

London South Bank University

Sickness and Absence Policy for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Tier 4 Students 2018/19

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. London South Bank University (“LSBU”) holds a Tier 4 licence. The licence allows LSBU to sponsor certain students to enable them to apply for a visa under Tier 4 General of the points-based system.
- 1.2. LSBU takes its status as a Tier 4 sponsor very seriously. As a Tier 4 licence holder, LSBU must demonstrate the highest level of compliance with sponsor duties which can be found in the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators>
- 1.3. The Tier 4 regulations specify that the University must withdraw sponsorship of students who miss 10 consecutive expected contact points.

2. Scope

This policy applies to undergraduate and postgraduate taught students who are currently sponsored by LSBU under Tier 4 General. It also applies to students who are off campus, undertaking work placements or shadowing during term-time.

3. Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this policy sits with:

- Deputy Director of Student Support and Employability and Head of Student Administration
- Immigration and International Student Advice Manager

Day-to-day oversight of the policy and process sits with the Tier 4 Attendance Monitoring team.

4. Attendance monitoring procedure for Tier 4 students at LSBU

- 4.1. The Tier 4 regulations specify that the University must withdraw sponsorship of students who miss 10 consecutive expected contact points. The University defines these contact points as working days (i.e. Monday to Friday). Therefore, the University reserves the right to withdraw you if you have not attended for 2 weeks (or 10 consecutive working days), regardless of whether you have classes on all those days.
- 4.2. It is vital that you keep the University informed about any sickness or absence. Please read this policy carefully to avoid being deemed withdrawn for non-attendance. We are required to inform the Home Office when students are withdrawn or interrupt their studies – this may result in the curtailment of your visa.
- 4.3. The attendance monitoring procedure for Tier 4 students at LSBU is as follows:
 - You will receive an email from the Tier 4 Attendance Monitoring team after you have missed one week of classes.
 - You will receive a second email from the Tier 4 Attendance Monitoring team after you have missed two weeks of classes.
 - Your case will be reviewed after the second email has been sent and a decision will be made on whether you are deemed to have withdrawn. In exceptional circumstances, we may decide not to withdraw you if we can see evidence that you have missed fewer than ten consecutive lectures, lessons, tutorials or seminars during the two week period.

5. Appealing a ‘deemed withdrawn’ decision

- 5.1. If you do not agree with the decision, you will have the option to appeal.

- 5.2. Details of how to appeal will be given in your 'Deemed Withdrawn' letter – you will need to write to The Head of Registry within 2 weeks of receiving the letter.
- 5.3. You should state the reasons for your lack of attendance, why you were not able to contact the University to explain your absence, and submit any evidence you can to support the issue(s) you have raised.

6. Notifying Sickness & Absence

- 6.1. You should contact us to ensure that the University is aware if you plan to be absent **for any reason** from any scheduled sessions of your course. You can do this by e-mailing the Tier 4 Attendance Monitoring team: attendancemonitoring-tier4@lsbu.ac.uk
- 6.2. If you are absent from your course due to sickness or any other reasons then you should:
 - contact us (attendancemonitoring-tier4@lsbu.ac.uk) as soon as you know you will be absent on the first day of your absence;
 - obtain a letter from your UK NHS doctor confirming your sickness for absence of longer than one week to be submitted to the University. Please note, we will not be able to accept letters confirming sickness from alternative medicine providers; or
 - obtain any other evidence which shows reasons for absence.
- 6.3. Students who are absent from their placements due to sickness, should contact their placement provider **and** the University to make them aware.
- 6.4. You may need to interrupt your studies if you are to be absent for a period of 2 weeks or more. This is because you will have missed 10 consecutive expected contact points (i.e. 10 consecutive working days). If you do not interrupt your studies, you may have deemed yourself withdrawn or you may be forced to interrupt as permitted by paragraph 1.38 of the LSBU Academic Regulations 2016/17.
- 6.5. You may also wish to discuss your situation or interruption with the Immigration and International Student Advice team to find out how your absence may affect your Tier 4 General visa: <https://my.lsbu.ac.uk/my/applicant/Current-Applicants/International-students/Advice>
- 6.6. You may also wish to seek advice from:
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing team: <https://my.lsbu.ac.uk/my/applicant/Current-Applicants/Student-Support/Mental-Health-and-Wellbeing>
 - LSBU Students Union: <http://www.lsbu.org/welfare/>

7. Exceptions

- 7.1. In exceptional circumstances, which could include serious illness or disability, pregnancy/childbirth, or death of close family (spouse/partner, children, or parents), and with the authorisation of the Dean or Director of Education and Student Experience (DESE) of your School, we may be able to allow absence of more than 2 weeks.
- 7.2. The circumstances of each case will be considered individually and will be referred as appropriate by the Tier 4 Attendance Monitoring team. Please note, an accepted claim for Extenuating Circumstances **does not mean** your absence is authorised.

8. Important points

- 8.1. The University will not authorise your absence, even if you have notified us. It will be recorded as a 'notified absence' and the attendance monitoring process given in point 1 above will still apply. You are therefore expected to be back in attendance without missing 2 weeks of classes.
- 8.2. It is helpful to discuss your absence with academic and other administrative staff – however, they are **not permitted** to authorise any absence. You must still ensure that you inform the Tier 4 Attendance Monitoring team.

8.3. This policy also applies to students who are off campus, undertaking work placements or shadowing during term-time. Students who are absent from their placements due to sickness, should contact their placement provider **and** the University to make them aware.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains compliant with the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance and Immigration Rules which are subject to change by the Home Office. The current version of this policy supersedes any previous versions.

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