ENGAGEMENT & ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Effective date	On approval
Date for review	November 2027
Policy owner	Chief Executive
Reference points	Office for Students: *Student Engagement and Consultation – Effective Practice* https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/equality-of-opportunity/effective-practice/student-engagement-and-consultation/ UK Quality Code: *Advice and Guidance – Student Engagement* https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/advice-and-guidance-student-engagement.pdf
Audience/handling notes	Student Services, Students, External, Public
Dissemination and implementation plan	This Student Attendance and Engagement Policy is an externally facing public statement and is published on NHAM's website. Academic and Student Services staff will receive training in how to apply this policy and its procedures. They will also be directed to where it is published. The Academy Manager will be responsible for the dissemination of the policy and procedures to academic and support staff through the Education Committee and for monitoring student engagement and attendance at NHAM. Students will be made aware of this policy and its implementation in the Student Handbook and at induction.
Linked Policies, Procedures and Forms	Student Handbook, Student Disciplinary(Policy), Extenuating Circumstances(Policy), Deferral of Assessment(Policy), Adjustments Needed, Disability Disclosure(Policy), Assessment(Policy).
Date approved	Pending approval

1 Introduction

The Notting Hill Academy of Music (NHAM) is committed to fostering an environment in which students can engage fully with their learning and achieve their potential. High engagement measured through both attendance and active participation, is positively linked to student success.

This policy:

- Sets expectations for engagement and attendance across all programmes.
- Outlines support mechanisms for students whose engagement falls below acceptable levels.
- Ensures compliance with OfS, UK Quality Code, and contractual obligations with validating partners.
- Recognises that poor attendance can be an early indicator of welfare concerns, requiring a supportive response.

NHAM will always aim to work with students to remove barriers to engagement before considering withdrawal.

2 Definitions of Engagement

Attendance is one measurable indicator of engagement but is not the only one. Engagement may include:

- Attending scheduled teaching sessions (in-person or online).
- Submitting formative and summative assessments.
- Accessing the student portal and learning resources.
- Attending tutorials, supervisions, or support service appointments.
- Participating in compulsory programme activities (workshops, rehearsals, placements).

The specific engagement requirements for each programme will be published in programme handbooks.

3 Attendance Standards

- Students are expected to attend all timetabled activities and to tell NHAM promptly about any absence.
- Attendance below 85% prompts a support review. Below 70% prompts a formal support meeting. Review every four teaching weeks, alongside assessment and communication.
- A withdrawal decision follows section 7 and carries the right of appeal in section 8.

4 Responsibilities

- Students must attend and engage with their programme and inform the Academy promptly of any barriers.
- Staff must record attendance accurately and take early action when concerns arise.
- Programme Leaders must monitor engagement, ensure interventions are timely, and liaise with support services.
- The Academy must accurately report engagement to validating partners, OfS, and the Student Loans Company, where relevant.

5 Authorised and Self-certified Absence

- Self-certify short illness for up to five consecutive working days.
- Beyond this, absences must be authorised and supported by evidence (medical or other).
- Patterns of repeated self-certification will be reviewed.
- Examples of authorised absence include: medical appointments, bereavement, significant travel disruption.
- Holidays during term time are not authorised.

6 Sickness

- Sickness up to five working days may be self-certified.
- For longer illness, discuss evidence and support with Student Services.
  professional.
- Long-term illness (over 30 days) may require interruption of studies.

7 Engagement Monitoring Process

The process is support-focused and operates in three escalating stages:

Stage 1 – First Support Meeting

- Trigger: a pattern of missed teaching, assessments or other signs of non-engagement.
- Meet the student to identify barriers and agree a support plan.
- May result in referral to support services or voluntary interruption.

Stage 2 – Final Support Meeting

- Trigger: continued low engagement after Stage 1.
- Meeting with Programme Leader or senior academic.
- Send a final written warning giving at least 14 days before withdrawal.

Stage 3 – Potential Withdrawal

- Trigger: continued non-engagement after Stage 2.
- Programme Leader compiles engagement profile (attendance, assessment submission, learning platform activity).
- Review support and adjustments, then confirm authority with BIMM before a final decision.
- Give the student written reasons, the effective date and the appeal route.

8 Appeals

Students may appeal a withdrawal decision if:

- There was a material procedural error.
- New, valid extenuating circumstances have come to light.

Submit an appeal within 14 calendar days. An independent NHAM reviewer considers the grounds and confirms any BIMM review under the Operations Handbook. The outcome explains the final review and OIA route.

9 Review and Monitoring

- The Chief Executive oversees compliance with this policy.
- Attendance data is reviewed at programme and Education Committee level.
- Review this policy annually and after changes to BIMM procedures.

10 Applying the policy locally

Attendance percentages are NHAM review indicators, agreed and communicated locally. They do not determine withdrawal by themselves and do not represent an OfS attendance threshold. Assess missed learning, assessment, contact, authorised absence, reasonable adjustments and individual circumstances together. A support meeting may be needed at any level of attendance.

The Academy Manager maintains the engagement record and checks missing or incorrect registers with teaching staff. Students can ask for an error to be corrected. Programme Leaders review cases every four teaching weeks and identify students needing earlier contact. Record what the student says, the support offered, actions, responsible staff and a review date.

Students should report an absence through the official NHAM route explained at induction, normally before their first session. Short illness may be self-certified for up to five consecutive working days. Beyond that, seek proportionate evidence and discuss support. Reporting absence does not itself extend an assessment deadline.

Review repeated illness with the student. Refer for reasonable adjustments, mitigation or Fitness to Study according to the circumstances. Contact with a support service is separate from evidence of academic engagement. No student is penalised for using support or requesting an adjustment.

11 Decisions and records

Before withdrawal, make reasonable attempts to contact the student using their current NHAM and personal email addresses and any agreed accessible route. A final warning must specify the concern, support available, required response and a deadline at least 14 calendar days away. Consider a justified extension or alternative response format.

An authorised, unconflicted senior NHAM decision-maker reviews the evidence and any representations. Confirm the allocation of authority with BIMM through the Partner Operations Handbook before implementing a change of registration. Record a single effective date and the reasons. Student Services reconciles the NHAM and BIMM records and arranges any required funding notification through the responsible organisation.

The written outcome states what changes, why, the effective date, financial or assessment implications that can be confirmed, and how to appeal within 14 calendar days. Arrange an independent reviewer. The outcome explains any further BIMM review and who issues the Completion of Procedures letter. An eligible OIA complaint must normally reach the OIA within 12 months of that letter.

The Governance and Education Committees receive de-identified trends and monitor whether support works, including differences between student groups. Restrict individual welfare evidence to those needing it. Keep records under the retention schedule and preserve relevant records during a live complaint, appeal or investigation.