



2019

Retention and Engagement of Students (HE08)

 **Partnership**
Training • Education • Careers

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Description:

Retaining students within higher education through to successful completion of their award is a key strategic agenda of the Grimsby Institute. This Code of Practice explains the processes followed by the TEC Partnership to encourage students to engage in their studies in order to give the best opportunity for success.

If you need any further advice on how the regulations work, you should contact the HE Quality Office.

HE Quality Office
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This document is available in alternative forms

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This code of practice sets out expectations of engagement expected from students and shows the processes which the TEC Partnership will follow, to encourage engagement in study.

1.2 Decisions taken at boards, which are made within regulations, do not have to follow processes set out in this code of practice.

1.3 Retention in this policy relates to the continued study of students between the core stages of their enrolled programme through to completion of the entire programme.

1.4 Engagement where used in this code of practice refers to efforts made by the student towards the completion of the core stage. This can be in the form of attendance at sessions or by completion of set work outside of sessions. Examples of work may include:

- i. specific work set by the tutor for completion before or after a session;
- ii. completion of work towards assessment either formative or summative;
- iii. engagement with online tasks, either one to one or many to many interactions.

1.5 Throughout the code of practice where the term 'must' is used this relates to a process which has to be completed for the resulting action or sanction to occur. Where the term 'should' is used this relates to normal practice and resulting actions or sanction can still be followed if there is a rationale. Where the term 'may' is used no rationale for resulting actions or sanctions are needed even where the activity has not occurred.

1.6 This code of practice refers directly to enrolled students of within TEC Partnership. Information and guidance for applicants is crucial to ensuring engagement and retention of students, these processes are dealt with in HE07 Admissions, Admission Appeals and Accreditation of Prior Learning and HE02 Published Information.

1.7 The TEC Partnership must organise teaching and learning activities which match those described in validation documents and other associated published information.

1.8 Students must attend sessions and engage in follow up work as described in the validation documents and other associated published information.

1.9 TEC Partnership believes that in order to assure engagement in study by the wider student cohort, it is sometimes necessary to withdraw individual students who are not engaging in their studies.

1.10 The code of practice is underpinned by a range of values and principles which include those of:

- i. inclusion and integration;
- ii. social justice;
- iii. equal opportunities;
- iv. support and guidance;
- v. acceptance;
- vi. student and institutional accountability;
- vii. availability, accessibility and quality;
- viii. consistency;
- ix. impartiality;
- x. responsiveness;
- xi. monitoring, feedback, evaluation and improvement;
- xii. professional judgement.

1.11 It remains the responsibility of the student to ensure that they are engaging in their higher education and its component parts. TEC Partnership will support where possible this engagement through its activities whilst ensuring its activities meet standards of fairness across the student cohort.

2.0 Guidance for Students

2.1 Throughout the duration of study, there may be points where additional advice and guidance may be beneficial beyond that which is provided by the teaching team e.g. matters relating to finance, accommodation, health and well-being, concerns and complaints, careers advice, study support, quality and standards.

2.2 Students are encouraged in the first instance to seek advice and guidance from their programme leader/nominated year tutor or success coach, however where advice and guidance is insufficient or alternate services are deemed more appropriate, students are in all instances urged to make direct contact with the service best suited to their needs.

2.3 Where additional advice and guidance is required, a range of other services exist.

a. For students based at University Centre Grimsby:

- i. Learning Resource Centre: support with all aspects of learning
- ii. Student Records: enrolment and registration information, council tax exemptions, change of circumstances details, references;
- iii. Learner Advisors: applications to the student loans company, financial support, student's bursaries.
- iv. Academic Achievement Coach: available to deliver study skills workshops to groups;
- v. Success Coach: for matters relating to such issues as advocacy, support for student disability, accommodation, attendance;
- vi. Institute Counsellor: for matters relating to mental health and well-being and personal therapy;
- vii. Sensory Impairment Team: for matters relating to academic and holistic support needs in instances where a student has a visual impairment, is blind, has a hearing impairment or is deaf;
- viii. Disability Advisors: the service is available for students who may need assistance with regards to their disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties. Disability and longer term support or short term intervention such as in the case of a broken arm, can be arranged in consultation with the Advisors;
- ix. Student Support Officers: deliver specific support as detailed in a learner's needs assessment report carried out by Educational Psychologists who, within the report, recommend and detail the type of support and allocated hours;
- x. HE Quality Office: for matters relating to the provision of Institute feedback regarding its services, all aspects relating to quality and standards, concerns and complaints.

b. For students based at Scarborough TEC:

- i. Learning Resource Centre: support with all aspects of learning
- ii. Student Records: enrolment and registration information, council tax exemptions, change of circumstances details, references;
- iii. Learner Advisors: applications to the student loans company, financial support, student's bursaries.
- iv. Academic Achievement Coach: available to deliver study skills workshops to groups;
- v. Success Coach: for matters relating to such issues as advocacy, support for student disability, accommodation, attendance;

- vi. Institute Counsellor: for matters relating to mental health and well-being and personal therapy;
- vii. Sensory Impairment Team: for matters relating to academic and holistic support needs in instances where a student has a visual impairment, is blind, has a hearing impairment or is deaf;
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3.0 Induction

3.1 The principles underpinning the TEC Partnership's induction processes recognise that quality of information provided, student satisfaction and opportunities to enhance student 'preparedness' when entering into higher education is of fundamental importance to retention.

3.2 Teaching teams must ensure that a comprehensive programme level induction schedule is administered to each new student cohort (full and part time). Induction must not occur as a 'one off' event but as a planned programme of activity with sufficient time allocated.

3.3 As a minimum, the content of the induction programmes must include:

- i. information about how to access wider Institute services and facilities;
 - ii. activities to promote integration and group cohesion i.e. 'ice breakers', group activities;
 - iii. library induction;
 - iv. study skills information and signposting to the study skills web page;
 - v. IT check to make sure all students have access to VLE, Office 365 and associated programmes;
 - vi. provision and explanation of programme and module handbooks;
 - vii. provision of the assessment schedule (a timetable of all assessment deadlines- formative and summative) and information in relation to feedback timescales;
 - viii. how to submit assessments, obtaining extensions, late and over-length assessment penalties.
 - ix. an explanation of academic regulations (within programme handbook) in particular the rules appertaining to absence with good cause from examinations, mitigating circumstances, applications for extensions, penalties for plagiarism or other academic misconduct;
 - x. details of how to access codes of practice and policies on the Institute's web site;
 - xi. timetable information and planned programme delivery;
 - xii. attendance and punctuality including who to contact in situations of absence;
 - xiii. completion of screening activities for the identification and support of learning disability;
 - xiv. availability of and how to access learning support services listed in 2.3;
 - xv. the role and appointment of student representatives and The Student Senate (See HE03);
 - xvi. conformation that the email address provided (@grimsby.ac.uk or @scarboroughtec.ac.uk) will be the only ones used for official correspondence (Results, Mitigating Circumstances, Reenrolment
- HE08 Retention and Engagement of Students v1.0

etc.).

3.5 Programme leaders must evidence how the above items have been covered for each student.

3.6 In instances of late enrolment (including students gaining approval for direct Entry on to an advanced stage within a programme), students must receive an induction programme organised by the programme team.

3.7 An assessment of students should be made in the first two weeks to consider the risk of retention of students, Pro-Monitor HE should be updated based on their risk. The following table provides indication of risk:

Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Student had full and timely IAG early in the application periodStudent had accepted their offer in advance of the enrolmentStudent has placement in place (where required)Student has DBS in place (where required)Student had excellent artistic portfolio at interview (where required)Student has recently completed Level 3 programmes of studyStudent finance is in place and payment is receivedWorks within the area of study
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Student applied relatively close to the application periodThere are concerns regarding application for student financeStudent passed entry test but not at a high levelStudent had artistic portfolio at interview but some skill gaps remain (where required)Student had applied before enrolment but had not accepted their offerReference in UCAS or on RPA was basicIndication that students need assistance in developing computer skills
Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No student finance in placeDBS is not in place (where required)Does not work within the area of studyStudent had significant gaps in artistic portfolio (where required)Student does not have a placement (where required)Concerns exist regarding work patternsStudent started the course lateStudent applied during the enrolment period

3.8 The Programme Leader and the Success Coach for the area should prioritise support in the first trimester to students who are graded as Red or Amber.

4.0 Attendance and Engagement of students

4.1 Attendance has a direct relationship to the likelihood of a student's success in higher education. However, there are times when engagement may be used as a measure of commitment to a programme. These measures can include:

- i. completion of summative assessment work;
- ii. completion of formative assessment work;
- iii. completion of tasks set to the whole group on the VLE;
- iv. completion of work set for an individual student;
- v. student evidencing reading and work beyond that set by the tutor.

4.2 In normal circumstances the TEC Partnership's expectation for student attendance for all HE programmes (unless specified otherwise by professional or awarding bodies) is 90%. Where student attendance drops below this the impact is often on colleagues left within the cohort.

4.3 In instances where a staff member raises concern about a student's attendance; TEC Partnership may contact a student by phone or in person to discuss the absence further and suggest an early intervention. This should be viewed as supportive to solve the problems causing lack of attendance. This call and the proposed solutions should be logged on Pro-Monitor.

4.4 Attendance is not the only measure of engagement. As stated in 1.4 engagement may be conducted by working at tasks set by module tutors or programme leaders.

4.5 Principles of professional judgement underpin decisions made whether to make further interventions to reengage students. This process if student's engagement levels do not change may lead to withdrawal of students.

4.6 In instances where unapproved absence or lack of engagement are identified and initial support has been rejected or has not been successful in ensuring attendance and engagement, the following 3 stage withdrawal warning system must be implemented.

4.7 Should a student be judged by the programme leader to not be engaging with study a request for a Success Coach intervention should be made:

- i. The student should be sent an attendance and engagement Stage 1 warning email HE08A;
- ii. The student must meet with the Success Coach within 7 days of sending of the email;
- iii. During the meeting the form HE08D must be completed, uploaded to Pro-Monitor and emailed to the student;
- iv. If the student fails to meet the team then the form is filled in by the Success Coach in their absence, stored on Pro Monitor, and sent to the student.
- v. Targets set under this form can only make reference to attendance and no other forms of engagement.

4.8 If a student's engagement fails to improve or they continue to attend below the desired level. The following process should be followed:

HE08 Retention and Engagement of Students v1.0

- i. The student should be sent an attendance and engagement Stage 2 warning email HE08B;
- ii. The student must meet with the Programme Leader within 7 days of receipt of the email;
- iii. During the meeting the form HE08E must be completed, uploaded to Pro-Monitor and emailed to the student;
- iv. If the student fails to meet the team then the form is filled in by the Programme Leader in their absence, stored on Pro Monitor, and sent to the student.
- v. Targets set under this form could make reference to methods of engagement specified in 4.1.

4.9 If a student's engagement fails to meet the targets set out in or they continue to attend below the desired level. The following process should be followed:

- i. The student should be sent an attendance and engagement Stage 3 warning email HE08C;
- ii. The student must meet with the Curriculum Manager within 7 days of receipt of the email;
- iii. During the meeting the form HE08F must be completed, uploaded to Pro-Monitor and emailed to the student;
- iv. If the student fails to meet the team then the form is filled in by the Curriculum Manager in their absence, stored on Pro Monitor, and sent to the student.
- v. Targets set under this form could make reference to methods of engagement specified in 4.1.

4.10 A student who has attended the meeting and has met the targets set in HE08F should not be withdrawn from studies. If their attendance or engagement subsequently drops in the same academic year they will enter the system at the third stage again.

5.0 Removal from studies through lack of engagement

5.1 These actions should be completed if a student has not achieved the targets set at third stage.

5.2 The Programme Leader should process a change request within Pro-Solution.

5.3 The Curriculum Manager or (STEC to add title) should review the case to ensure that all processes and steps have been completed and logged on Pro-Monitor before approving the request.

5.4 The Associate Principal or (STEC to add title) should review the case to ensure that all processes and steps have been completed and logged on Pro-Monitor before approving the request.

5.5 The resulting withdrawal actions will be processed by HEMIS and a withdrawal email will be generated and sent to the student's college and personal email addresses (HE08G).

6.0 Student request for withdrawal or suspension of study

6.0 It is the responsibility of the student to complete the suspension form.

6.1 TEC Partnership recognises that sometimes students are uncertain if they have made the right
HE08 Retention and Engagement of Students v1.0

decision in relation to a chosen pathway of study or sometimes they may decide they wish to withdraw.

6.2 TEC Partnership should process the withdrawal/suspension within 14 days of notification that a student wishes to withdraw. The student must provide this evidence in writing either by signed letter or by email (from official student email) to studentrecordshe@grimsby.ac.uk.

6.3 The Programme Leader should make attempts to contact the student and discuss the underlying issues with the student either by phone or by email to ensure that withdrawal is the last resort. All communication should be logged on Pro-Monitor.

6.4 When the Programme Leader is convinced they have done all actions required they should request withdrawal via Pro-Solution. The Curriculum Manager of the area should process the withdrawal for referral to the Associate Principal.

6.5 Suspension of Studies is the means by which students request to take a break from their studies. This is usually because circumstances have changed during the course of study such as:

- Significant changes in the health of a student;
- Significant changes in the health of a dependant of the student;
- Significant changes in employment for a student;
- Significant changes leading to financial issues for a student;
- Other significant changes.

6.6 Suspension of studies usually means that a student returns to study one year after their last date of attendance.

6.7 For all HE programmes delivered by the TEC Partnership applications for suspension of studies must be completed on form HE08H (or HE08I for University of Hull) and sent to Student Records HE along with evidence supporting the suspension. This should be accompanied by a change request on Pro-Solution (See 5.2 above)

6.8a Students who request to return to studies without a repeat period or assessments can be processed and noted by the HE Suspension of Studies Committee.

6.8b Where a student has requested a repeat period or to have assessment results voided the application should be processed in lieu of the decision by the HE Suspension of Studies Committee (HE08J) or the relevant University partner.

6.9 The deadline for a suspension of studies is normally 1 week before the Easter Break in any given academic year. Applications outside of this period and/or applications for an earlier return to study must be considered by the HE Suspension of Studies Committee (HE08I) who report to the HE Progression and Standards Committee and have a strong evidence base before they are granted.

6.10 The HE Suspension of Studies Committee must view each application on merit and using the HE08 Retention and Engagement of Students v1.0

evidence base provided make a decision regarding the point of return. The committee must take into account the evidence provided by the student and comments from the academic and support team. Following the meeting the secretary for the committee will inform HEMIS, the student, and the academic team of the result.

6.11 A student has the right to appeal the decision of the HE Suspension of Committee if they feel that the process has been misapplied or the return time is unfair. To do so they should write to the Academic Registrar who will enact an appeal in line with HE16 Academic Appeals.

7.0 Indicators of lack of engagement

7.1 Programme teams must be vigilant in their monitoring of attendance at key points with the academic year such as after the first assessment period and at the beginning of terms 2 and 3 when some students may not return.

7.2 Non submission of assignments can sometimes be related to poor attendance and threaten student retention. Module tutors must ensure that students who have failed to submit on time without approved extensions are immediately contacted preferably with a follow up call by the HE Success Coach. These interactions must be logged on Pro-Monitor.

7.3 Retention between academic years is recognised as important. Twice during each academic year destinations data will be collected for all HE students. HE Success Coaches will discuss with each student their plans for the following year. Where students are in doubt support will be organised by the school to try to secure progression. All actions must be logged in Pro-Monitor.

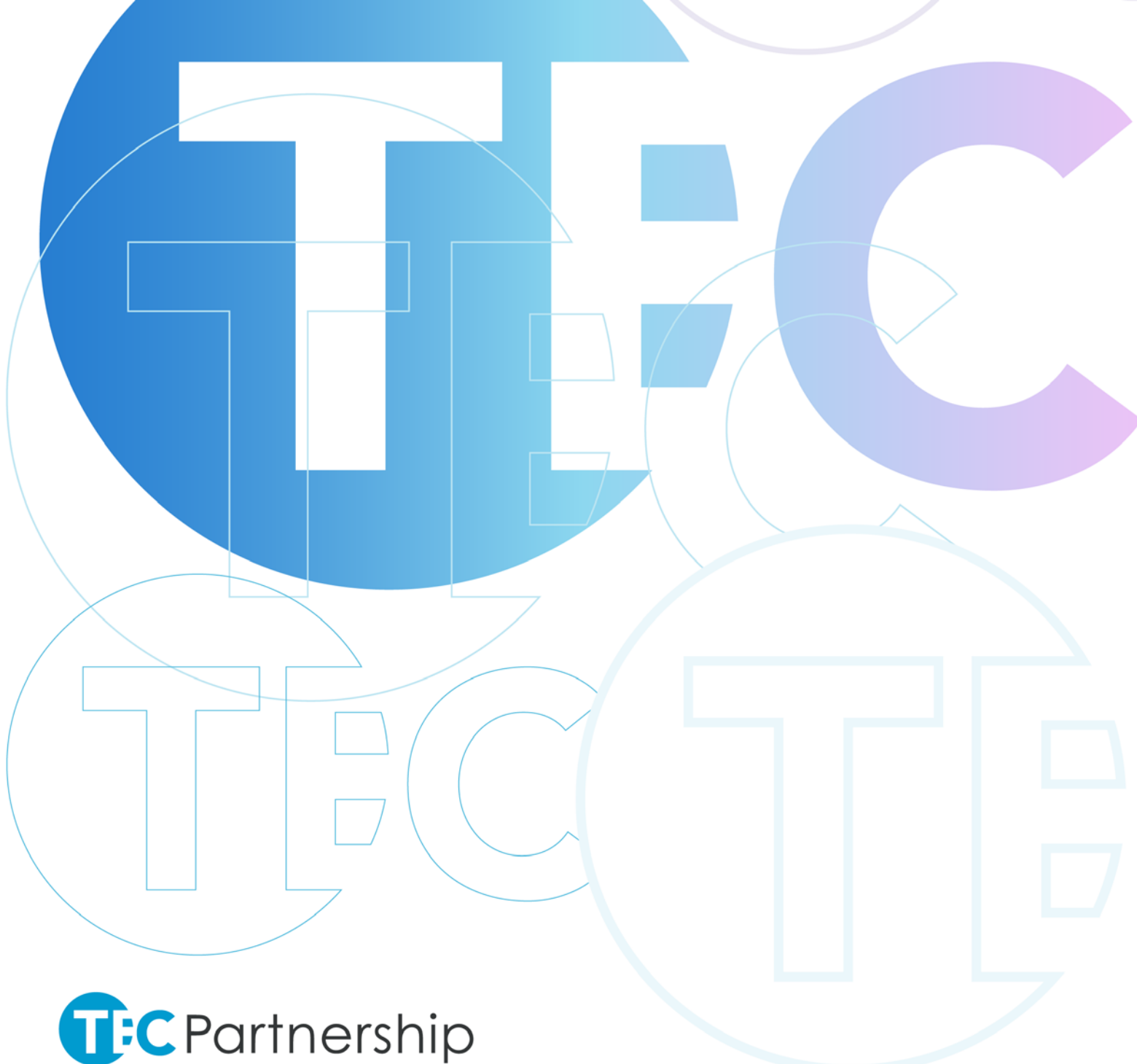
7.4 Completion of assignment work should not be used as a sole measure of engagement throughout the academic year. It could however be used during the final weeks of a trimester if judged so by the academic team.

7.5 Data gathered on VLE use may be used to evidence for engagement in studies. This data could be used to evidence lack of engagement of individual students or to demonstrate engagement with studies beyond attendance.

8.0 Complaints and Appeals

8.1 If a student thinks that this Code has been misapplied to themselves and this has affected their continuation on the programme because processes have not been followed, they are able to appeal under the processes set out in HE16.

8.2 If a student feels their treatment has been unfair they have to right to complain following the processes set out in Investigation and Determination of Complaints Policy & Procedure or by the online Complaints form, this is under HE20 or by this link <https://tecpartnership.com/partnership-feedback/#1501672889199-d0950462-b97c>



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