**Student visa Engagement and Monitoring Policy March 25 – AY 24/25**

**Student visa Engagement and Monitoring Policy**

**Introduction**

An appropriate level of engagement from all students with their programme of study is important and has a direct impact on their success. Sufficient attendance at relevant classes is a strong indicator of engagement and is essential for international students who have a Student visa, to ensure visa compliance.

It is therefore important for the University to undertake effective and efficient monitoring of student engagement and be able to produce and analyse attendance data.

The monitoring of student engagement is a mandatory requirement of the Home Office (UKVI) for the University to maintain its Sponsor Licence as a sponsor of ‘international students’. Loss of this status and hence the ability to admit international students, would be extremely detrimental to the University and would constitute a significant financial and reputational risk.

During a UKVI audit, St Mary’s staff will need to provide evidence of a robust engagement and monitoring policy/system. The minimum expectation from UKVI is that student engagement is recorded throughout the full academic journey. As a duty of care to our students we must maintain regular contact and keep records of any interventions where any authorised and unexplained absences have occurred. We need concise, user friendly processes that evidence how we monitor engagement, progress, wellbeing, authorised absence, unexplained absence and any non-academic progression of our students.

**The Student visa Engagement and Monitoring Policy is to be used in conjunction with:**

* St Mary’s Attendance Monitoring Policy
* Personal Tutoring Policy
* Fitness to Study Policy
* Leave of Absence Policy
* Extenuating Circumstances Policy
* Withdrawal Policy
* Tuition Fee Regulations
* Fitness to practise
* Academic appeals procedure
* Academic Misconduct Policy

**1. Enrolment**

**Enrolment stages**

**EE – Eligible for enrolment**

Applicants applying for Student visas, will have been assigned a CAS number via the International Admissions team and invited via email from the Registry team to complete online enrolment tasks.

**PE – Provisionally enrolled**

Occurs when applicants have completed online enrolment tasks.

In the majority of cases from overseas and are awaiting caseworker decisions on Student visa applications. A caseworker may request a credibility interview, visa decisions can be delayed and visa applications could fall for refusal. It is not guaranteed that applicants who have completed online enrolment tasks will arrive inside the UK in-time for latest course start dates.

PE status is a holding enrolment position but until International students have arrived inside the UK and completed a face-face ‘Immigration check’ they will not be made ‘Current’ by the student visa team. Those who have not arrived inside the UK by the latest course start dates will have their enrolment status ‘withdrawn’; unless deferral of course start date has been agreed to later course start date. E.g. September – January or September – September.

Where a CAS is USED but an international student does not complete all stages of enrolment, the visa team will report non-enrolment to the Home Office, within 10 working days of the latest enrolment date.

**C – Current**

The student visa team will update a student record to ‘Current’ status once international students have arrived in the UK and completed their face-face ‘Immigration check’. The visa team will check and record immigration documents and arrival dates to ensure international students have entered the UK after their leave was granted and with the correct immigration permission.

**Immigration document checks**

During enrolment periods, regular enrolment checks take place to ensure sponsored visa students enrol on to their programmes. It is a UKVI requirement for sponsors to ensure that students who do not enrol or re-enrol within stipulated times are reported to the Home Office for the visas to be curtailed (cancelled).

All eVisa details must be checked for errors to meet the expectations of [Appendix D](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/823766/Appendix_D_07-2019.pdf) of the immigration rules. International students must open [UKVI accounts](https://www.gov.uk/get-access-evisa) and request their student [eVisa share codes](https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status) to provide to the visa team to complete enrolment.

The visa team will meet and greet all international students during the enrolment period for face-face ID checks. During enrolment and throughout the duration of studies, all students with a visa status, must have up to date immigration documentation, e.g. Passports and visa status saved against relevant student admissions/enrolment records (SITS). This is to ensure that all students have the right to study whilst they study.

Until all international students have completed their face-face ID checks, their enrolment record will remain Eligible to Enrol (EE) or Provisionally Enrolled (PE) *please see above*. Where international students do not present themselves by the latest course start dates the Student visa team will investigate absence and liaise with course leads and the Registry team to withdraw enrolment status.

Regular audits are completed by the visa team, any students who have not updated their immigration status or have not provided their immigration documents on request are at risk of withdrawal from St Mary’s University. Email reminders are automatically emailed to students via SITS for visas and passports expiring within 5 months.

Continuing students can use the [Student Portal.](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/students/links.aspx#:~:text=Moodle-,My%20Student%20Record,-Office%20365%20(Email) to upload new immigration documentation. Enrolment and re-enrolment will be recorded as the first key event for the academic year. During welcome events and identity checks, the student visa engagement requirements, employment regulations (during studies) and other visa conditions will be explained in person with the students.

#### **Failure to Enrol or Re-enrol**

A student with a USED CAS number who does not enrol within ten working days of the latest enrolment period, (this is usually two weeks after teaching has begun) will be reported to the Home Office for failing to register at St Mary’s University if there are no communications received and there are no engagement records.

Where non-enrolments are reported to the Home Office they will impact student visa enrolment rate assessments. Any visa refusals leading to non-enrolment must be recorded and investigated but they will not impact student visa enrolment rate assessments.

A continuing student will also need to re-enrol to continue with their studies at St Mary’s University. A student who does not re-enrol within 10 working days of the latest enrolment period, (this is usually two weeks after teaching has begun) will be reported to the Home Office and will impact student visa enrolment rates. Any reports for non-enrolment that are sent to UKVI will be processed and all applicable student visas will be curtailed (cancelled).

**2. UKVI Engagement and Monitoring requirements**

According to [UKVI Sponsor Guidance.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988267/Student_Sponsor_Guidance_-_Doc_2_-_Sponsorship_Duties_2021-05.pdf) (subject to change) student visa sponsors must complete strict attendance monitoring requirements for all courses. Foundation Degrees and lower level qualification have more strict attendance thresholds that must be adhered to. There are two bands of engagement as explained below:

**UKVI Band 1**

Band 1 – RQF level 5 (SCQF 8 and equivalents) and below.

Where a student has not reached 85% attendance of the minimum of 15 hours of classroom-based study in any given month, the reasons for absence must be reviewed and documented. A student’s attendance record must be annotated with the reason for non-attendance and what steps are being taken to improve this.

Where attendance falls below 70% for three consecutive months, a sponsor must withdraw sponsorship unless there are exceptional reasons for the non-attendance (for example, Illness) according to [UKVI Sponsor Guidance.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988267/Student_Sponsor_Guidance_-_Doc_2_-_Sponsorship_Duties_2021-05.pdf)

**UKVI Band 2**

Band 2 – RQF 6 (SCQF 9/10 and equivalents), RQF 7 (Taught and Research) (SCQF 11 and equivalents), and RQF8 (SCQF 12 and equivalents).

The [UKVI Sponsor Guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988267/Student_Sponsor_Guidance_-_Doc_2_-_Sponsorship_Duties_2021-05.pdf) provides academic engagement examples to be used for the purposes of monitoring. The examples below will be used throughout the full academic year to ensure we have clear visibility of progression until the end of a programme. During a UKVI audit, we must produce the Student visa Engagement and Monitoring policy on request.

The engagement tracking examples will be recorded for UKVI audit purposes.

**Student visa engagement tracking examples and how they will be applied:**

* **Course registration/enrolment/re-enrolment** – *Deadline 10 working days of latest enrolment date.*
* **Lecture/Seminar attendance** – *Band 1 and Band 2.*
* **Moodle reports** – *For tracking engagement with teaching platforms.*
* **Exam Board progression** – *Submissions and achieved grades to indicate progression or repeat/interruption processes.*
* ***Academic Misconduct***– *Will indicate academic understanding and credibility of submitted work.*
* **Outstanding fee payment status checks** ­– *Course fees must be paid by agreed deadlines. Debtors are at risk of withdrawal under fee regulations.*

**3. Management of engagement and St Mary’s University Process**

There must be a robust monitoring and engagement system in place:

* To identify non-attendance and engagement.
* To record interventions and aid retention.
* To identify any students who do not comply with attendance thresholds to report to UKVI where applicable.

**UKVI Band 1**

Band 1 – RQF level 5 (SCQF 8 and equivalents) and below.

There is a minimum attendance threshold of 85% attendance per month for students studying at Band 1. Where attendance falls below 70% for three consecutive months, compulsory UKVI visa withdrawal reporting must be completed; unless there is good reason for absence. For example: Illness.

Where below 85% attendance is found, any applicable students will be emailed reminders of the importance complying with the thresholds.

Where attendance levels are below 70%, any applicable students will be invited to attend face-face meetings where interventions are recorded. Where face-face meetings are not possible, meetings via Teams or Zoom will be required. Any visa sponsored student who does not attend St Mary’s University without good reason is at risk of withdrawal and UKVI reporting.

Any reports for withdrawal of sponsorship for non-engagement that are sent to UKVI will be processed and all applicable student visas will be curtailed (cancelled). It is at the discretion of a Course Lead and/or the UKVI Compliance and Immigration Manager as to whether or not sponsorship of a student visa can be continued.

A student who knows they will be absent for any period of time must make this known to their Course Lead, Personal tutor and/or their programme administration team. Investigations and interventions must be recorded to comply with UKVI attendance monitoring regulations.

**UKVI Band 2**

Band 2 – RQF 6 (SCQF 9/10 and equivalents), RQF 7 (Taught and Research) (SCQF 11 and equivalents), and RQF8 (SCQF 12 and equivalents).

As stated in the [Academic Regulations](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/academic-regulations.aspx#SectionBGeneralRegulationsforStudyingatStMarysUniversity), all other students at St Mary’s University are expected to attend all the University classes and School experiences, and to maintain an attendance level of at least 70%, or that dictated at programme level (whichever is the highest).

Where below 70% attendance is found any applicable students will be emailed reminders of the importance complying with the thresholds.

Where attendance levels are below 50% any applicable students will be invited to attend face-face meetings where interventions are recorded. Where face-face meetings are not possible, meetings via Teams or Zoom will be required.

Any visa sponsored student who does not attend St Mary’s University without good reason is at risk of withdrawal and UKVI reporting. Any reports for withdrawal of sponsorship for non-engagement that are sent to UKVI will be processed and all applicable student visas will be curtailed (cancelled).

It is at the discretion of a Course Lead and/or the UKVI Compliance and Immigration Manager as to whether or not sponsorship of a student visa can be continued.

A student who knows they will be absent for any period of time must make this known to their Course Lead, Personal tutor and/or their programme administration team. Investigations and interventions must be recorded to comply with UKVI attendance monitoring regulations.

**End of semester 1**

Where students visa holders are found to have 25% attendance or below, they’re visa sponsorship may be withdrawn with Course Lead approval.

**End of semester 2**

Where students visa holders are found to have 25% attendance or below, they’re visa sponsorship may be withdrawn with Course Lead approval.

**4. 60 days of non attendance (engagement)**

UKVI guidance states that where there is 60 days of no engagement, a sponsor must withdraw sponsorship. Where a student is inactive for 60 days without authorisation, they must have their visa sponsorship withdrawn.

The visa team will submit a report to the Home Office within 10 working days of the considered date. Before such reports are submitted to the Home Office any cases of non-engagement must be fully investigated.

Any visa sponsored student who fails to engage for 60 days must be invited to a face-face meeting to explain their absences (if not recorded). Where face-face meetings are not possible, meetings via Teams or Zoom will be required. Failure to attend meetings will lead to withdrawal from St Mary’s University under UKVI regulations.

Any reports for withdrawal of sponsorship for non-engagement that are sent to UKVI will be processed and all applicable student visas will be curtailed (cancelled).

**5. Change of course (all programmes)**

There are restrictions in the immigration rules that do not permit course changes. A course transfer will only occur once any visa implications have been considered by the visa team.

A student must submit their request via the [Student Portal.](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/students/links.aspx#:~:text=Moodle-,My%20Student%20Record,-Office%20365%20(Email) When submitting a request students are advised to contact the visa team before attempting to submit a course change to learn the visa implications. The visa will receive email notification via: [studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk). If there are any visa implications to consider the visa team will contact the student directly to discuss the visa implications.

If a course change is possible the visa team will submit a report to UKVI within 10 working days from the date of change.

**6. Authorised Absence letters**

Any absences during term time must be authorised by a course lead. An Authorised Absence letter request form can be found here: [Authorised Absence Request Form](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/registry/doc/authorised-absence-international-student-template.docx) and must be approved by a course lead before leaving the UK.

One Authorised Absence can be agreed per academic year and the maximum amount of time that can be agreed is 15 study days (3 weeks) during term-time.

If required, Authorised Absence only applies to:

* Pregnancy,
* Personal injury from an accident,
* Family emergency where family members are gravely ill overseas, and
* Bereavement.

Minor sickness or long-term illness is not included as a ground for Authorised Absence. Authorised Absence will only be granted after satisfactory evidence is provided. E.g. Medical records.

Overseas weddings are not viewed as a family emergency and Authorised Absence will not be granted for this reason. Undergraduate students are free to travel overseas during recognised vacation periods.

Any absence accrued must not lead to the requirement to make a visa extension in the future. The visa team will issue an Authorised Absence letter electronically via email. A visa holder will be asked to ensure they present themselves to their course lead and a member of the visa team on their return.

Any international student visa holders requiring more absence **must** apply for [Leave of Absence (LOA).](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/leave-of-absence.aspx) Failure to request LOA within 5 working days may result in visa sponsorship withdrawal due to visa compliance reasons without the right to appeal.

**7. Leave of absence (LOA)**

If there is an ongoing issue that can be evidenced, which prevents full engagement, it may be appropriate to follow the St Mary’s University [Leave of Absence policy](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/registry/changing-your-student-enrolment-status.aspx#:~:text=A%20Leave%20of%20Absence%20can,e.g.%20in%20cases%20of%20pregnancy).) until a more suitable time to recommence studies. In some cases if a student is pregnant, taking an LOA could be the most appropriate route to use if the pregnancy will affect attendance and engagement with studies. If a student decides after their arrival to the UK they want to defer until the following academic year, LOA is also appropriate.

LOA requests are submitted via the [Student Portal.](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/students/links.aspx#:~:text=Moodle-,My%20Student%20Record,-Office%20365%20(Email) When submitting a request students are advised to speak with their course lead and the visa team before deciding to take LOA to learn academic and visa implications. The visa team will receive email notification via: [studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk). If there are any visa implications to consider the visa team will contact the student directly. If LOA is the best option, a member of the visa team will submit a report to UKVI within ten working days from the date of change.

**8. Early completion**

In some instances students will finish their course earlier than anticipated. There are different reasons for early course completion. Examples:

1. A Student visa holder sponsored on full year Study Abroad programme may end the course early after semester one.
2. A course end date may have been incorrectly entered on a CAS.
3. Students studying at RQF level 7 and 8 (MPhil/PhD) may submit their dissertation/viva early.
4. Work placement year removed.

The student visa team will assist with any visa implications or questions with regards to early completion: [studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk).

The student visa team will submit a report to the Home Office within ten working days of the new early completion date and the Home Office will curtail the visa, usually inclusive of the same length of extant leave.

**9. Extenuating Circumstances**

Student visa holders may be eligible to apply for extenuating circumstance due to unforeseen circumstances that have impacted submission of work and attendance, e.g. Serious illness. International students must speak to their course lead if there are on-going issues. The policy is provided: [Extenuating Circumstances](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/extenuating-circumstances.aspx) and must be followed accordingly.

**10. Repeating a year and Interrupting studies**

A student may need to repeat a year, for example, if the [Extenuating Circumstances](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/extenuating-circumstances.aspx) policy has been followed and accepted at faculty level. Where an additional year of study is required a new visa application for a visa extension will need to be submitted to the Home Office. The student visa team with liaise with the exams team to discuss exam board progression.

Failing a year does not automatically generate a repeat option for student visa holders. It is possible that visa sponsorship will be withdrawn at the end of each academic year on a case by case basis where there is consistent non-engagement and poor marks where non-submissions are found without extenuating circumstances. Visa holders can discuss eligibility for repeats with a member of the visa team.

Students must have classroom attendance to be classified a repeater. Where work can be submitted remotely because there are no modules to repeat that include classroom attendance it is not suitable for students to remain inside the UK ‘not studying’. In these instances students should return to their home countries and submit any work remotely. **‘Interrupting studies’** and for studies to be completely remotely must be agreed via the Course Lead. A new visa is required to re-enter the UK for returning students.

Any requests for visa extensions must be submitted via the [Student Portal](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/students/links.aspx#:~:text=Moodle-,My%20Student%20Record,-Office%20365%20(Email). *(Immigration rules are subject to change).* Students are requested to complete a CAS request form found on [Registry pages](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/registry/visas.aspx#:~:text=Applying%20for%20a%20Student%20visa%20(extension%20or%20renewal)). Each request will be considered on a case by case basis. To request a repeat year, students must complete [application to repeat a year request form](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/registry/forms-and-processes.aspx).

**11. Academic appeals procedure**

Is only to be used for making an appeal against decisions of the University Examination Board or Research Degrees Committee.

Due to the duration of the appeal process, international student visa holders may run out of time due to visa expiry dates. The immigration rules do not include allowing visa extensions from inside the UK for the outcome of an appeals process.

If an appeal outcome is successful and visa status has expired, international students must not remain inside the UK but will be able to resubmit work from their home country.

**12. Withdrawals**

Voluntary withdrawal from St Mary’s University must be submitted via the [Student Portal](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/students/links.aspx#:~:text=Moodle-,My%20Student%20Record,-Office%20365%20(Email). When submitting a request to withdraw students are advised to contact the student visa team to learn the visa implications. The student visa team will receive email notification via: [studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk). If there are any visa implications to consider the visa team will contact the student directly.

If a withdrawal is processed, the visa team will report to UKVI within 10 working days from the date of the withdrawal.

Any reports for withdrawal of sponsorship for voluntary reasons that are sent to UKVI will be processed and all applicable student visas will be curtailed (cancelled) via the Home Office. Examples of withdrawal for voluntary reasons are financial difficulties, changing sponsor and personal reasons.

**13. Programme termination**

If a student is found to have no visa status or is unable to produce documentation to prove their visa status they will have no permission to study and will be withdrawn from St Mary’s University.

Programme termination can also occur where students are found to have academic misconduct, fail to pay course fees or are withdrawn due to disciplinary regulations and non-attendance or engagement reasons.

In the event a student is programme terminated, the visa team will submit a report to the Home Office within 10 working days of the considered date. Any reports for withdrawal of sponsorship that are sent to UKVI will be processed and all applicable student visas will be curtailed (cancelled) via the Home Office.

There are no grounds for appeal for Student Route student withdrawals resulting from non-engagement.

**14. Other engagement and monitoring considerations**

**Work Placements - Programmes with ‘WPL’ modules arranged by CWL, including internships**

Students must have their attendance and progression monitored via their employer, a Work Placement Supervisor and Placement Officer. Work Placement checklist, assessment form and timesheets are completed as part of the assessment procedure and saved by The Centre for Workplace Learning (CWL) for UKVI audit purposes.

Information to be collated for UKVI reporting:

* Employer, contact name and address
* Start and end dates
* Days per week worked and hours per week

The placement details are collated in SITS and where possible reported to UKVI before the placements are started. Reports will be produced at the beginning of the semester and throughout the academic year to identify students with placement details added to their student record.

The visa team must submit an SMS report to the Home Office confirming the above details for each student on a placement.

All students going out on placement require a letter from their sponsor to provide to their employer to outline the visa and attendance requirements.

Students who do not attend their placements and who do not comply with their visa regulations are at risk of withdrawal from St Mary’s University.

**All other programmes with Work Placement opportunities - (Not arranged by CWL)**

Students must have their attendance and progression monitored.

Information to be collated for UKVI reporting:

* Employer, contact name and address
* Start and end dates
* Days per week worked and hours per week

The placement details must be collated and where possible reported to UKVI before the placements are started.

At the beginning of each semester the student visa team will submit a [**Mandatory UKVI Placement Form submission**](https://stmarysuniversity.formstack.com/forms/ukvi_work_placement_for_ukvi_reporting_)request to all departments to gather work placement details for UKVI reporting.

The visa team must submit an SMS report to the Home Office confirming the above details for each student on a placement.

All students going out on placement require a letter from their sponsor to provide to their employer to outline the visa and attendance requirements.

Students who do not attend their placements and who do not comply with their visa regulations are at risk of withdrawal from St Mary’s University.

**QTS/Teaching**

Progression whilst on placement will be closely monitored by the Institute of Education in line with teaching standards and the Department of Education regulations. Where placement modules are failed there is no progression and a repeat and visa extension could be agreed on a case by case basis. (See notes on repeats above 9).

At the beginning of each semester the student visa team will contact to education department to collate placement details and where possible reported to UKVI before the placements are started.

The visa team must submit an SMS report to the Home Office confirming the above details for each student on a placement.

Students who do not attend their placements and who do not comply with their visa regulations are at risk of withdrawal from St Mary’s University.

**Study Abroad (incoming) - Student visitors**

For September and January intakes there will be Study Abroad students completing a semester at St Mary’s University. All students should be contacted before they visit regarding UK border control policies.

A Visitor stamp must be provided at the UK port where e-Gates are not permitted to enable students with the right to study.

Copies of all visa stamps should be recorded against each student admission/enrolment record to ensure that all students have the correct immigration permission during enrolment periods.

The student visa team will check the entry dates using a students boarding pass and check passports for ID checks on arrival.

**Study Abroad (incoming) - Internships (Vignettes)**

Study Abroad students will require a Student visa if they are coming to the UK to complete an internship as part of the course.

Copies vignettes should be recorded against each student admission/enrolment record to ensure that all students have the correct immigration permission during enrolment periods.

The student visa team will check the entry dates using a students boarding pass and check passports for ID checks on arrival.

Students must have their attendance and progression monitored.

Information to be collated for UKVI reporting:

* Employer, contact name and address
* Start and end dates
* Days per week worked and hours per week

The placement details are collated in SITS via the CWL team and where possible reported to UKVI before the placements are started. Reports will be produced at the beginning of the semester and throughout the academic year to identify students with placement details added to their student record.

The visa team must submit an SMS report to the Home Office confirming the above details for each student on a placement.

Students who do not attend their placements and who do not comply with their visa regulations are at risk of withdrawal from St Mary’s University.

**Study Abroad (outgoing)**

Where students are completing a semester of an outgoing Study Abroad programme the International Mobility Manager and the affiliated faculty will maintain contact with the student and the partner institution during the Study Abroad period to ensure attendance is on-going.

Outgoing students must find out what the immigration controls are for the country they are visiting to ensure they have the correct permission to study.

Students should contact the Embassy in London of the country they are visiting for more information.

**Distance Learners - Student visitors**

The MSc Strength and Conditioning Distance Learning programme has two mandatory sessions (per academic year) held on the St Mary’s main site. (June and August).

A Visitor stamp must be provided at the UK port where e-Gates are not permitted to enable students with the right to study.

Copies of all visa stamps should be recorded against each student admission/enrolment record to ensure that all students have the correct immigration permission during enrolment periods.

The student visa team will check the entry dates using a students boarding pass and check passports for ID checks on arrival.

**Short Courses - Student visitors**

All visiting international students will require Visitor visas when they enter the UK at the port.

A Visitor stamp must be provided at the UK port to enable students with the right to study unless exempt.

More details can be found on the [SMU website.](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/international/visas/short-term.aspx)

Copies of all visa stamps should be recorded against each student admission/enrolment record to ensure

that all students have the correct immigration permission during enrolment periods.

**Student Ambassadors - 20 hours per week (max) employment**

Student visa conditions restrict students to work no more than 20 hours per week during term time depending on their level of study. Working hours must be monitored to ensure that permitted working hours are not exceeded.

**Student Union Sabbatical Officers**

Students' union sabbatical officers are paid, elected executive union positions. The term "sabbatical officer" also includes those elected to posts with the National Union of Students (NUS). These posts are usually full time. Students can continue studying the course for which their student visa was granted while working full time as a Sabbatical Officer. Employment as a Student Union Sabbatical Officer can be for up to two years and students can work for up to 20 hours per week during term time in a different job.

**'Off site’ teaching locations**

All sites/locations where students are taught from must first be approved locations by UKVI before they are added to the Sponsor licence.

In the absence of recorded attendance, registers must be recorded for any offsite locations with evidence of interventions where any unexplained absence has occurred. Course Leads must be able to demonstrate how attendance has been monitored for the full duration of studies in the absence of recorded attendance.

**St Mary’s teaching locations:**

* Teddington Lock campus, Teddington
* Naylor Library, Teddington
* 60 Waldegrave Road, Teddington
* The Exchange, Twickenham

**St Mary’s offsite teaching locations:**

* News Associates, Twickenham

**Partnerships - (collaborative provisions)**

Any UK based collaborative provisions where students complete part of their studies with a different institution must first be approved by UKVI before any students can be taught by the partners. If students remain sponsored, attendance must be registered and recorded for the full duration of studies with evidence of our interventions where any unexplained absence has occurred.

**Updated address and contact details**

[Appendix D](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/823766/Appendix_D_07-2019.pdf) of the immigration rules indicate that Sponsors must keep up to date contact details for all sponsored students.

Students must keep all contact details up to date via the [Student Portal](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/students/links.aspx#:~:text=Moodle-,My%20Student%20Record,-Office%20365%20(Email). The visa team will run regular audits to ensure contact details are maintained and students will be communicated with to remind them of the importance update their details. Where UK address details have not been updated, student records may be temporarily withdrawn until updated.

**Students with ‘other’ immigration status**

The immigration permission of all other students with a visa must be regularly monitored to ensure that all students enrolled at St Mary’s University have the correct immigration permission to study throughout the duration of their studies. The visa team will run regular audits to ensure continuation of studies can only occur in the event that all visa holders have completed right to study checks. Any students without the correct immigration permission at St Mary’s University are at risk of withdrawal. Email reminders are issued to students for visas and passports expiring within 5 months. [Right to work checks.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/667438bb64e554df3bd0dbe8/Guidance_Right_to_work_checks_-_an_employer_s_guide.pdf)

**Debtors (X3 status)**

Students who are debtors and owe money for modules should not attend any timetabled sessions when course fees are owed as studies have not been paid for. X3 debtor status will lead to blocked access to university systems, this will have implications on attendance, submitting work and progression.

Failure to pay tuition fees within 42 days of the final due date will result in the immediate withdrawal from university facilities.

When a student is withdrawn from their programme, they must be reported to the Home Office within 10 working days from the date of withdrawal.

If late fee payments are not made within 10 working days of the date of withdrawal, course registration will not be reinstated.

The visa team will confirm in writing directly to a student's email address when a report has been submitted to the Home Office following a withdrawal.

Attendance and engagement reports will identify all students with debtor status. The visa team will extract attendance reports and remind international students of the visa implications for non-payment of fees during the academic year.

**Reporting students and visa curtailments**

UKVI guidance states that reporting duties should be completed within 10 working days from the date the change was actioned.

The visa team will submit a report to the Home Office within 10 working days of the considered date. Any reports for withdrawal of sponsorship (for any reason) that are sent to UKVI will be processed and all applicable student visas will be curtailed (cancelled).

When a student is reported to UKVI their visa is curtailed to 60 days. UKVI send notification to the last known address via the post and via email.

The visa team will email any students who are reported to advise them of the visa implications including visa curtailment information. The Home Office will action the curtailment in a queuing system. The visa team is unable to advise on timescale.

A student who is no longer actively studying, is no longer inside the UK for the purpose of the visa they were granted and will be advised to leave the UK at the earliest opportunity.

Please contact the student visa team with any questions: [studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:studentvisas@stmarys.ac.uk)

**Requests for additional evidence**

To prevent fraud, you may be asked to provide true, complete, and accurate information where any evidence of a claim is investigated. E.g. Long term absences and requests for refund of deposit money.

St Mary’s University staff may request original, or scanned copies of original documents in order to verify your information.

[Extenuating circumstances policy](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/extenuating-circumstances.aspx)

[Refund policy](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/international-deposits.aspx)

Investigations can take up to 21 days. Where fraud is detected, enrolment status and visa sponsorship will be removed with no right of appeal.

**EU Nationals**

According to [Appendix D](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/987891/2021-05-18_Sponsor-guidance-Appendix-D-05-21_v1.0.pdf) of the immigration rules, EU nationals who are required to apply for Pre-Settled or Settled Status must have their [‘Share Code’](https://www.gov.uk/check-immigration-status) checked and uploaded to their enrolment record (in SITS) to ensure they have the correct immigration status to study. Unless an applicable EU national has legal status and has their status checked, they are unable to enrol from September 2021.

Any EU national with ‘digital status’ inside their passport who has applied under the ‘Student Route’ with a CAS will also require their ‘Share Code’ checking and their status uploaded and updated within SITS to be permitted to enrol.

It has also been determined by the Home Office that all students must have their entry to the UK checked and logged (in SITS) to ensure students have not entered the UK ‘too early’ under visitor status. In this instance where student leave has not been registered correctly at the border, students must re-enter the UK via Europe when their entry to the UK as ‘a student’ is valid. (France is the closest country, NOT Ireland).