

Phase 1 MB ChB Engagement Policy

MB ChB

November 2023

Policy Statement

The purpose of this document is to define the policies for monitoring and supporting learning and engagement in compulsory teaching and learning events to align with the engagement requirements of Phase 1 of the University of Buckingham MB ChB course as detailed below.

Definitions

For purposes of this document the word “engagement” relates to the **proactive involvement** of a student and/or group of students in their learning activities. This means that students are not only present during their group work activities but that they make an active contribution to group work learning both through verbal and written communication and physical contributions. If a student fails to attend a learning activity, this will also be viewed as failure to engage.

Unauthorised absence is where the absence notification or certification procedure has not been followed or the reason for absence doesn't meet the criteria for authorisation.

Contents

Policy Statement	2
Definitions	2
Purpose	4
Scope	4
Policy Details	4
Engagement requirements in Phase 1	4
Monitoring Engagement in Phase 1.....	5
Data Processing, Thresholds and Consequences.....	5
Student Visa monitoring	6
Responsibilities	6
Related Policies	6
Document Control	6

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define the policy for monitoring and supporting learning and engagement in compulsory teaching and learning events to align with the engagement requirements of Phase 1 of the University of Buckingham MB ChB course as detailed below.

Scope

Policy covering curriculum engagement by Phase 1 students on the MB ChB course.

Policy Details

The MB ChB degree is achieved following a programme of professional training, and students must demonstrate professional attitudes and behaviours consistent with the high standards that are expected of a doctor by the time they graduate. This means standards of engagement appropriate for a practicing professional.

In line with the MB ChB General Regulations, the Medical School stipulates that all students must meet the standards and learning outcomes defined by the General Medical Council in 'Outcomes for Graduates 2018' in order to successfully graduate. The nature of the MB ChB programme, the design of the curriculum, group work and self-directed learning structure do not allow for repeated missed sessions or for sessions where students have not been fully engaged.

The University has general expectations about attendance and engagement of all students which are defined in the University General Regulations for First Degrees and all these regulations are stipulated in the MB ChB Student Agreement. These requirements are to ensure that students learn efficiently and collaboratively but ensures that all medical students complete the sufficient hours of clinical training. Additionally, the Medical School has a detailed absence and leave policy which should be read in conjunction with this engagement policy.

Therefore, due to the nature of the curriculum design, educational model and the required learning outcomes of all students, and in line with the expectations set out above, all students must demonstrate engagement with 100% of all scheduled learning events to meet the requirements set out by the University of Buckingham Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. All students have scheduled periods of leave (scheduled holiday) during the course so learning and engagement at all other times is mandatory.

Furthermore, to align with the foundation training programme guidance around absence thresholds and checks regarding training requirements, as well as visa requirements, we are ensuring that all non-engagement is accounted for in engagement-monitoring. Any leave / absence may have an impact on the training needs or visa status of an individual student.

Engagement requirements in Phase 1

Phase 1 of the MB ChB is delivered mainly on campus; however, all students will have a small amount of teaching in both primary and secondary care. Students must engage in all the teaching and learning events that are scheduled, including group work, workshops and sessions as required via the published timetable.

Additionally, the university expects students to actively engage in their sessions and, as such, student "engagement" will be monitored throughout their educational activities. Engagement will be

deemed as a student's attendance at and interactions (with peers, staff, resources, and activities) in group work and will be recorded periodically as part of scheduled 'spot-checks' of engagement.

Staff members teaching within the curriculum activities will be responsible for assessing engagement and no challenge to those judgements will be possible.

The Medical School expects all students to manage absences in line with absence and leave policy. However, absence from any learning session for whatever reason will be considered as non-engagement with the learning event and may count towards action being taken.

Monitoring Engagement in Phase 1

The Medical School will monitor student engagement using several metrics including, but not limited to:

1. Spot-checks of engagement in small group sessions (i.e. engagement with peers, staff, resources, and activities)
2. Engagement in all CSFC and NM timetabled curriculum sessions
3. Engagement in clinical placements (within CSFC and NM)
4. Completion of termly formative assessments (i.e. META, termly written formatives, MOSCE, ARPP1&2)

Whilst the Medical School will reconcile any non-engagement with appropriate self-certification of illness and approved absences, as described by the absence and leave policy, the lack of engagement in the curriculum for any reason requires catch up and is of concern due to the accelerated nature of the course and the volume of material on the MB ChB programme. Therefore, even an authorised absence will add to a student's cumulative absence from the course.

Data Processing, Thresholds and Consequences

The student support team will review the engagement data collected from the spot checks and authorised absences and incorporate into the cumulative record of engagement. Through an automated process, Student Support authorised absence records will be matched to the curriculum spot check data and a running total of absence and engagement data collected.

The pattern of overall engagement will decide on the action taken on the data, but it is anticipated that students may have an engagement pattern that consists of either authorised absence alone, unauthorised absence alone, or a mixture of both and/or lack of engagement in the programme.

The unauthorised non-engagement record is cumulative over Phase 1 and does not reset termly or annually. Authorised absences will be monitored as described in the absence and leave policy.

Alongside this process anyone can contact the student support team if they are concerned about an individual student's engagement pattern.

Where a student is requested to attend a meeting related to their engagement it is the student's responsibility to arrange the meeting within a 48h period as stipulated within the student agreement.

Student monitoring and consequences

If engagement is a concern, the student will receive a first email about the lack of engagement. Following this email, the student should re-engage in their studies as soon as possible and no further action is required.

If non-engagement continues, for any reason, the student will be sent an email requiring that they book and attend an appointment with student support. The student must attend this appointment in a timely manner, in which they will be advised of actions need to take within a set timeframe to continue their studies.

In a small number of cases if repeated non-engagement is identified and therefore there is a serious risk of withdrawal of sponsorship if on a visa or escalation to concerns processes. If this occurs a student will receive an email requesting that they attend an appointment with professional support. The student must attend this appointment, in which they will be advised of actions needed, including the planning of educational or pastoral support and remediation by the student, within a set timeframe to continue their studies.

Consequences of recurring non-engagement

If continuous or recurring repeated non-engagement or absence occurs by any student, the school may proceed to escalate the case straight to the Dean an outcome of which may be a compulsory suspension of studies.

Students can appeal any outcome decision via the appeals process, details of which can be obtained via FMHS-appeals@buckingham.ac.uk.

Responsibilities

Phase 1 Lead is responsible for the update and review of this policy on an annual basis.

Related Policies

- 1 Absence and Leave Policy
- 2 MB ChB General Regulations
- 3 Appeals policy

Document Control

Date policy approved: December 2022

Date of policy review approval: November 2023

Date of next policy review: End of Academic year 2024