



Absent and Missing Students Policy

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Policy Owner: Director of Student Services

Department: Student Services

Version	Effective From	Amendments	Equality Analysis	Stakeholders Consulted	Approval Date	Author	Date for Review
V1.0	01/09/2023	<p>Updated in line with best practice around information sharing and escalation procedures clarified to reflect current practice.</p> <p>Updated department names, role titles. Changed Next of Kin to 'trusted contact'.</p> <p>Cross referenced with Engagement and Attendance Policy.</p> <p>Inclusion of missing students to be reported via the Head of Student Wellbeing, Student Engagement & Retention and Head of (School) Department.</p>	20/09/2023	Policy Review Group Student Services Disability & Dyslexia Team Student Engagement & Retention Centre Wellbeing Team EEC & Academic Board Members	20/09/2023	Lydia Pell, Interim Deputy Director of Student Services	21/10/2024

This Policy is reviewed by [Education & Experience Committee](#) and approved by [Academic Board](#)



1 Purpose and Scope of the Policy

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The university accepts it has a responsibility to have due regard to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of students. It aims to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment in which students can study and sometimes reside. This support includes taking necessary actions, where appropriate, to address any cause for concern regarding the absence of individuals.

1.1.2 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define how the University ascertains whether a student is missing or absent and if so, what action should be taken.
- Set out administrative responsibilities in the event of an absent or missing student;
- Ensure that the response to such an event is appropriate, timely and effective;
- Ensure that the University communicates effectively with the family and all public authorities involved in the incident
- Ensure that the University acts in a supportive way to all involved.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This policy and procedure will apply only to students enrolled and studying on the University of East London premises.

1.2.2 Collaborative partners will require their own local policies and procedures.

1.2.3 This policy does not address the University's response to emergencies which is dealt with under the Incident Management procedures.



2 Policy Statement

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1.1 Student responsibilities: All students should be aware that they are expected to comply with university attendance requirements outlined in the [Engagement and Attendance Policy](#). Students are expected to attend all taught sessions and engage in all activities that are scheduled as necessary to achieve the learning outcomes of your programme, as outlined in programme and module handbooks. Students whose attendance falls below expected levels will be followed up routinely as outlined in the Engagement and Attendance policy.
- 2.1.2 Staff attendance monitoring responsibilities: Academic Advisors, Module Leaders and Residences staff should play an active role in monitoring the attendance and wellbeing of specific students allocated to their caseload and should report any concerns to their line manager and Student Support without delay. Student attendance is monitored by the Student Retention and Engagement Team and staff should liaise with the team as necessary.

2.2 Responding to reports of an absent or missing Student

- 2.2.1 The University is committed to responding to reports of an absent or missing student in a dutiful and respectful manner.
- 2.2.2 The University will be guided by the following principles when responding to such incidents:
- The University will act in a timely and sensitive manner to the report of an absent or missing student. It will analyse any attendance records, contact with Schools, and relevant student support teams, to gather information about previous engagement and academic progression. Where appropriate, other sources of information will also be sought.
 - Student Services will take the lead on establishing the level of risk posed to ensure that decisions around 'missing', and 'absent' students are soundly based on risk.



- The University will seek to collaborate and cooperate with external agencies to facilitate any investigations or administrative activities related to the reporting of a missing or absent student and seek to establish a decision on a reasonable response with them.
- Care will be extended to those closely involved with the student, including the named trusted contacts, family, friends or staff members that may have raised the enquiry, as appropriate.
- The University will act discretely when dealing with information relating to the student and the incident and will abide by the limitations of the Data Protection Act (2018) at all times. Any public statements made for or on behalf of the University will only be released after they have been checked for accuracy and approved by a senior member of the Communications Team Communications Office. Any staff involved in responding to the incident will use discretion at all times.

3 Links to other Institutional Policies and Procedures

3.1 Internal Policies

This Policy/Regulation relates to the following institutional regulations, policies or procedures:

[Student Engagement and Attendance Policy](#)

[Safeguarding Policy](#)

Student Death Policy

Incident Management Procedures

3.2 Exemptions and Professional Bodies

There are no exemptions to this policy.



4 Definitions

- 4.1.1 The University will use the most recent definition(s) of 'absent person' and 'missing person' as proposed by the Association of Chief Police Officers of the United Kingdom (March 2015) to update their Authorised Professional Practice (APP) and following the Interim Guidance on the Management, Recording and Investigation of Missing Persons (2013).
- 4.1.2 This is to ensure that decisions around 'absent' and 'missing' are soundly based on risk and that the rationale for those decisions is suitably documented.
- 4.1.3 The definitions below have been adopted for the purpose of this policy:
- Absent – “A person not at a place where they are expected or required to be and there is no apparent risk.”
 - Missing - “Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.”