



University
of Glasgow

Student Absence Policy

May 2010; updated November 2010; updated August 2011; updated December 2011;
updated October 2015; updated June 2016; updated July 2020

STUDENT ABSENCE POLICY

This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students.

1. Definitions

A class is any learning and teaching session. It includes such things as lectures, seminars, laboratories, work placement etc.

A working period is any teaching or revision/examination period. For undergraduate students this will often be a semester. For students engaged in project work, placements or field work, a working period is any period which is not a declared holiday.

A significant absence is:

1. an absence of **more than seven consecutive days**¹ during working periods
2. an absence of **any duration** if it prevents a student from:
 - a. attending an examination, or
 - b. fulfilling any other published minimum requirements for the award of credit (e.g. compulsory attendance at a tutorial or laboratory class or meeting a deadline for handing in an assignment).

2. Attendance Requirements

1. Students are expected to attend all timetabled classes.
2. Attendance at any examination which contributes to summative assessment is compulsory.
3. Heads of Schools/Research Institutes are responsible for ensuring that students are given clear notification of all classes for which attendance is compulsory.

3. Procedures for Notification of Absences²

3.1 Reporting Requirements

Students must complete a MyCampus³ absence report or Good Cause Claim for any significant absence. Mere completion of the report does not necessarily justify an absence. It is the responsibility of each student to give a clear explanation which justifies any significant absence. In particular, absence from compulsory course requirements to fulfil commitments that need not necessarily be undertaken at that time may not be regarded as an acceptable reason for absence. Where possible, the justification should be accompanied by contact details of a person who could verify the information and/or provide further details. A clear reason should be given in all cases where such contact details are not provided.

As well as entering directly into MyCampus a clear explanation for the reason for absence, further documentary evidence in the form of electronically uploaded files is required as detailed in 3.3 and summarised in Table 1. In addition to using the file upload facility to provide evidence from third parties, it may also be used to provide an extended justification, where appropriate.

¹ The seven consecutive days include weekends, for example: Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

² Special arrangements may be made for students who are absent from placements (e.g. work experience). Such special arrangements must be approved by the appropriate Head(s) of School/RI.

³ Interim arrangements for submitting absence reports will apply during the resit diet in August 2011. Information on these will be available on MyCampus.

Even if not formally defined as significant, students are recommended to complete an absence report for any absence for which they would like the University to take account of special circumstances regarding their ability to attend university, e.g. the cumulative effect of several (non-consecutive) days of absence.

Students with a disability related absence and who have their support co-ordinated by the Disability Service are not expected to complete multiple absence reports for absences related to their disability.

3.2 *Timing*

All Good Cause Claims must be submitted within **1 week** of the date of the affected assessment (examination or assessment submission deadline). All other potentially significant absences should be reported as soon as is practical, by completing part 1⁴ of the MyCampus absence report⁵. Part 2 of the MyCampus absence report should be completed on return to university. The normal submission deadline for the completed absence report is 7 days after return to university. The Board of Examiners will not necessarily take account of absences reported after this deadline when considering a case for good cause (see 4.2 below).

If at all possible, absences which will result in non-attendance at examinations should be notified **before** the examination by contacting the relevant examiner, School Absence Contact, or Head of School/RI. This should be followed up by completion of the MyCampus Good Cause Claim.

3.3 *Submission of Documentary Evidence*

Documentary evidence is required for any significant absence. Table 1 shows under what circumstances medical evidence is required. Documentary evidence should be scanned electronically and linked to the MyCampus absence report⁶. It is the responsibility of the student to keep all original documentation and submit it to the Head(s) of School(s)/RI(s) or nominee(s) on request. If a student is unhappy about scanning sensitive information into MyCampus, he or she must submit the original information to their Adviser of Studies, Honours Convener, or Head of School/RI or nominee, who must complete part 3 of the MyCampus report to acknowledge receipt. Some Schools/RIs may insist on submission of all original documents. In such circumstances, Heads of School/RI are responsible for ensuring that details of additional submission requirements are published.

This policy does not attempt to provide a definitive list of all suitable documentary evidence, but types of evidence are given in 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 below.

⁴ Part 1 requests the date of first absence and estimated duration of absence.

⁵ Please note that the provisions on Incomplete Assessment resulting from Good Cause (16.45-16.53 of the *University Calendar*) require that notification of relevant absence is made within 1 week of the relevant exam date or coursework submission date, so part 1 of the MyCampus absence report should be completed within this period.

⁶ Full instructions will be provided in MyCampus.

Consecutive days absent during working periods	Qualifier	Significant?	Absence notification/Good Cause Claim via MyCampus	Reason for Absence	Medical Documentation required?	Other Documentation required?
7 or less	No examination missed; nothing missed which would impact on the fulfilment of published minimum requirement for the award of credit	NO	NO ^{5,7}	Medical	NO	NO
				Other	NO	NO
	Examination missed; at least one event missed which would impact on the fulfilment of published minimum requirements for the award of credit	YES	YES	Medical	NO ⁸	YES
				Other	NO	YES
More than 7	-	YES	YES	Medical	YES	NO ⁹
				Other	NO	YES

Table 1

3.3.1 Medical Documentation

Suitable types of medical documentation include:

- a medical certificate¹⁰
- a medical report⁸
- a note from a hospital
- a formal notification of a hospital or clinic appointment.

3.3.2 Other Documentation

Suitable types of documentation include:

- a note from an independent responsible person who can vouch for the event which led to the absence

⁷ In some circumstances it may be beneficial to complete the MyCampus notification. See section 3.1 regarding the cumulative effects of several absences.

⁸ A student is encouraged to provide medical documentation where it is available.

⁹ A student is encouraged to provide all documentation which might help to explain/justify a significant absence. Further documentation is particularly important if medical evidence does not include a clear explanation.

¹⁰ General Practitioners are not obliged to issue medical certificates to students and may charge a fee for providing medical reports. If payment of such a fee will cause the student financial hardship he/she should seek advice from Registry on taking out an emergency Student Loan or applying to the Student Hardship Fund.

- evidence from a member of staff who was alerted to the circumstances at the time
- a letter from a student counsellor¹¹ or other professional that the student actually consulted during the period when the difficulties were occurring
- a note from the police

4. Procedures for responding to Notification of Absences and Good Cause Claims

Course Co-ordinators, Course Administrators and Advisers of Studies will be notified by email 7 days after the start of an absence, as indicated by part 1 of the MyCampus absence report. They will also be notified on submission of the completed MyCampus absence report. School Absence Contacts, Advisers of Studies and Assessment Officers will have full access to the student absence reports. School Absence Contacts should monitor the situation and liaise with the student, Adviser of Studies, Course Coordinator, Honours Conveners and Programmes Leaders as necessary. Course Co-ordinators, Course Administrators and Good Cause Co-ordinators will be notified of Good Cause Claims.

MyCampus absence reports and Good Cause Claims may be used:

1. By Course Coordinators and/or Heads of School/RI to suggest any remedial work which the student should do on return to university. It is the responsibility of the student to ask the appropriate staff member about any required remedial work.
2. By the Board of Examiners and/or Heads of School/RI to consider any case for 'good cause' and apply the rules of incomplete assessment as appropriate (see Calendar sections 16.45-16.53). It is the responsibility of the Assessment Officer to ensure that relevant information from the MyCampus absence reports is presented to the Board of Examiners.

5. Retention of Records

1. Absence reports and associated documents will be retained in line with agreed University policy.
2. Heads of School/RI are responsible for having a system in place for removing locally held student absence information (electronic and paper) in line with agreed University policy.

6. Summary of Responsibilities

6.1 Students should:

1. attend all timetabled classes;
2. investigate alternative arrangements to compensate for missed work or assessment;
3. complete part 1 of the MyCampus absence report for significant or potentially significant absences as soon as possible, OR, submit a Good Cause Claim within a week of the affected assessment (see https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_424718_smxx.pdf);
4. complete part 2 of the MyCampus absence report within 7 days of return to university;
5. ask the appropriate member of staff about any required remedial work;
6. in cases of incomplete assessment resulting from 'good cause', follow the procedure set out at sections 16.45-16.53 in the Calendar.

¹¹ The University's Student Counselling and Advisory Service does not provide letters for students who have not previously attended appointments with a counsellor.

6.2 School Absence Contacts should:

1. monitor significant absences and liaise with the student, Adviser of Studies, Course Coordinator, Honours Conveners and Programmes Leaders as necessary.

6.3 Course Coordinators should:

1. respond to requests from students regarding advice about remedial work to be done.

6.4 Course Administrators should:

1. support the Course Coordinator in monitoring absence across the course

6.5 Advisers of Studies should:

1. provide general support and advice to students who seek it;
2. monitor significant absences and liaise with the student and School Absence Contact;
3. if necessary, receive the information which was not submitted on-line and ensure that part 3 of the MyCampus report is completed;
4. where appropriate, respond to requests from students for help in establishing a case for 'good cause'.

6.6 Honours Conveners should:

1. if necessary, receive the information which was not submitted on-line and ensure that part 3 of the MyCampus report is completed.

6.7 Assessment Officers should:

1. ensure that relevant information from the MyCampus reports is presented to the Board of Examiners.

6.8 Board of Examiners should, in accordance with the rules of incomplete assessment:

1. consider the evidence presented and decide whether good cause has been established¹²;
2. taking into account all the evidence, determine the appropriate outcome for the work being assessed.

6.9 Heads of School/RI should:

1. ensure that students are given clear notification of timetabled classes for which attendance is compulsory;
2. identify and publicise School Absence Contacts and Assessment Officers;
3. ensure that centrally held course coordinator information is kept up to date;
4. ensure that any additional requirements for submission of original evidence are published;
5. if necessary, receive or nominate someone to receive the information which was not submitted on-line and ensure that part 3 of the MyCampus report is completed;

¹² §16.47 of the University Calendar sets out the procedures that will be followed in the event of a meeting of the Board of Examiners not being anticipated until some significant time after the examination or submission date missed by the candidate claiming good cause.

6. approve any special measures necessary to deal with students who are absent from placements;
7. in the event of a meeting of the Board of Examiners not being anticipated until some significant time after the examination or submission date missed by a candidate claiming good cause, determine the outcome of a claim of good cause in consultation with the relevant Assessment Officer and report any such decisions to the Board of Examiners at the next available meeting;
8. ensure that a system is in place for removing locally held student absence information (electronic and paper) in line with agreed University policy.

Appendix for Postgraduate Research Students

1. Students are expected to be engaged with their studies throughout their programme. Where absence due to illness or other personal circumstances limits or prevents this engagement, students should report this to the University. The University has a duty of care to support students appropriately throughout their studies and may only exercise this duty effectively where students have made the University aware of their current circumstances.
2. A significant absence is defined here as an absence of more than seven consecutive days or an absence of any duration if it prevents a student from attending any assessment or fulfilling any requirements of their programme, e.g. attending annual progress review, planned supervision meetings, attendance at skills training courses.
3. Students must complete a MyCampus absence report for any significant absence and are recommended to complete an absence report for any absence for which they would like the University to take account, e.g. where meetings, seminars, workshops or training courses might be missed or where they may wish to evidence any circumstances of relevance to their progress, such as the cumulative effect of non-consecutive days of absence. Absences are reported via the Student Centre in MyCampus via 'My Absences'.
4. While supervisors will receive notification of absences reported via MyCampus, students should make sure that their supervisor is kept up to date, especially where meetings might be missed or there is an expectation that work will be submitted. It is also a good idea to keep your supervisor informed of any short periods of illness, particularly if these are frequent, so that any potential impact on progress can be identified and any additional support provided if agreed as necessary.
5. Students who do not wish speak to their supervisors directly may contact the PG Convenor within their School or their Graduate School to discuss any absence related issues or support requirements.
6. Completion of an absence report does not necessarily justify an absence. It is the responsibility of each student to give a clear explanation that justifies any significant absence. Students should refer to the Student Absence Policy for UG and PGT students for a list of suitable types of documentary evidence that may be uploaded with an absence report and when these are most appropriate: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/registry/staff/studentrecords/absence/>.
7. Students who hold Tier 4 visas should be mindful of any attendance monitoring points and seek advice from the International Student Support Team (<https://www.gla.ac.uk/international/support/>) or the Tier 4 Compliance team (tier4compliance@glasgow.ac.uk) if they have any queries relating to attendance.
8. Absence reports and associated documents will be retained in line with agreed University policy.
9. All potentially significant absences should be reported as soon as is practical, by completing part 1 of the MyCampus absence report. Part 2 of the MyCampus absence report should be completed on return to university. The normal submission deadline for the completed absence report is 7 days after return to the University.
10. Students with a disability related absence and who have their support coordinated by the Disability Service are not expected to complete multiple absence reports for absences related to their disability.
11. Any request for a period of suspension due to illness or adverse circumstances should be made to your Graduate schools as soon as is practical. Retrospective requests would only be considered in the most exceptional of circumstances.

12. The University is not generally able to provide funding to students to cover periods of absence. Students should consult with their supervisors, Graduate Schools and relevant student services to determine if any funding or additional support is available in individual circumstances. For example, students may be eligible for the hardship or crisis funds via the Registry Office: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/registry/finance/funds/> and may also wish to contact the SRC for support: <https://www.glasgowstudent.net/blog/benefits-students/>.
13. Where students receive funding from external sources for stipendiary payments, they may be entitled to continue to receive these during periods of absence (please note that parental leave is covered under a separate policy) subject to the terms and conditions of the source of the funding:
 - The extent to which payments may continue or whether students should consider a temporary suspension of study will be guided by individual funders' policies. Students have an obligation to make themselves aware of and make sure that they do not violate these policies.
 - Students receiving stipends from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) doctoral training funding who are within their funded period can, with a medical certificate or other appropriate evidence, suspend study for up to 13 weeks in a 12-month period and continue to receive stipend payments. For periods of suspension in excess of 13 weeks, stipend payments will be also be suspended. Suspensions of study are not granted retrospectively.
 - Students funded directly through research grants should contact their supervisor and their Principal Investigator to confirm whether any funding to cover periods of absence is available within the grant.
 - If you are funded by internal University funding (e.g. a College Scholarship, Kelvin Smith Scholarship) and receiving a stipend, you may suspend study and continue to receive your stipend payments for 13 weeks on the same basis as for UKRI funded students. For periods of suspension in excess of 13 weeks, stipend payments will be also be suspended. Suspensions of study are not granted retrospectively.