Code of Practice on Monitoring Student Attendance

Code of Practice number	LT COP 05
Version:	2.0
Superseded Version:	1.2
Date approved by Management Committee	V 1.0 approved 29.07.15
Originator	Academic Registrar
Date for Review:	July 2018

Target Audience	
People who need a detailed knowledge of the Code of Practice	LSTM students on Tier 4 visas; Academic Registrar; Registry Manager; Programme Administrators
People who need a broad understanding of the Code of Practice	All academic staff; Staff in the Education Department
People who need to know that the Code of Practice exists	Director of Human Resources

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1 Introduction and Context

1.1 The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) is a licensed Tier 4 sponsor of overseas students and is committed to implementing full and robust processes to ensure compliance with the terms of the licence. LSTM has a statutory responsibility to monitor the expected contacts of its students holding Tier 4 (General) visas and to report to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) any failure in maintaining these.

1.2 To ensure equity of treatment across the student body, LSTM addresses its responsibilities by a system of attendance monitoring for all postgraduate research students and for all students on taught programmes of greater than six months in duration. As well as meeting the requirements of UKVI, this system facilitates the identification of students who may be experiencing difficulties with their studies and need particular support.

1.3 This Code of Practice is set within the context of the statutory and legislative requirements imposed on education providers by the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. It will be updated if there are significant changes in responsibilities under the Act as reflected in current information held at:

https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/overview

1.4 Related documents:

- LSTM Student Charter
- Code of Practice on Student Engagement and Enhancing the Student Experience
- Procedure for consideration of extenuating circumstances

2 Scope

2.1 This Code of Practice applies to all students studying on LSTM programmes longer than six months in duration. Reporting duties will apply only to those students who have entered the UK on a Tier 4 (General) visa. Students undertaking study of less than six months or research students based off-site can enter the UK on a Short Term Study visa, which does not carry any reporting requirements.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that LSTM fulfils the reporting requirements of UKVI.

3.2 The Registry Manager will:

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      3.2.1   Act as the first point of contact for staff and students for advice and guidance relating to Tier 4 (General) visa regulations

      3.2.2   Ensure that the original immigration documents of all students are verified at registration and that photocopies are kept on file, including passport, visa and Biometric Residence Permit and Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate (if applicable).

3.3   The Programme Administrators will:

      3.3.1   Inform the Academic Registrar of any students who have failed to register within the prescribed enrolment period

      3.3.2   Produce registers, maintain records of unauthorised absences and inform the Academic Registrar and Director of Studies as appropriate

      3.3.3   Ensure that LSTM holds correct contact details for all students registered on the programme

4   Failure to Register within the Prescribed Enrolment Period

4.1   The 'prescribed enrolment period' refers to the period during which students are permitted to register for their programme and will be stated in the student's Confirmation of Place letter. Once the prescribed enrolment period has lapsed, the Academic Registrar will report to UKVI, within 10 working days, any student who has been refused entry clearance or leave to remain, or where leave has been granted but the student has failed to enrol.

4.2   The prescribed enrolment period for taught Master's programmes will extend until two weeks after the date of registration. For research programmes, the prescribed enrolment period will extend until one calendar month after the date of registration.

4.3   Research students who are unable to register within the prescribed enrolment period due to reasons beyond their control (e.g. delay in the visa application process) can, with approval from their supervisor, defer their registration. Cases will be dealt with on an individual basis and where possible the student will be expected to provide supporting evidence.

5   Monitoring Expected Contacts

5.1   UKVI policy dictates that educational institutions must report students when they have missed ten expected contacts for their programme of study. The contacts that will be monitored for students on taught Master's and research programmes are given in Appendix 1.

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5.2   Students on Tier 4 visas must declare their intentions with respect to returning to the UK after completion of dissertation field work. The Academic Registrar will report to UKVI those students who declare that they are not intending to return to the UK and LSTM will cease to act as their Tier 4 sponsor.

6   Recording and Investigating Absences

6.1   If a student misses an expected contact due to good cause (e.g. illness), this absence will be classed as "authorised" and not as a missed contact.

6.2   A student on a taught programme who knows in advance that an expected contact will be missed must submit a *Request for Authorised Absence*. The form can be completed retrospectively at the discretion of the Director of Studies or Module Convenor provided it is received no later than two weeks after the last missed contact.

6.3   If a student accrues five unauthorised absences on consecutive working days, formal attempts will be made to contact the student and these will be documented on the student's file. Normal reporting arrangements will apply unless contact with the student establishes good cause for the absences.

6.4   The following shall apply in the case of student absence through illness:

6.4.1   A student can self-certify an absence for up to five consecutive working days by submitting a *Certificate of Illness* within two weeks of the last absence

6.4.2   Illness-related absences of more than five consecutive days must be certified by a medical practitioner

6.4.3   If illness results in absence from an examination or failure to submit an assessment, the student should follow the *LSTM Procedure for consideration of extenuating circumstances*

6.5   The supervisor of a research student should report to the Research Degrees Administrator when there has been no contact with the student within any 2 month period (unless absence has been authorised for fieldwork, illness, etc.), or where there is a pattern of absences that is affecting the student's work and/or causing concerns for the student's well-being.

7   Early Completion of Programme

7.1   Regulations for early completion apply for any student who completes their course (as stated in the "course title" field of their CAS) earlier than the course end date (as stated in the "course end date" of their CAS).

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7.2   LSTM must report to UKVI any student who completes their course earlier than expected (this normally applies only to Postgraduate Research Students).

7.3   Once an award is confirmed, any Postgraduate Research Student who has more than four months' leave remaining on their visa will be reported to UKVI. The student will be warned that their leave will be curtailed.

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7.4 **APPENDIX 1**

A. Contacts monitored for taught Master's programmes

Contact	Mechanism for monitoring
Attendance at timetabled teaching session (e.g. lectures, laboratory practicals)	The Academic Registry will generate weekly class registers for disseminating to teaching staff. Teaching staff will be responsible for ensuring that registers are taken at the first teaching session of the day and that completed registers are returned to the Academic Registry for review. Students will not be permitted to sign a register retrospectively.
Formal assessment that requires a student to be physically present (e.g. written examination)	A list of students who are expected to undertake the assessment will be produced by the relevant Programme Administrator. This will be checked against the students who actually attend the assessment. The Programme Administrator will review the list for any unauthorised absences.
Meetings with personal tutor	Students are expected to attend three meetings with their personal tutor during the programme. These meetings will be documented and records reviewed by the Student Experience Officer.
Progress meetings with dissertation supervisor	Students are expected to keep in regular contact with their supervisor, either by telephone, email, skype or in person. Supervisors are expected to alert the Registry Manager if there has been no contact.

B. Contacts monitored for research programmes

Contact	Timescale	Mechanism for monitoring
Registration	Once only on start date	Registration and arrival on campus will be recorded in the Student Information System
LSTM Induction Event	Once only	Attendance will be monitored by the Research Degrees Administrator and recorded on the PGR student database
Project Plan Document	Once only within 3 months of registration	Attendance will be monitored by the Research Degrees Administrator and recorded on the PGR student database
LSTM Symposium	Annual in April/May	Attendance will be monitored by the Research Degrees Administrator and recorded on the PGR student database
Personal Development Record (PDR)	12 meetings per year with supervisor	Students must record a minimum of twelve formal meetings with their supervisor per academic year. Progress will be reviewed quarterly by the Research Degrees Administrator
Annual Progress Review (APR) and update of personal details	Annual in June	Interactive monitoring tool to record annual progress by the student, which is reviewed by supervisors and LSTM Director of Postgraduate Research
Progress Assessment Panel	Annual	Pro forma completed by Panel, held in the student file.
Intention to Submit	Once only	Students must declare their intention to submit a thesis at least 2 months prior to the hand-in date. Completion is monitored by the Research Degrees Administrator and recorded on the PGR student database
Submission of dissertation	Maximum of four years from initial registration (full-time)	Any student who has not submitted by final deadline date will be reported to UKVI after appropriate investigation
Payment of fees	Annual	If a student does not pay fees, sanctions will be put in place that may result in the student being financially suspended

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Annex of Modifications		
Version	**Date of issue**	**Details of modification from previous version**
1.1	30.01.15	Minor edits following review by Management Committee 29.07.14
1.2	2.10.15	Removal of reference to "Highly Trusted Sponsor" and addition of Section 7.0
2.0		Minor changes to terminology – Student Visitor Visa now Short Term Study Visa, mitigating circumstances now extenuating circumstances.

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