

# Attendance Policy and Procedure

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Chapter in OU Operations Manual	18
Mapping to Quality Code	Chapter B3 / 8

# 18 Attendance Policy & Procedures

## 18.1 Policy

18.1.1 Due to the nature of practical dance training a very high level of attendance is extremely important for all students of the following reasons:

- The collaborative nature of the course requires all students to contribute to group projects and performances. Absentee students can affect the learning of others in the group.
- Prolonged absence from physical exercise can result in health and safety risks on return.
- Where modules are assessed through a process of continuous assessment it is assumed that students will be thoroughly engaged in a longitudinal process of participation, reflection, development and advancement. Any absence will inevitably impact negatively on a student's work and consequently his / her assessment grades.

18.1.2 Absence should be restricted to medical or compassionate absence.

18.1.3 A rigorous assessment monitoring procedure is in place. The purpose of this is three-fold.

- To ensure the safety and well-being of students and provide support if necessary.
- To highlight any student who has frequent or prolonged absence, which may be an indicator of other issues and pastoral student support may be required.
- To ensure that students are fully engaged with the programme. Prolonged or frequent, unexplained absence could be grounds for deregistering the student.

18.1.4 Attendance monitoring is particularly important for overseas students whose attendance is a requirement under their tier 4 visa.

18.1.5 Procedures will be in place for students to request authorised absence from classwork. This will usually be granted unless it is considered that the frequency or duration of the absence seriously affects the learning of the student, or of other students.

18.1.6 Absence from single assessments can also be requested and must be accompanied by a Late Authorisation request. Authorisation will only be granted under certain unavoidable circumstances (see late authorisation procedure).

18.1.7 Unavoidable, prolonged absence covering a significant amount of teaching or a number of assessments will be dealt with under the Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) procedures.

18.1.8 PEC procedures will also be used if a student is absent from an assessment without authorisation and due to serious and unavoidable personal circumstances.

18.1.9 Students are entitled to withdraw from their course and that decision must always lie with the student. Students should be encouraged to discuss possible withdrawal with staff and the principal prior to making a decision.

18.1.10 This policy will be reviewed annually.

## 18.2 Attendance Procedures

18.2.1 All members of the Ballet West community have responsibilities for maintaining and

monitoring student attendance.

#### 18.2.2 Students are required to -

- Report any absence to the office through electronic submission on the VLE on the first day of absence, so that staff can be informed.
- Seek permission in advance for any planned absence using the form on the VLE or the paper form [Authorised Absence Request]
- If planned absence includes one or more assessments a Late Authorisation Form must also be completed.
- Provide medical or other evidence, as requested, for any lengthy absence or any absence that includes a practical assessment
- Discuss any issue that is causing frequent or prolonged absenteeism with his/her student advisor or the principal.

#### 18.2.3 Teaching staff are required to -

- Complete electronic attendance registers for every class, recording presence or absence of students.
- Inform the principal of any student -
  - with unexplained absence longer than two days
  - who is absent frequently

#### 18.2.4 Administrative staff are required to -

- Inform teaching staff of any medical absence notified by students
- Relay to the principal absence requests for authorisation
- Note authorised absence
- Note information from class registers on central spreadsheet recording
  - Presence
  - absence
- Request and retain doctor's notes from any students medically absent for more than 5 days.
- Inform the principal of any student with prolonged or frequent absenteeism
- Produce end of term attendance reports for staff and students' parents

#### 18.2.5 The Principal is required to -

- Authorise or refuse requests for absence in consultation with other staff members, particularly when absence affects assessment.
- Contact by telephone or in person, any student
  - with unexplained absence longer than two days
  - who is absent frequently
  - who has an unauthorised absence at an assessment
- Take appropriate action ensure that the student is supported though any issue causing absenteeism, for example by referral to medical or student support services.
- Discuss withdrawal with any student with prolonged or frequent unexplained absence.

### 18.3 Absence from Assessment

18.3.1 When a student knows in advance that they will be absent for an assessment, he /she

must request an extension to the assessment deadline using the Late Authorisation Form. This must be submitted to the programme manager before the deadline.

18.3.2 The programme manager, in consultation with module staff will approve or decline the request.

- If approved - a new date will be set for the assessment, usually within 7 days of the original assessment date
- If declined - the student will either attend or submit the assessment, or be penalised

18.3.3 A student whose work is submitted late, without prior authorisation or personal extenuating circumstances will be subject to the following penalties (in accordance with OU regulations 13.4)

- Submission within 6 days: a 10% reduction for each day late down to the 40% pass mark and no further.
- Submission that is late by 7 or more days: submission refused, mark of 0. Submission after the deadline will be assumed to be the next day.

18.3.4 A student who fails to attend a practical assessment without prior authorisation or personal extenuating circumstances will be given an alternative assessment date as soon as practical and will receive a maximum of the 40% pass mark. Failure to attend the alternative assessment will result in a mark of 0%.

## 18.4 Personal Extenuating Circumstances

18.4.1 A Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) Form should be submitted when -

- A student fails to attend or submit an assessment without a prior Late Authorisation and considers their personal circumstances caused that failure.
- The student's circumstance are likely to be long-lasting, serious, unforeseen and unpreventable and affect a number of assessments.
- A student completes an assessment on time but believes his / her performance was severely affected by personal circumstances.

18.4.2 Guidance of circumstances acceptable are given in the table below

Normally acceptable circumstances	Required evidence <sup>1</sup>
Tragic personal circumstances, e.g. death or serious illness of family member or close friend.	Sight of death certificate (or photocopy) or independent corroboration of illness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant personal accident or injury.</li> <li>• Serious ill health, which may include an acute episode of a disability or chronic condition affecting performance but not covered by special examination provision.</li> <li>• Late stage pregnancy or pregnancy with complications.</li> </ul>	Medical evidence, which specifically relates to the timing of the claim.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acute personal or emotional trauma,</li> </ul>	Independent corroboration of the circumstances.

<sup>1</sup> If not in English, a translation must be submitted together with the original evidence.

<p>e.g. acute anxiety or depression, family breakdown, breakdown of close personal relationship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jury service.</li> <li>• Impact of natural disaster, civil disruption or other major hazard.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional dance engagement</li> </ul>	Contract of employment
<p><b>Normally unacceptable circumstances</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment commitments of full time students.</li> <li>• Pre-existing long-term medical conditions</li> <li>• Early stage pregnancy without complications.</li> <li>• Routine or long-term domestic or caring responsibilities.</li> <li>• Normal exam stress or anxiety experienced during revision or the assessment period, unless corroborated by medical evidence as a chronic condition and undergoing treatment.</li> <li>• Non-serious domestic or personal disruptions (financial difficulties, moving house, holidays, failed travel arrangements, oversleeping).</li> <li>• Term-time personal arrangements (e.g. holiday, wedding) made after starting the programme.</li> <li>• Study related circumstances (equipment failure, failure to take back-up copies of stolen or corrupted work, bunching of deadlines, assessments too close together, missing books, assessment re-scheduling, misreading the assessment timetable).</li> </ul>	

18.4.3 The form and supporting evidence must be submitted to the programme manager within 7 days of the assessment date. If an Exam Board decision has already been taken on the end of stage results, a claim can only be considered under the Appeals procedure.

18.4.4 PEC claims made prior to assessments (for example due to an injury preventing a number of practical assessments) will be assessed by the vice principal for learning and teaching and the programme manager. If the claim is valid, a meeting will take place with the student to discuss alternative assessment dates, where possible.

18.4.5 In cases where the student's circumstances severely affect their ability to learn and be assessed over a long period of time, meaning that completion of that stage of study is not realistically possible in the same academic year, the student should temporarily withdraw from the course.

18.4.6 If the claim is made after assessment or close to the end of the academic stage, where an alternative assessment schedule is not possible, the claim will be considered by the exam board, immediately prior to the formal progression and awards exam board meeting.

Possible outcomes are as follows:

- If the module is passed and the student is at a progression stage no action will normally be taken, although the circumstances will be taken into account when the award is determined if relevant.
- The student is given a deferral (i.e. additional first sit) opportunity. The mark for the

re-assessed work will count in full even if lower than the original mark. If the affected assessment is a resit, the student may be permitted to resit, as if for the first time.

- In exceptional cases a module pass may be awarded taking into account any work completed, the overall profile of marks and the requirement that all components of assessment must be completed.
- Where it is deemed that extenuating circumstances have had a major impact, the student may be given the opportunity to repeat part or all of the academic stage.
- If the Exam board is satisfied that there is sufficient evidence of the student's achievement at the award stage, the student may be recommended for the award (and classification if relevant) for which he or she is a candidate.

18.4.7 Where further evidence is thought to be necessary the Exam board may assess the student by whatever means it considers appropriate. It may exercise discretion on the form of re-assessment provided the student is not put in a position of unfair advantage over other candidates for the award.

18.4.8 Should a student be prevented by illness, or other circumstances, from completing the final assessed component of the programme, the board of examiners, having considered the relevant evidence (including medical certification) may make a recommendation that an Aegrotat award be made. Such exceptions are limited to students who are permanently unable to continue their studies and are registered for the final module that would complete a qualification, and have been assessed on at least part of the module. The board must be satisfied that the student's prior performance shows beyond reasonable doubt that they would have passed but for the illness, or other circumstances.

## **18.5 International student attendance monitoring**

18.5.1 Under the Tier 4 Points Based System Ballet West is required to ensure their international students are fully registered and attending their studies. We are required to notify the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) if international students are not in attendance. Demonstrating a good attendance record is therefore extremely important.

18.5.2 To ensure students are able to demonstrate a record of attendance, Ballet West will implement an Attendance Monitoring System in line with UKVI regulations:

- Registration- Students must complete the registration process to be fully registered. A student who is not fully registered, within the prescribed time, will be withdrawn from the system and the UKVI are notified.
- Attendance - All students at Ballet West are monitored in the same way with attendance monitored at every class.

18.5.3 Unauthorised absences and reporting to the UKVI - Standard attendance procedures apply to International Students but after ten days of unauthorised absence and failure to contact the student. Ballet West will begin proceedings to notify the UKVI of the student's absences and may withdraw him/her.

## **18.6 Permanent Withdrawal Procedure**

18.6.1 Students considering withdrawal from the course should first discuss the matter with the

principal and programme manager at the earliest opportunity.

- 18.6.2 The principal will seek to determine the reasons for withdrawal and whether any actions can be taken to resolve any issues. The decision to withdraw from the course should always rest with the student.
- 18.6.3 It is the responsibility of the principal and programme manager to discuss the consequences of withdrawal in terms of academic progression and student funding.
- 18.6.4 If a student decides to withdraw from a course, they should submit a withdrawal form to the programme manager.
- 18.6.5 If a student fails to attend without explanation, as recognised through the attendance policy and procedure, every attempt will be made to contact the student. If it transpires that the student has left the course without notification, written confirmation of that decision must be sought. This should normally be completion of a withdrawal form, but an email or letter clearly stating the decision to leave is acceptable. In the latter case, a withdrawal form will be completed by the programme manager.
- 18.6.6 The programme manager is responsible for contacting
- The Open University to deregister the student.
  - The SLC to notify the change of circumstances.

## **18.7 Temporary withdrawal (interruption of studies)**

- 18.7.1 In accordance with the OU regulations 8.0, a student may temporarily withdraw from his or her studies for up to twelve months. This will usually be due to injury or other personal circumstances and will be considered under the extenuating circumstances regulations and procedure.
- 18.7.2 In accordance with the Terms and Conditions para 3.11, if a student undertakes an approved, temporary withdrawal from his/her studies, the full annual tuition fee is payable, including payment to replace any anticipated loan payment from the SLC or grant payment from SAAS. No refund will be made except at the absolute discretion of Ballet West's Board of Trustees.

# Authorised Absence Request

This form should be used to request absence from Ballet West during term time. The minimum time for which a request should be submitted is one day.

This form must be submitted to the office at least 2 days BEFORE the period of absence and must be approved by the principal before you leave the school.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you catch up on any work which you miss during your absence. If you miss an assessment, you **MUST** submit a Late Authorisation Form and it is your responsibility to discuss a resit date with the specific module tutors.

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Course &amp; Year:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>	
<b>Telephone number:</b>	

<b>1st day of requested absence</b>	
<b>Date of return</b>	

<b>Will you miss assessments during your period of absence?</b>	<b>Y / N</b>	
<b>If yes, You MUST talk to your module tutor and submit a Late Authorisation Form or Personal Extenuating Circumstances from</b>		
<b>Reason for absence</b>	<b>MEDICAL</b>	
	<b>FAMILY</b>	
	<b>DANCE RELATED e.g. auditions, competitions, performances</b>	
	<b>OTHER</b>	

<b>Signed</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Date</b>

## Late Authorisation Form

If you have personal circumstances, which are unforeseen and unpreventable and have a serious effect on your ability to attend a practical assessment or submit assessed coursework by the published hand-in deadline, you can apply for more time to complete the work using this form. This form **MUST** be submitted to the programme manager **BEFORE** the deadline for the assessment. You will usually be granted an additional 7 days to complete an assessment. If your circumstances are ongoing and likely to affect a number of assessments, you must complete a Personal Extenuating Circumstances form.

<b>Student name</b>			
<b>Academic year</b>		<b>Semester</b>	
<b>Programme title</b>		<b>Programme level</b>	
<b>Module title</b>		<b>Module code &amp; credit value</b>	
<b>Assessment component</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	
<b>If your assessment involves other students, please list here</b>			
<b>Reason for late submission</b>			
<b>Short-term medical problem (Medical evidence required)</b>			
<b>Disability or on-going Additional Needs which carry a recommendation of flexible deadlines for assessed work. (Negotiated with Guidance Tutor)</b>			
<b>Compassionate grounds affecting only this submission (evidence required)</b>			
<b>External Examination</b>			
<b>Other - give details</b>			

<b>Approved date and time for late submission</b>	
<b>Authorised by</b>	
<b>Date Authorised</b>	
<b>Student signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	



## Circumstances affecting assessment performance

Please give details of the circumstances that have affected your assessment performance. Explain clearly what the problem/s is, how it has affected you and how this relates to the assessment/s you have listed. This should include an indication of the period you have been or expect to be affected.

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If you have received help from the Student Support Team in relation to any of the assessments identified, please give details below.

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Name of member of staff who you have discussed this claim with		Date of discussion	
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## Supporting evidence (see notes for required evidence)

List supporting evidence provided with this form, indicating type of evidence and date/s. If you cannot provide the supporting evidence by the deadline, submit this form and indicate here the evidence you intend to provide, and when.

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## Declaration

I declare that the information I have provided on this form is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and authorise Ballet West to make enquiries to verify the accuracy of the information if necessary.

Signature		Date	
Received by		Date	

Guidance of circumstances acceptable are given in the table below

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Normally unacceptable circumstances	
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# Withdrawal Form

SLC Student Support number	
Student Name	
Date of Birth	
Current Programme of study	

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

I am seeking permission to withdraw TEMPORARILY / PERMANENTLY from my studies

(Staff use only)

The above student should no longer have registered status

Date of last attendance/contact

End of Current Academic Year

From \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Please tick main reason for withdrawal:

- Academic failure
- Transferred to another HEI: Institution, if known \_\_\_\_\_
- Health reasons
- Financial reasons
- Other personal reasons
- Gone into employment: Employment/Employer, if known \_\_\_\_\_
- Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/>
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I confirm that the possible financial and academic implications of these changes have been discussed with me. (tick box)

Signed  
(student)

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed  
(principal)

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Name Printed  
(principal)

\_\_\_\_\_


Received

Approve

Data entered on SIS