opportunities;

- the assessment and marking criteria should be published;
- up to and no more than 10% of the available marks might be awarded on the basis of the extent to which the learning outcome(s) have been demonstrated by 'engagement';
- marks are to be positively awarded for demonstration of achievement rather than deducted: a student who does not participate does not receive any of the marks set aside for participation (however that is expressed), i.e. a marks neutral position, whilst a student who is able to demonstrate participation may be awarded some or all the marks set aside for this aspect;
- where appropriate, the level of reward is likely to depend on the quality as well as the fact of regular engagement, e.g. active participation, constructive contribution.
- due allowance should be granted for instances of non-attendance where students present timely and satisfactory explanation;
- appropriate learning and teaching events in which 'academic engagement' might be demonstrated include: seminars, tutorials, group-work, presentations, projects, fieldwork, laboratory and/or practical classes. Lectures should be excluded;
- Module Leaders assessing such learning outcomes must keep accurate records of student engagement.

Module outlines must clearly state where marks for engagement will be awarded, alongside a description of the learning outcomes that will be assessed via engagement and the criteria that will be used to allocate marks for engagement.

Staff and students should be aware that anonymised marking is not possible where academic engagement is being assessed.