

# OCA Active Study Policy

## Introduction

As an educational charity, the Open College of the Arts (OCA) has a duty of care to students who enrol to our programs of study. This duty of care extends to wellbeing and safeguarding, but also attainment and access to success. In addition we have regulatory requirements to monitor activity for reporting purposes to Office for Students (OfS), Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE), Student Loans Company (SLC) (hereafter referred to as Student Finance) among others.

Students enrolling onto a course of study with OCA need to remain engaged with their studies throughout. OCA monitors engagement in order to provide support to students. Where there are gaps in interaction with College services and support, these flag up intervention points that OCA uses to get in touch and provide support.

This policy is part of the Student Regulations and Conditions of Enrolment that each student agrees to upon enrolment onto a course of study, inclusive of validated undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. This policy is aligned to any other associated College policies and regulations including the Academic Regulatory Framework.

As a body in receipt of public funding through Student Finance and HEFCE, OCA is required to report ongoing engagement with studies. This is a requirement for any student in receipt of funding through Student Finance.

This policy applies equally to all students on all courses at OCA.

## Our legal obligations

At three points in each academic year, OCA is required to report to Student Finance and other relevant organisations the status of each student in receipt of funding. Student Finance and other relevant organisations require ongoing interaction with studies in order for tuition fees and/or maintenance grants to be released. What is defined as ongoing interaction is set out by OCA in this policy below.

## Active engagement with study

OCA defines engagement with studies as interaction with one or more services offered by OCA in order for students to complete their studies. Ongoing engagement is defined as one or more interactions with the aforementioned services in any given two month period.

In any 60 day period students need to interact with OCA in at least one of the following ways:

- Submitting an Assignment
- Attending a tutorial with their tutor
- Engagement with the Learner Support Team
- Engagement with the Academic Development Team
- Attending an OCA/OCASA organised study event
- Attending an OCA organised webinar/groupwork session
- Update to learning log
- Applying for and/or submitting work for formal assessment

We conduct monthly checks with tutors and OCA HQ support teams, contact and/or engagement with services to work out whether any of the above have happened. Evidence of any of the above will enable OCA to confirm active ongoing engagement for reporting purposes.

## What happens when there is no active engagement

During any given 60 day period, if there is no recorded engagement with any of the above services, this will create a flag for OCA services, where we will attempt to contact the affected student. This contact is to see what is happening, if there are any issues affecting students ability to study, and to offer support.

OCA, through support teams, will get in touch with students first via phone through numbers listed when students enrol, and then via email to a students OCA and personal email addresses. In addition, tutors may also be in contact to check progress and provide support.

If for any reason students actively wish to withdraw, students should request a withdrawal form from [studentadvice@oca.ac.uk](mailto:studentadvice@oca.ac.uk).

## Student Finance reporting obligations

Where there is no recorded engagement from a student during any specified 60 day period, and OCA has attempted to get in further contact, students will be classified as not in attendance.

Students not in attendance will ordinarily be withdrawn from their degree pathway. Where this is required, 10 days formal notice of the intended action will be given to the student by email to the students' OCA email address and personal email address.

Students in receipt of Student Finance funding, classified as not in attendance, and withdrawn will be notified to Student Finance.

If engagement is re-established prior to the reporting period, a study plan with specified contact points will be required before a student can continue. Where a study plan is in place and active engagement can thereafter be determined, reporting will be postponed pending review at the next reporting point.

## Students not in receipt of Student Finance

For students not in receipt of Student Finance funding or other attendance reporting obligations, where there is no recorded engagement from a student during any specified 60 day period, and OCA has attempted to get in further contact, students will be classified as not in attendance.

Students not in attendance will ordinarily be withdrawn from their degree pathway. Where this is required, 10 days formal notice of the intended action will be given to the student by email to the students' OCA email address and personal email address.

If engagement is re-established prior to withdrawal, a study plan with specified contact points will be required before a student can continue. Where a study plan is in place and active engagement can thereafter be determined, reporting will be postponed pending review at the next reporting point.

## Refunds

Refunds, and the grounds for eligibility are outlined in the OCA Refund Policy.

## Document Control

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