

Phase 2 Engagement Monitoring Policy

School of Medicine

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Context

The purpose of this policy document is to define the principles related to monitoring attendance and engagement in teaching and learning events within placement sites participating in Phase 2 of the University of Buckingham MB ChB course as a tool to identify students who may be facing difficulties with their studies and to support student wellbeing.

Definitions

“Attendance” refers to a student and/or group of students being present in the allocated location of a course activity.

“Engagement” relates to the proactive involvement of a student and/or group of students in their learning activities. Unless communicated otherwise, engagement will be assumed to require attendance.

“Unauthorised absence” is where a student is not in attendance as expected and either the absence notification and/or certification procedure has not been followed or the reason for absence doesn't meet the medical school's criteria for authorisation.

“Placement provider” refers to any organisation external to the University that is providing an educational experience for students on behalf of the medical school. This includes hospitals and GP surgeries as well as a variety of other organisations relevant to health and/or social care.

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy document is to define the principles related to monitoring attendance and engagement in teaching and learning events within placement sites participating in Phase 2 of the University of Buckingham MB ChB course as a tool to identify students who may be facing difficulties with their studies and to support student wellbeing.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Phase 2 students registered on the MB ChB course and at all placement provider locations.

3. Policy Details

1. In line with the MB ChB General Regulations, medical 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 intensive nature of the MB ChB programme and the design of the curriculum do not allow for repeated missed learning. This is particularly important in Phase 2 where most learning takes place in the clinical environment and through direct interaction with patients.
2. All students have scheduled periods of leave (scheduled holiday) during the course so attendance at placement site at all other times is mandatory. Students are expected to attend 100% of the teaching and learning events that are scheduled, including lectures/teaching sessions, allocated clinics, ward rounds, simulation sessions, workshops and meetings as notified to students.
3. The medical school recognises that proactive engagement is more important than attendance alone and since the MB ChB course is a programme of professional training, students must demonstrate professional attitudes and behaviours consistent with the high standards that are expected of a doctor by the time they graduate. This includes standards of engagement appropriate for a practising professional.
4. Placement learning opportunities involve complex organisation and significant time input from busy clinicians and voluntary participation of patients. It is therefore essential that both the medical school and the placement provider are notified at the earliest opportunity to do so if a student is unable to attend. This is to ensure that any impact on the healthcare workforce and patients can be minimised and that students have access to support as necessary.
5. Students should refer to the Medical School's absence and leave policy for information on how absences must be reported to the medical school and the circumstances in which they may be authorised. In addition, each placement provider will notify students of their own mechanisms for reporting absence directly to them. Students are individually responsible for reporting their own absences to both the University and their placement provider. They should not rely on other students or staff to do this for them.
6. In line with professional standards, students are expected to proactively seek out opportunities to engage in learning that they or their supervisors deem necessary for them as an individual to meet the expectations of each block and ultimately the GMC's outcomes

for graduates. Similarly, where students have been unable to attend course activities, they are responsible for proactively seeking out opportunities to engage in learning that that has been missed and for engaging with relevant support services.

7. The medical school will monitor student engagement throughout the duration of their studies in accordance with the Engagement & Attendance Monitoring Procedures for Phase 2 as outlined below.
8. The medical school will pro-actively offer access to support where a student starts to disengage with their programme of studies. Support offerings will aim to improve student engagement and wellbeing in order to maximise student success in their studies.
9. In line with the Equality Act (2010), the medical school will ensure that the implementation of this policy does not disadvantage any student with a disability and reasonable adjustments will be applied where appropriate.
10. If all supportive steps outlined in the Attendance and Leave Policy and Concerns Policy have been exhausted
 - a. A student may not be able to meet the requirements of the course and may be at risk of studies being terminated in accordance with general Regulation 8.8.
 - b. A student may be at risk of having their Student Visa cancelled by the UK Visas and Immigration;
11. This policy and the associated procedures will ensure that our statutory obligations under our UK Visas and Immigration Student Sponsor Licence to monitor all students sponsored under a Student Visa are met.

4. Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

- Reporting any absence from placement to the medical school and the placement provider using the notified mechanisms and timeframes.
- Engaging with all scheduled activities in a timely and professional manner
- Responding professionally to feedback in relation to individual learning requirements and proactively engaging with recommendations from the supervisory team.
- Engaging with support processes to improve engagement where necessary.

Placement providers are responsible for:

- Developing and communicating a local mechanism for students and staff to report student absences and non-engagement with learning activities.
- Developing and implementing a mechanism for cross referencing local engagement records with the medical school's database of authorised absences.
- Developing and communicating a mechanism to enable block leads and educational supervisors to access accurate and up to date engagement data for the block as a whole.
- Notifying the medical school and Deputy Phase 2 lead (and raising concerns where appropriate) for students with unauthorised absences or who are not engaging appropriately with learning activities.

Block leads are responsible for:

- Determining and communicating any block specific thresholds or processes relating to engagement monitoring (e.g. for blocks with multiple settings, do these need to be considered separately or together and do they have equal weighting).
- Supporting students to identify opportunities to catch up learning missed due to authorised absence.

Educational supervisors are responsible for:

- Using the local engagement data for the block to inform accurate completion of the end of block reports according to the criteria above and any additional block specific guidance.
- Supporting students to identify opportunities to catch up learning missed due to authorised absence.

Deputy Phase 2 leads are responsible for:

- Developing and implementing a local mechanism for reviewing student engagement data to identify those who may need further support and/or additional monitoring.
- Supporting students to identify opportunities to catch up learning missed due to authorised absence.
- Where ongoing barriers to engagement exist, referring students to relevant support services.

The medical school is responsible for:

- Providing students with clear information on how they report absences and a mechanism to do so.
- Reviewing and authorising student absences where appropriate
- Maintaining a database of authorised and unauthorised absences and a mechanism for placement providers to report absences and non-engagement to the medical school.
- Providing training and access to student portfolios and other systems as necessary for relevant staff within the placement site.
- Monitoring a student's overall engagement record on a regular basis
- Communicating with and offering support to students who are indicated as disengaging with their programme of studies
- Implementing the support and concern escalation processes related to non-engagement as described in the absence and leave policy and concerns policy
- Making timely reports to the UK Visas and Immigration where appropriate

5. Data

- All engagement data will be processed in line with UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Student data will be collected and analysed in compliance with the University's Data Protection Policies, and according to the terms outlined within this Data Use Policy. The use of data in this way is based on the principal of legitimate interest, and supports our duty of care to students, which arises from the Faculty's agreement with students. Low engagement, and or absences, may indicate a need for support and the use of data to help identify such students ensures that appropriate interventions can be considered and offered if necessary.

- Additionally, where students are studying under a Sponsored Visa the University has a legal obligation to confirm attendance and engagement for the UKVI.
- For this reason, it is not possible for students to opt out of the collection of student engagement data.
- Student Engagement and absence data will be recorded and retained for the duration of a student's studies with the University, and may be retained for 6 years following departure from the University
- Students have a right to view the data that is held about them, and student details will be provided in electronic format on request. Students should allow 3 weeks for their request to be processed.
- Only staff directly involved in teaching and supporting students will have access to engagement and absence data and this will not be disclosed to parents, guardians or other third parties except in the following special circumstances.
 - UKVI Student Visa requirement
- UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) regulations mean that Student Visa holders are required to engage with their studies as a condition of their Visa. The University, as an immigration sponsor, also has statutory responsibilities to adhere to, as set out by UKVI. Evidence of attendance and engagement may be supplied to UKVI on request and failure to engage for a sustained period may invoke a statutory obligation to report absence to UKVI.

6. Related Policies

1. Absence and Leave Policy
2. MB ChB General Regulations
3. Concerns policy
4. Individual placement provider policies and procedures relating to medical student attendance and engagement

7. Document Control

Date policy approved: 27th March 2024

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