

Guidance on Monitoring the Attendance and Wellbeing of Undergraduate Students Abroad

Regulation XX (Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students), extends to students who are undertaking a period abroad on an international placement (including study, work, or volunteering) or conducting independent fieldwork¹. The attendance and wellbeing of students participating in group fieldwork will be monitored by the accompanying on-site staff.

Where students are abroad, the University has a responsibility to ensure their wellbeing, monitor their progress, and to identify where they may need additional support, or where they are failing to follow their course with due diligence. Monitoring the attendance and wellbeing of students abroad requires not only contact from The University of Manchester but a requirement for an active response from the student and a process to review the response, and where relevant, follow-up with the student.

International Tier IV students who are on an international mobility placement are included in the process outlined below. In addition, there are further attendance monitoring requirements for these students based on the Guidance for Staff on the International Census².

Use of My Placement³

It is anticipated that in most cases the attendance and wellbeing of undergraduate students undertaking a period abroad on an international placement will be monitored through My Placement as follows:

- Required contact points with students will be partially automated within the system using simple questionnaires (see appendix 1). The questionnaires will be 'activated' at key points during the period abroad;
- Students must respond to the questionnaires and will receive an initial notification/reminder at the relevant stage of the placement, followed by daily or weekly⁴ automated reminders), until the requested action has been completed;
- The questionnaires will incorporate reminders of key actions that students need to take, for example, updating their contact details or registering for Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice updates.

Contact points for monitoring wellbeing

The arrangements for communicating with students on international placements should be set in advance and communicated to the student in written guidance before they go abroad with clear responsibility placed on the

¹ Independent fieldwork constitutes lone working in the field and not led by any on-site staff.

² <http://www.saa.manchester.ac.uk/student-immigration/censusandattendancemonitoring/>

³ My Placement is a web-based software system that is used for managing placement activity for the University of Manchester students.

⁴ The My Placement system currently provides the option to issue automatic notifications/reminders daily or weekly. In the absence of other alternative timeframes, it is felt that more frequent rather than less frequent reminders is desirable given the wellbeing/safety concerns associated with the monitoring.

student to actively engage with the monitoring process. The International Programmes Office (IPO) will ensure that the monitoring questionnaires are attached to all undergraduate student records in My Placement.

The standard monitoring points include:

For all placements:

1. On arrival - for the student to confirm their safe arrival
2. On conclusion of the period abroad – for the student to confirm completion of the placement

For placements longer than 2 months (as above plus):

3. A census point approximately midway through the period abroad – for the student to confirm their continued wellbeing

For year-long placements (typically 8 months or more) (as above plus):

4. A further 1-2 census points – for the student to confirm their continued well-being

'Census' points will be set in My Placement as predetermined dates for all students on placements longer than two months. It is recognised that some students will receive monitoring requests earlier or later in their placement than others but this approach ensures more effective business processes and the opportunity for Schools to focus staff resources at key points.

If students do not have internet access while abroad, an analogous system must be put in place and contact manually recorded in My Placement. Where there is no reasonable access to any means of communication, appropriate preparation and support in lieu of continuous monitoring should be addressed in a specific risk assessment.

Responsibility for monitoring wellbeing

A designated contact in the School should run weekly checks on My Placement throughout the year (or as appropriate depending on their placement timelines) to review questionnaire completion rates by their students. This process will show whether students have completed monitoring questionnaires at the required points and allow Schools to identify students needing further follow up and record actions undertaken. The exception to this will be international programmes managed directly by central services such as the IPO where checks will be undertaken by the relevant service⁵. Progress and Wellbeing questionnaires will be delivered at predetermined 'census' points during the year – 31st October, 31st March and 30th June (provisional). Schools should run checks at least twice a week during these periods and during the arrivals periods to ensure that monitoring time frames can be adhered to.

The target is to confirm wellbeing from the student or a reliable third party as soon as possible after a required monitoring point and within a maximum period of 21 days for arrival and 28 days for census points.⁶

⁵ International programmes where monitoring is conducted by the IPO include: All semester/year-long study exchange placements (excl. students studying modern language degrees or 'with a modern language', Medicine with European Studies, Life Sciences degrees and all AMBS Programmes) and IPO led summer programmes. The IPO does not have oversight for the monitoring of any students on international work/professional experience placements.

⁶ This aims to provide a reasonable time frame for communication taking into account time zones, weekends and holidays, reasonable times to await responses and internal business processes/ staff workloads.

The IPO will run monthly reports to oversee questionnaire completion rates.

Arrival Monitoring

On arrival, students will receive daily automated reminders to complete an arrivals questionnaire. The reminders will continue until the student completes the questionnaire. On day 7, the My Placement system will send an automated 'personalised' email to students who have still not completed the questionnaire.

Students are expected to respond within 7 days of their anticipated arrival date. If this period is exceeded, steps should be taken by their School or Service to contact them.

Progress and Wellbeing Census Points

Students will receive daily reminders following the determined census points to complete the Progress and Wellbeing questionnaire. On day 14, the My Placement system will send an automated 'personalised' email to students who have still not completed the questionnaire.

Students are expected to respond within 14 days of a Progress and Wellbeing census point. If this period is exceeded, steps should be taken by their School or Service to contact them.

Completion Monitoring Point

On completion of their placement, students will receive weekly automated reminders to fill in a completion questionnaire. Students who have not responded to the completion questionnaire will continue to receive weekly reminders but do not need to be followed up unless there have been prior concerns about their wellbeing. In cases where there have been prior concerns which are recorded in My Placement, all relevant standard contact steps should be followed.

Steps to contact students

Where a student has not responded to an arrival or wellbeing census point, the School or Service should take steps to make contact with the student. These steps should be recorded in My Placement in a follow up questionnaire against the individual student record:

The following actions can be taken in the order that the School or Service considers likely to be most effective. However, the emergency contact should be used ONLY after all viable steps have been attempted⁷. These steps should normally include:

- Check if the student has uploaded verified proof of arrival or similar documentation on My Placement e.g. an Erasmus Certificate of Arrival or Sydney Chaffers Confirmation of Registration (only applicable to the arrival monitoring point; and only viable for students on specific schemes requiring verified proof of arrival such as Erasmus+). An Erasmus Learning Contract does NOT count as evidence of arrival.
- Attempt to contact the student by telephone if a valid telephone number has been provided;

⁷ The use of the emergency contact is under review by the University. Before taking this step please contact Paul Redmond, Director of Student Life, to discuss whether it is appropriate to use.

- Check if the student or placement provider has been in contact with other key members of staff in the School or IPO (for students participating in Erasmus). Typically a check should be made with the Academic Exchange Adviser or Placement Coordinator and the student's personal Academic Adviser (or equivalent). These colleagues should be asked to notify the relevant person/office immediately if they hear from the student. If any other required documentation has been requested from the student by the School within the relevant monitoring period e.g. placement information forms, health and safety questionnaires, verification of enrolment, reflective pieces etc., then a check should be made as to whether these have been submitted.
- Email the student to ask them to confirm their arrival and to remind them to complete the questionnaire allowing up to 3 days for a reply.
- Send a formal letter using the standard template or similar (see Appendix 2) to the student's permanent home address marked as urgent.
- Email the host institution/ supervisor using the standard template or similar (see Appendix 2) - allowing up to 3 working days for a reply and following-up by telephone if there is no response.
- If no verification of wellbeing has been received after ALL the steps above have been followed then the student's listed emergency contact should be used⁷.
- In the event that the emergency contact is unable to confirm the wellbeing of the student then the School should contact the International Programmes Office to discuss further action.

If any of the above actions provide confirmation from a reliable source⁸ of a student's arrival or continued wellbeing, this can be taken as sufficient evidence and recorded in My Placement. The student will continue to receive reminders to complete the relevant questionnaire but they will be removed from the internal checks run by Schools/ Services.

Recording and monitoring academic attainment and progression

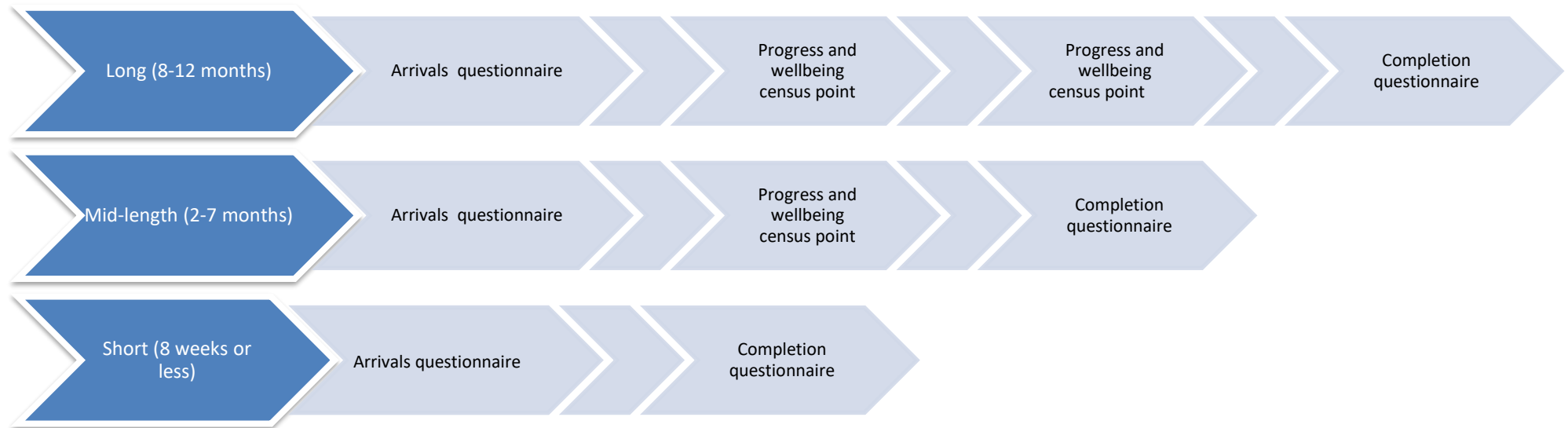
In addition to this series of electronic contact points, for students on placements longer than 2 months at least one personal academic contact per semester (or similar) should be made between the student and their Manchester Academic Exchange Adviser/Supervisor or their Academic Adviser (or equivalent) and a record of this contact should be made on My Placement. This could take the form of a Skype conversation or phone call, a 'face-to-face' meeting/pastoral visit, or a 'live' conversation via a social media platform, dialogue concerning a student's blog or similar. Practice in some Schools requires or encourages students on placements to keep **regular reflective diaries/learning logs**, sometimes signed off by a local supervisor. This is particularly useful for students on work placements.

Schools must follow procedures in Regulation XX (Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students) and the related Policy with some practical amendments based on the distances involved for placements abroad. There should be processes in place in the School to escalate issues related to lack of attendance or poor performance of students while abroad once these have been identified during the monitoring process.

⁸ This could be from a member of staff in the partner institution responsible for international placements or student records; from a member of staff within the School; from a close family member; it should not be from another student.

Table 1 – Wellbeing monitoring points for undergraduate students on international placements

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Students undertaking two consecutive placements will be monitored separately for each placement

Appendix 1 – Monitoring questionnaires

On Arrival Monitoring Questionnaire

Instructions:

The University of Manchester wants to make sure that you are safe and well throughout your placement abroad. In order to help us do this, we need you to respond to us promptly via questionnaires sent to you at key points.

It is very important that you complete the questionnaires when requested. We expect you to complete the arrival and completion questionnaires within 7 days of the questionnaire being activated and the on placement census point questionnaires within 14 days.

We take your wellbeing very seriously so if you do not respond we will take steps to ensure that you are safe and well including:

- Continue to send daily reminder emails through the My Placement system until you complete the questionnaires
- Call you directly (if you have provided a valid overseas phone number)
- Contact your placement provider to confirm your attendance/ wellbeing
- If none of the above allow us to verify your safety and wellbeing, we will contact your listed emergency contact person

Please take the few minutes required to answer the questions on My Placement as soon as you can to avoid causing concern and to allow us to focus on supporting students who are genuinely in difficulty.

1. I have updated my contact details on the UoM student portal (*)

If you have not already done this, you can do so now by logging into the student portal to complete this.

1. Go to www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk and login
 2. Select: My Services – Student System – Campus Personal Information
 3. Update your term-time address with your new overseas home address, telephone number and any email addresses you check regularly in your host country. Please mark your overseas phone number as your preferred contact number.
- If you are in temporary accommodation for more than a week you should provide your temporary accommodation information until you have more permanent accommodation and then update with your permanent details once you know them.

2. I have checked and, if necessary, updated my emergency contact details on the UoM student portal (*)

If you have not already done this, you can do so now by logging into the student portal.

1. Go to www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk and login
2. Select: My Services – Student System – Campus Personal Information
3. Update your emergency contact

It is important that we know who to contact in the case of an emergency while you are abroad.

3. I have registered for Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice updates for my host country (*)

If you have not already done this, you can do so now by going to <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> and signing up for regular updates on the country or countries you are staying in and travelling to. In any local emergency you should check the FCO advice immediately.

4. I am aware that I should contact UoM if any issues arise that may affect my progress or my wellbeing (*)

You are still a registered student at UoM and so you should stay in touch, especially if you are encountering issues related to your academic progress or personal wellbeing

5. I will check my UoM email AT LEAST once a week (*)

It is important that you keep in touch with Manchester while abroad. UoM will normally contact you via email so it is important that you check your Manchester email address on a regular basis. If you wish, you can automatically forward all emails to a separate personal mailbox that you check more regularly to help ensure you don't miss out on important messages.

6. I will ensure that I am familiar with how to access local medical provision (*)

If you have not already done this, it is important that you find out about how to access local medical provision, both for regular care and emergencies. Input numbers for healthcare services into your phone so you can access them quickly.

Progress and Wellbeing Census Point:

Instructions:

We want to know that you are continuing to do well during your time abroad. You are still a registered student at The University of Manchester and can access support systems at a distance if you need to. If you have any concerns about your wellbeing or progress make sure you make your placement coordinator at The University of Manchester aware.

1. My contact details are up-to-date on the student portal (*)

You should log into the student portal to check this.

1. Go to www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk and login

2. Select: My Services – Student System – Campus Personal Information

3. Update your term-time address with your overseas home address, telephone number and any email addresses you check regularly in your host country. Please mark your overseas phone number as your preferred contact number.

2. I will inform UoM if there are any issues that might impact negatively on my academic performance (*)

If you are aware of any issues that are negatively impacting the successful completion of your placement, please notify your placement coordinator at Manchester now so we can support and advise you.

3. I will keep in touch with UoM if I have any concerns about my general wellbeing (*)

If you have any concerns about your safety, personal wellbeing or health, please notify your placement coordinator at Manchester now so we can support and advise you.

4. I will continue to check my UoM email account AT LEAST once a week until the end of my placement and regularly during vacation periods. (*)

It is important that you keep in touch with Manchester while abroad. The University will normally contact you via email so it is important that you check your Manchester email address on a regular basis. If you wish, you can automatically forward all emails to a separate personal mailbox that you check more regularly to help ensure you don't miss out on important messages. You should continue to check your emails during vacation periods in case any issues related to your placement need addressing during this period.

On Completion of Placement Questionnaire:**Instructions:**

You should complete this as soon as possible after the completion of your placement abroad.

1. Have you completed your placement as expected? (*)

I have completed my placement as expected. I am not aware of any outstanding issues.

I have completed my placement but there are some outstanding issues. I will contact my Placement Coordinator about these as soon as possible.

2. Have you now returned to the UK/ your home country? (*)

Please be aware that once your placement has been completed if you choose to undertake further travel you are doing so independently. From 14 days after your placement end date you are no longer covered by The University of Manchester travel insurance or support services. Please ensure that you have taken out appropriate travel insurance and have provided a full itinerary to a family member or responsible friend.

No, I am undertaking further travel post placement
Yes, I am home safely.

Appendix 2 - How to monitor students in My Placement

Template email for daily automated reminders

You need to complete the Confirmation of Arrival/ Progress and Wellbeing Check (+ relevant date)/ Confirmation of Completion **(delete as appropriate)** questionnaire in My Placement. Please log in to the My Placement system and make sure that you complete it as soon as possible. Email reminders will be sent daily until you complete the questionnaire so please take action now.

Please do not reply to this email. This is an unmonitored email address and replies to this email will not be read or responded to. You should contact your placement coordinator at the University if you need to make direct contact.

Template automated 'personalised' email for students (to be used after day 7 for arrivals/ day 14 for midway Progress and Wellbeing census points)

Our records show that you have not completed the Confirmation of Arrival/ Progress and Wellbeing Check (+ relevant date) **(delete as appropriate)** questionnaire in My Placement. It is essential that you do this immediately. We want to make sure you are safe and well.

If you don't complete the questionnaire, The University of Manchester will take further steps to confirm your wellbeing. This will include attempting to call you (if you have provided a valid phone number), contacting your placement provider, and, if these are not successful, using your listed contact for emergencies. Please take the few minutes required to answer the questions on My Placement as soon as you can to avoid causing further concern and to allow us to focus on supporting students who are genuinely in difficulty.

This is a mandatory requirement for your placement so please ensure that you log in to My Placement to complete it. If you do not take action immediately on receipt of this email we will start to take further steps as outlined above as we will work on the basis that something is wrong.

Please do not reply to this email. This is an unmonitored email address and replies to this email will not be read or responded to. You should contact your placement coordinator at the University if you need to make direct contact.

Template automated 'personalised' email for students to be used after day 7 for the Completion questionnaire

Our records show that you have not completed the Confirmation of Completion questionnaire in My Placement. It is essential that you do this immediately. We want to make sure you have completed your placement as expected.

This is a mandatory requirement for your placement so please ensure that you log in to My Placement to complete it.

Please do not reply to this email. This is an unmonitored email address and replies to this email will not be read or responded to. You should contact your placement coordinator at the University if you need to make direct contact.

Template formal letter to student's permanent home address

Dear

Our records show that you have not completed an attendance and wellbeing questionnaire in My Placement (link here) for the University of Manchester. This is a mandatory requirement so please ensure that you log in and complete it as soon as possible. We have attempted to contact you by other means but have received no response to date.

We would like to confirm that you are still actively undertaking your international placement. If you have returned home and/ or are no longer at your placement location you must contact us as soon as possible with further information.

We are concerned to ensure that you are safe and well and that there are no issues negatively affecting your placement.

When you complete the questionnaire we will take this as evidence of your continued participation in your placement as expected and will not require further confirmation. However if you are no longer attending your placement or if you have any concerns about your wellbeing, academic progress or other matters please contact us as soon as possible

Yours Sincerely

Template email for partners

Dear partner/ placement provider

Thank you for hosting our student(s).

The University of Manchester has a system in place for monitoring the attendance and wellbeing of our students overseas. The following students have not checked in and they have not responded to any of our direct attempts to communicate with them:

names

Could you please confirm that they are pursuing their placement or studies with you as expected and that they have been attending regularly. If there is any additional information with regard to the above student(s) that we should be aware of, we'd be very grateful if you could let us know

Document control box	
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Next Review Date	Review dates 07/2016, 07/ 2017 and every 3 years thereafter
Related Statutes, Ordinances, General	Regulation XX - Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students;
Related Policies	Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance
Related Procedures and Guidance:	Principles and Procedures for Student Placements on Taught Programmes; Checklists for Placement Learning; Guidance for Staff on the International Student Census
Reviewed by Health and Safety Services	28 th April 2016
Policy Owner	International Programmes Office (IPO)
Lead Contact:	Caroline Whitehand, Manager, International Programmes Office