

School of Physics and Astronomy Attendance Policy

1. This paper details a revised attendance policy for undergraduate students in the School of Physics and Astronomy, to take effect from September 2013.
2. Evidence indicates that there is a strong correlation between attendance at lectures and other module components, and exam outcomes. The School wishes to maintain an attendance policy that clearly indicates expected levels of commitment by students to their work, whilst at the same time having sufficient flexibility so as not to impose unreasonable constraints. Externally imposed regulations on the College now also require Schools to deregister students that are not attending modules.
3. The policy is that First, Second and Third Year Undergraduate students are required to attend at least 70% of all lectures, seminars, laboratory sessions, exercise classes, project meetings, tutorials and other forms of teaching developed by the Module Organiser. Attendance will be monitored through the use of registers.

Performance in assessments will be monitored and students that fail to achieve above the pass rate of 40% for two or more assessments in a particular module will be contacted. For modules that include a Mid-term examination, students that achieve below 40% will also be contacted (see 9. below). Attendance and Assessment conditions will be measured over rolling periods of at least two and at most three weeks.

4. A student who falls below these levels will be sent a warning email alerting them to this, asking them to talk to the Student Support Officer to discuss the affected modules and raise any problems that they might be having that may be affecting their work. The email will also notify them that continued unexplained absences or failure to submit assessments is in violation of the policy and there is risk of deregistration from the module. In these cases, the student will be expected to rapidly attain the minimum levels of attendance and failure to continue to meet these levels will risk deregistration from the module by applying the Queen Mary deregistration procedures. Excused absences (see 6. below) will be excluded from the considerations of this and the previous paragraph 3.

The email will state that students should respond to arrange a meeting within five working days. Students that do not respond within the allotted time or meet with the Student Support Officer will be contacted again via email.

5. Discretion will be used in the application of the policy for students who are near the borderlines of the attendance requirements. This will apply in cases where the overall attendance of the student is good and where there is clear evidence that the student does not appear to be at risk of failing the module. This evidence would be expected to include having attained good results in assessments for the module at that point and having a good prior academic record. There will be less room for discretion in the first year than in subsequent years.

6. Excused absences: If a student knows they will not be able to attend for a specified session they must use the on-line notification system. If a student is unable to attend on the day for unanticipated reasons (such as illness or a family emergency) they should contact the School Administration Office as soon as possible. The absence will then be recorded and the Module Organiser notified. Students may have up to 5 excused absences per module, per semester, unless it has been agreed previously with their Academic Advisor. Any further absences will be seen as non-attendance and procedures in place will take effect (see 3. above). If a student gives a reason for absence that the Module Organiser considers to be unacceptable, it will be reported to the Deregistration Committee (comprising the Head of School, Director of Taught Programmes and Senior Tutor, also taking advice from the School Manager and Student Support Officer as needed). If this Committee considers the reason to be unacceptable the absence/s will be registered as unexplained.
7. Students who have a significant number of unexplained absences in a semester may be advised to interrupt their studies.
8. Students that fail to submit assessments may provide the School Administration Office with an Extenuating Circumstances Claim Form if they have a valid reason for non-submission. If accepted by the Chair of Extenuating Circumstances, the non-submission will be excluded from the considerations as mentioned in paragraph 3. Failure to submit assessment includes non-attendance at Mid-term examinations.
9. The Deregistration Committee will meet at least every two weeks and will consider the cases of all students who appear to be in violation of the attendance policy.
10. The School will send out written warnings for final deregistration in accordance with the Queen Mary academic regulations. Students will be sent a warning letter to their home address (as listed on MySiS) using a standard School template. The warning letter will be kept in their student file and copied to the Module Organiser, Academic Advisor and Senior Tutor.
11. Once the Deregistration Committee has agreed to deregister a student in accordance with Queen Mary regulations the Senior Tutor will send all the documentation to the Registry. The School will provide a form to facilitate this process. Any student who has been deregistered from a module will be required to meet with the Senior Tutor to discuss their programme of studies. Students will have the right of appeal against deregistration through the College Appeal Regulations.