

# Code of Practice on Monitoring Student Attendance

<b>Code of Practice number:</b>	LT COP 05
<b>Version:</b>	3.1
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<b>Date approved by Learning and Teaching Committee:</b>	V 1.0 approved 29.07.15 V 3.1 approved 14.11.22
<b>Originator:</b>	Academic Registrar
<b>Date for Review:</b>	14.11.23

<b>Target Audience</b>	
People who need a detailed knowledge of the Code of Practice	LSTM students on Tier 4 visas; Dean of Education; Academic Registrar; Admissions & Recruitment Manager; PGR Administrators; Registry Team; Admissions Officers
People who need a broad understanding of the Code of Practice	Academic staff; Staff in the Faculty of Education
People who need to know that the Code of Practice exists	Director of Human Resources

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## 1 Introduction and Context

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- 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>

Related documents:

- LSTM Student Charter
- Code of Practice on Admissions
- Code of Practice on Student Engagement and Enhancing the Student Experience
- Code of Practice on Hosting of Visiting Students
- Procedure for consideration of extenuating circumstances
- Procedure for Monitoring the Academic Progress of Postgraduate Research Students
- Procedure for Requesting an Extension, Withdrawal or Suspension of Studies for Postgraduate Research Students
- Procedure for Supervision of Postgraduate Research Students
- Procedure for Monitoring Attendance & Sickness Absence (Taught Programmes)

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## 2 Scope

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- 2.1 This Code of Practice applies to all postgraduate taught and postgraduate research 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.

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### 3 Roles and Responsibilities

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- 3.1 The responsibilities associated with LSTM's Tier 4 sponsor licence are devolved across the Education team.
- 3.2 For applicants to a postgraduate taught programme, the Admissions and Recruitment Manager is responsible for ensuring that LSTM fulfils the reporting requirements pre-Registration and including during the prescribed enrolment period. The Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that LSTM fulfils the reporting requirements for Registered postgraduate students.

The Admissions team will:

- 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). Further details can be found in the Code of Practice on Admissions
- 3.2.3 Report any students who have failed to register within the prescribed enrolment period to UKVI using the Sponsor Management System (SMS)

The Registry team will:

- 3.2.4 Produce registers, maintain records of unauthorised absences and inform the Academic Registrar and Director of Studies as appropriate
- 3.2.5 Ensure that LSTM holds correct contact details for all students registered on the programme
- 3.2.6 Report any student who meets the reporting criteria set out in section 5 and 6 of this document to UKVI via the SMS.
- 3.3 For applicants to a postgraduate research programme and registered students on a postgraduate research programme, the Early Career Researcher Support team will:
- 3.3.1 Act as the first point of contact for staff and students for advice and guidance relating to Tier 4 (General) visa regulations
- 3.3.2 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).

- 3.3.3 Report any students who have failed to register within the prescribed enrolment period to UKVI using the Sponsor Management System (SMS)
- 3.3.4 Maintain and monitor supervisory meeting record system for registered students and inform the Director of Academic Development and Director of Postgraduate Research as appropriate
- 3.3.5 Advise on implications of suspension or extension of studies in relation to Tier 4 (General) sponsorship for registered students. Manage record of annual leave and unauthorised absence.
- 3.3.6 Ensure that LSTM holds correct contact details for all students registered on the programme
- 3.3.7 Report any student who meets the reporting criteria set out in section 5 and 6 of this document to UKVI via the SMS.

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## **4 Failure to Register within the Prescribed Enrolment Period**

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- 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 Admissions and Recruitment Manager 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 both research and taught programmes will extend until two weeks after the date of registration. In exceptional circumstances, LSTM may consider a further extension of this enrolment period.
- 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.
- 4.4 Initial registration for both postgraduate research and taught courses at LSTM is the first formal student interaction recorded for Tier 4 monitoring purposes. Section 5 provides more information regarding expected contacts.
- 4.5 Registration at LSTM requires all students to formally register their personal and academic details on the student record system (and in doing so agree to abide by all LSTM policies, regulations and procedures as outlined in the student handbook), to confirm their arrival at LSTM, and to provide original immigration and qualification

documentation that satisfies the requirements of paragraph 4.4 of the Code of Practice on Admissions. Students will not be considered fully registered until all of these steps have been completed.

- 4.6 In cases where an expected international student entrant arrives at LSTM for registration but fails to provide all original immigration and qualification documentation that satisfies the requirements of 4.5 of this Code of Practice and 4.4 of the Code of Practice on Admissions by the end of the prescribed enrolment period, the Academic Registrar or Early Career Researcher Support team will undertake all reasonable steps to contact the student and request the documentation within a reasonable timeframe.
- 4.7 Following the end of the prescribed enrolment period, LSTM reserves the right to restrict access to LSTM facilities and services until such time as the student provides the required immigration and qualification documentation to satisfy LSTM Tier 4 compliance responsibilities.
- 4.8 In the event that an international student does not provide all of the required documentation, and where reasonable steps have been taken by LSTM to gather this documentation, LSTM reserves the right to de-register a student from their programme of study in order to protect its Tier 4 sponsor licence. In such cases, LSTM will withdraw the existing CAS and therefore its sponsorship of that student and the student would most likely be required to leave the UK.

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## 5 Monitoring Expected Contacts

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- 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.
- 5.2 Postgraduate taught 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.
- 5.3 Unless otherwise declared, LSTM will assume that postgraduate research students on Tier 4 visas undertaking field work outside of the UK during the course of their studies will return to LSTM prior to submission of their thesis.
- 5.4 LSTM will report to UKVI the following changes to a Tier 4 students' registration status:
- 5.4.1 The discovery of fraudulent information or documents submitted to support an application for postgraduate study during the lifetime of a CAS assigned by LSTM
  - 5.4.2 Voluntary withdrawal from a programme of study

- 5.4.3 Termination of students' studies following unsatisfactory academic progress (including following the completion of appeal procedures, or lapse of time permitted for appeal)
  - 5.4.4 Withdrawal from a programme due to failure to attend or engage with studies (following completion of appeal procedures, or lapse of time permitted for appeal)
  - 5.4.5 Termination of studies following a serious breach of academic misconduct
  - 5.4.6 Voluntary suspension of study
  - 5.4.7 Termination of study as a result of a failure to pay outstanding tuition fees
  - 5.4.8 Failure to register (see section 4)
  - 5.4.9 Early completion of the programme. Once an award is confirmed, any Postgraduate 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.
  - 5.4.10 Failure to return from a period spent overseas as part of an MSc dissertation project.
- 5.5 In all circumstances above, the change in registration status will be reported to UKVI via the SMS. In all circumstances LSTM will withdraw its current sponsorship of the student and the student may be required to leave the UK.
- 5.6 The Academic Registrar will normally report to UKVI a transfer into another programme of study.
- 5.7 The Academic Registrar will notify UKVI of any MSc students who entered the UK on a Tier 4 visa and travel overseas to undertake research as part of a dissertation project.

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## **6 Recording and Investigating Absences**

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- 6.1 All postgraduate taught students are expected to maintain a minimum level of 80% of course contact hours.
- 6.2 If any 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.
- 6.3 A student on a postgraduate taught programme who knows in advance that an expected contact will be missed must submit a *Request for Authorised Absence*.
- 6.4 If a student on a postgraduate taught programme 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. If a further five expected contacts are missed, and in order to protect LSTM's Tier 4 sponsor licence, the

Academic Registrar will report the student to UKVI via the SMS and withdraw sponsorship unless contact with the student establishes good cause for the absences.

- 6.5 The supervisor(s) of a postgraduate research student should report to the Early Career Researcher Support team when there has been no contact with the student within any 2 month period (unless absence has been authorised for 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.
- 6.6 LSTM may also consider failure of a postgraduate research student to engage with Annual Progress Monitoring requirements as absence.

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## **7 Early Completion of Programme**

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- 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).
- 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.



## 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.
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 Academic Registrar 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 Early Career Researcher Support team and recorded on the PGR student database
Project Plan and Document	Once only within 3 months of registration	Completion will be monitored by the Early Career Researcher Support team and recorded on the PGR student database
Training and Development Activities	According to training need	Student will identify training needs upon registration and annually. Student will attend training sessions facilitated by LSTM according to identified needs. Attendance will be monitored by the Early Career Researcher Support team.
LSTM Symposium	Annual in April/May/June	Participation will be monitored by the Early Career Researcher Support team and recorded on the PGR student database
Supervisory Meeting Record	Once every month/every two months	Students should meet regularly with their supervisor(s) and record at least one formal meeting per month (full-time) or per two months (part-time). Progress will be reviewed each month by the Early Career Researcher Support Team and assessed as part of Annual Progress Monitoring.
Annual Progress Monitoring (APR) and update of personal details	9 months following initial registration and annually	Student will meet with independent Progress Assessment Panel (PAP) and present portfolio of work to evidence progress. Student, primary supervisor, PAP, and Director of Postgraduate Research will complete interactive monitoring tool to record and review annual progress.
Intention to Submit	Once only	Students must declare their intention to submit a thesis at least 3 months prior to the submission date. Completion is monitored by the Early Career Researcher Support team and recorded on the PGR student database
Submission of thesis	Maximum of four years from initial registration (full-time) or	Any student who has not submitted by final deadline date will be reported to UKVI after appropriate investigation

	six years (part-time)	
Participation in Viva Voce examination	Once only following submission of thesis	Student will defend research to panel of internal and external examiners. Outcome of examination will be communicated to Early Career Researcher Support team by examiners within two weeks of examination.
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

<b>Annex of Modifications</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date of issue</b>	<b>Details of modification from previous version</b>
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.
3.0	11.4.19	Additional related documents added to 1.4
		Clarification to sections 1.6 and 1.7 following staffing restructure and distribution of responsibilities and including some additions to section 1.7
		Additions in 1.8 to include Early Career Researcher Support responsibilities
		Clarification of roles in 1.9
		Addition of extension of prescribed enrolment period in 1.10 and correction for research programmes from one month to two weeks
		Additions to expand on Tier 4 sponsor duties from 1.12-1.16
		Clarification to specify postgraduate taught students in 1.18
		Addition to include postgraduate research field work at 1.19
		Additions to expand on Tier 4 sponsor duties from 1.20-1.20.9
		Additions to Annex 1 part B
		Revised standard of student attendance for postgraduate taught added at 1.19 to maintain a level of 80% of course contact hours
		Revised standard of unauthorised absences added at 1.22, also pointing to sponsorship consequences and addition of reference to the student handbook
		Removal of section 1.23 relating to self-certification of illness

		Addition to include postgraduate research absences and annual progress monitoring at 1.26 & 1.27
3.0		Removal of personal tutor meetings as compulsory contact points for taught students.
3.0		Addition of points 5.4.10 and 5.7
3.1		Minor edits to reflect changes to Target Audience. Updated reapproval date.