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Introduction

The University of Edinburgh has “Highly Trusted Sponsor” status as a sponsor of international students within the UK immigration system (known as ‘Tier 4’ students) and is required to evidence robust process and systems that demonstrate oversight of Tier 4 student attendance and engagement with their programme of study. The University is required to demonstrate that sponsored students are attending and engaging in their programme of study and that there are active procedures in place to identify and address attendance/engagement patterns of concern.

The University’s Student Attendance and Engagement Policy supports the improvement of the overall Tier 4 student experience by identifying where students may be experiencing difficulties and ensuring that timely and appropriate intervention can be delivered to provide support. The policy outlines how the University will deliver this: it is provided in the next section of this handbook.

The University is subject to audit visits by UK Visas and Immigration officials from within the Home Office. If the Home Office were to conclude that attendance and engagement monitoring was not being implemented as required, the University might face either a suspension or revocation of its Home Office Tier 4 Sponsor licence and Highly Trusted Sponsor Status. Aside from the significant reputational and financial damage this could cause, it would place the immigration status of all Tier 4 students at the University of Edinburgh at risk and would also be likely to impact upon all sponsored skilled workers employed at the University.

One of the key areas used to assess the University as a sponsor is its performance in its management of student attendance and engagement. The University’s Policy is therefore based on the identification and monitoring of a minimum of 10 contact points across the academic year for all Tier 4 students. Some contact points record student attendance and are monitored by Student Administration, and some contact points record various types of student engagement and are monitored by Schools.

Some Schools may wish to record more than the minimum prescribed numbers of contact points thereby subsuming those points within a larger range of monitoring data, and so build up a far more comprehensive set of information on patterns of engagement, in order to provide more responsive and effective pastoral support for Tier 4 students. Some Schools may also wish to extend the monitoring to include non-Tier 4 students also.

This handbook provides the core information needed by the College of Science and Engineering (CSE) School Tier 4 Contact Officers and others tasked with carrying out student attendance and engagement work.
Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

A copy of the full University Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy is available at http://www.ed.ac.uk/international-office/immigration/staff-guidance/staff-policy-documents

Below are the key precepts of the policy - the link to the electronic version is:

1. The host School/College of the programme have oversight and responsibility for the students in relation to this policy.

2. A minimum of 10 points contact throughout each academic year must be identified by each School. The points should be spread evenly throughout the academic year, for each year of the programme of study and must involve a mixture of both ‘attendance’ and ‘engagement’ points. Colleges may monitor more than 10 points if they wish.

3. The ‘attendance’ points are organised and monitored by Student Administration, and Schools identify and monitor the ‘engagement’ points.

4. EUCLID will be used to record the attendance and engagement records of individual students and will be used to demonstrate that attendance and engagement is being recorded for students and that non-attendance is recorded and/or noted and acted upon. These records must be kept up to date.

5. Schools are required to review the ‘engagement’ data that they collect and record on a regular basis and act on any attendance data sent to them by Student Administration which highlights absence.

6. These reviews will determine whether and what appropriate action needs to be initiated, including following up with the student whose ‘attendance’ and ‘engagement’ record requires escalation. Escalation should be recorded on EUCLID.

7. The University is required to report to the Home Office within 10 working days any Tier 4 student whose lack of attendance or engagement or lack of progress has resulted in their exclusion, thereby cancelling the University’s education sponsorship of the student in the UK.

8. Students with a Tier 4 visa must ensure they have obtained the appropriate visa for studying in the UK in advance of enrolling at the University of Edinburgh. Tier 4 visa holders are expected to be in attendance on their chosen programme and actively engage with it, as required within relevant academic regulations. If there are any queries regarding this, students should approach their Supervisor, Personal Tutor or the International Office for advice.

9. Students with a Tier 4 visa must ensure the University holds their most up to date contact details on the student record. This can be updated via MyEd.

10. Students with a Tier 4 visa must ensure they use their student email address and must respond timeously to official contact from the University.
College actions to implement the Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

At School level, Heads of School should show strong leadership for School-level compliance requirements. Heads should ensure that compliance is given priority within their School, support their Tier 4 Contact Officer and other staff involved in monitoring and reviewing student engagement, and ensure that monitoring is undertaken in line with the School’s Engagement Monitoring Plan.

At College-level, the College needs to be able to provide assurance to the University that the College has the necessary mechanisms in place and that they are working in practice. This entails:

- Having strong engagement monitoring procedures – guidance on the format and implementation of School Engagement Monitoring Plans are given in sections below.
- Undertaking regular inspections of School compliance, including sampling individual student records, and taking follow-up action is necessary.
- Providing advice and support for Schools.

The College is appointing a College Student Engagement Officer to manage the risk associated with these tasks. The Officer will undertake School audit visits each semester and also themed visits looking at particular cohorts of students across the College. The Officer will liaise closely with the Compliance Section and International Office concerning updates and change to the Home Office guidance and help communicate these changes to Schools.
CSE School Tier 4 Contact Officers

- **Role Descriptor**

  The Tier 4 Contact Officer role is responsible for overseeing School based compliance in relation to the University’s legal duties and obligations as a sponsor within the UK immigration system which is directly linked to the maintenance of the University’s Home Office Tier 4 licence and Highly Trusted Sponsor status. The Head of School and Director of Professional Services have overall responsibility for compliance relating to Tier 4 and UK Visas and Immigration sponsor obligations within their School.

  The Tier 4 Contact Officer is responsible for ensuring, on behalf of Directors of Professional Services and the Head of School, that all relevant University policies and guidelines relating to Tier 4 are effectively implemented and adhered to within the School and that School staff are aware of their duties and obligations in relation to the University’s Tier 4 sponsor licence.

  The Tier 4 Contact Officer acts as the key contact for staff across the School in relation to Tier 4 and for senior staff across central and College administration. The role reports to the Director of Professional Services in the School and the Registrar at College level, who has strategic responsibility for compliance and engagement across all Schools.

- **Duties and Responsibilities**

  1. **Compliance Management**

     The Head of School and Director of Professional Services are responsible for ensuring that the School is fully compliant with Home Office sponsor guidelines and University policies relating to Tier 4 and that these are effectively implemented, regularly tested and reviewed.

     The Tier 4 Contact Officers will deliver this by ensuring that:

     - All School data is recorded and maintained in line with the University’s Attendance and Engagement Policy and that records are robust and available for audit purposes.
     - All Tier 4 students who intend to go on work placements, go abroad programmes for any duration are advised appropriately by the School and records are updated to reflect this period of study/work away from the University.
     - They represent the School at the Tier 4 Contact Group and attend training sessions provided by Student Administration and the International Office.
     - There is engagement of staff in undertaking the Schools obligations with regards to the University’s Home Office licence. They will assist staff from Student Administration and the International Office in maintaining and upholding the University’s Tier 4 Home Office licence.
• They act as the key contact for communications by the International Office and Student Administration relating to Tier 4 and that these are appropriately communicated to School staff (this includes responding to e-mails from these Offices).

• They regularly review central University guidance and documentation on the Tier 4 Managed Migration for Staff wiki site, run by the International Office, to ensure that their knowledge and understanding of Tier 4 is up to date.

• They ensure that information on School schedules; recording methods, reviews and process for reporting are maintained on the Tier 4 Managed Migration for Staff wiki site as the golden copy.

• They act as the lead School contact for College and University administration in relation to Tier 4 and for Home Office audit visits, preparation for audit and assist with Internal University audits relating to School compliance.

2. Tier 4 Student Engagement

The Tier 4 Contact Officers will ensure that:

• The School is fully compliant with the University’s Attendance and Engagement Policy and Home Office student engagement and monitoring requirements. Where there are delays or difficulties these will be reported immediately to the Head of School and/or Director of Professional Services for action.

• School records of student engagement monitoring are maintained and that these records can be made available for inspection and audit requirements when requested. These records must be made available as required by the Home Office as part of their compliance visit. While notice is normally given, visits can be conducted with minimal or no prior notification.

• Student engagement data is robust, regularly reviewed and that any changes in Tier 4 student status are reported immediately to Student Administration in accordance with University policy.

• School data related to engagement is reviewed weekly to verify that it is robust and in line with requirements for Home Office audit purposes, and action is taken on any data omissions or non-engaging students.

• Colleagues are made aware of their obligations in relation to School based engagement monitoring and Tier 4 and any issues are resolved, if necessary by the Head of School and/or the Director of Professional Services.

3. Tier 4 International Students

The Tier 4 Contact Officers will ensure that:

• Once academic and/or School decisions have been made (for example: progression, interruption of studies, withdrawal, exclusion), the specific impact in relation to Tier 4 international students on visas and wider implication for student’s current and future immigration is taken into account and managed accordingly.
• Student engagement and attendance points are recorded routinely as required across the year and that data is updated and robust on system and accessible at short notice in full.

• Tier 4 students who are away from the University (internship, conference, working, studying) are recorded on system and that regular communication with the host is undertaken and recorded regarding ongoing student engagement.

• Changes to student circumstances are immediately reported to relevant contacts within College and Student Administration and that staff are aware that failure to do so may result in adverse impacts for a student’s current and future immigration status in the UK.

The role of the Tier 4 Contact Officers is held on the Tier 4 Managed Migration Wiki (which requires EASE authentication to access) at https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/T4MMSI/Tier+4+Contact+Officers

• CSE Tier 4 Contact Officers

CSE’s Tier 4 Contact Officers are listed below.

The College Registrar is the lead within the College in relation to Tier 4, supported by the Head of Academic Affairs. The Registrar oversees the network of Tier 4 Contact Officers and that the list for the College is updated and maintained. Any changes to Tier 4 Contact Officer details must be notified to: isas@ed.ac.uk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Tier 4 Contact</th>
<th>Email / Extension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>Ann Haley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ann.haley@ed.ac.uk">ann.haley@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Linda Burns</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Linda.Burns@ed.ac.uk">Linda.Burns@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Victoria Farrar</td>
<td><a href="mailto:V.Farrar@ed.ac.uk">V.Farrar@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GeoSciences</td>
<td>Faten Adam</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Faten.Adam@ed.ac.uk">Faten.Adam@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informatics</td>
<td>Neil Heatley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:neil.heatley@ed.ac.uk">neil.heatley@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Or if not available either</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(UG &amp; PGT students): Kate Farrow, <a href="mailto:kate.farrow@ed.ac.uk">kate.farrow@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>51 3211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(PGR students): Fraser Pullar, <a href="mailto:Fraser.Pullar@ed.ac.uk">Fraser.Pullar@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>50 2706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Fiona Curle</td>
<td><a href="mailto:F.Curle@ed.ac.uk">F.Curle@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics &amp; Astronomy</td>
<td>Rosie Edwards</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rosie.edwards@ed.ac.uk">rosie.edwards@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Office</td>
<td>Joy Candlish</td>
<td><a href="mailto:joy.candlsih@ed.ac.uk">joy.candlsih@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Engagement Monitoring Plans

Each School must have one or more School Engagement Monitoring Plans, covering all students “owned” by their School (i.e. students on a programme owned by the School, as designated in EUCLID) on all courses across all levels of study:

- undergraduate
- taught postgraduate
- research postgraduate, including writing up
- incoming and outgoing students on visiting and exchange programmes
- students studying away from Edinburgh on Leave of Absence

The Plans for each School will be held on the Tier 4 Managed Migration Wiki at [https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?title=Science+and+Engineering&spaceKey=T4MMSI](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?title=Science+and+Engineering&spaceKey=T4MMSI) (note EASE authentication is required to access this link).

Schools should ensure that the International Office has any updated version of the Plans. Any changes should be notified to: immigrationcompliance@ed.ac.uk

The School Engagement Monitoring Plan must include the following:

- definitions of engagement points and the pattern of engagement and attendance points throughout the year for particular cohorts of students;
- procedures and responsibilities for the entry of engagement data into EUCLID and review of that data to identify cases of non-engagement; and
- procedures and responsibilities for addressing cases on non-engagement and, where necessary, escalating cases to College or University level.

### Defining Contact Points

A minimum of 10 contact points throughout each academic year must be identified by each School. **The points should be spread evenly throughout the academic year** for each year of the programme of study, **and must involve a mixture of both ‘attendance’ and ‘engagement’ points.**

The ‘attendance’ points are organised and monitored by Student Administration, and Schools identify and monitor the ‘engagement’ points.

### Attendance Points

Student Administration will use the following to record attendance:

- Confirmation of Attendance element of matriculation;
- Census points; and
o Attendance at an examination diet’ (where applicable)
   * Student Administration will only record in EUCLID whether a student has attended at
     least one examination in the diet. It will not record all exam attendance. Schools will
     receive information from Student Administration on absences from exams which
     Schools can use for pastoral purposes. It will also highlight absences by Tier 4
     students, so that Schools may explore the cause of the absence.

The schedule of **attendance** points is:

- Confirmation of Attendance: September
- Census point: October
- Examination diet: December (where applicable)
- Semester 2 census point: January
- Semester 2 census point: March
- Examination diet: May / June (where applicable)
- Census point: July (for PGT and PGR)

### Engagement Points

Schools must define a sufficient number of **engagement** points for each cohort of
students to ensure that each student will have at least 10 contact points (**attendance**
and **engagement**) throughout the year.

**Schools are strongly encouraged to go beyond this minimum and define at least 10
genagement points through the year to (i.e. have more than 10 total contact points) to ensure that the minimum number of contact points is met, even if some engagement points are missed.**

Examples of engagement points can include:

- Submission of assessed work (assignments)
- Programme induction sessions
- Submission of coursework either in-person or electronically
- Attendance at feedback or feed-forward events
- Achieving research or writing-up milestones as per agreed schedule/timeline or research plan
- Accessing and engaging with online/virtual learning content
- Meetings with PTs/supervisors
- Vivas or presentations of project work
- Laboratory practical sessions
- Lectures or specific seminars / tutorials (for example, during a defined period in the academic year)
• **Entering Engagement Data into EUCLID**

EUCLID will be used to record the attendance and engagement records of individual students and will be used to demonstrate that attendance and engagement is being recorded for students and that non-attendance is recorded and/or noted and acted upon. These records must be kept up to date.

Guidance on the use of the IT tools for recording attendance and creating and maintaining engagement events in EUCLID can be found on the Student Systems web page: [http://www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/staff/user_guides/student_engagement/index.htm](http://www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/staff/user_guides/student_engagement/index.htm)

Note that at present there is no direct link between the Personal Tutor Notes system in EUCLID and the Engagement Tab system in EUCLID. If a Personal Tutor wishes a meeting to be considered an engagement event, then this must be entered into the Engagement Tab.

Collection of engagement data and uploading the data into the EUCLID Engagement tab must be done promptly, so that timely review of the data can be made.

• **Reviewing Data**

Effective monitoring is not a passive data collection exercise. Schools are required to review the engagement data that they collect and record in EUCLID, and any attendance data provided by Student Administration (for instance, failure to attend a census or failure to confirm attendance at matriculation), on a regular basis, looking for exceptions to regular engagement, to identify students who may be experiencing problems. Good practice would be to run BI reports on the EUCLID Engagement tab data at least every fortnight, to identify students with gaps emerging in attendance and engagement.

Guidance on the use of the IT tools for reporting on the attendance and engagement data in EUCLID can be found on the Student Systems web page: [https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/IP/Engagement+Monitoring+Toolkit](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/IP/Engagement+Monitoring+Toolkit)

These reviews will determine whether and what appropriate action needs to be initiated, including following up with the student whose ‘attendance’ and ‘engagement’ record requires escalation.

• **Escalation Procedure**

Schools should exercise professional judgment in determining how to interpret absences and lack of engagement and when to escalate matters. Some Schools may have more data to record than others due to the nature of the academic discipline or the level of study, e.g. if a School routinely monitors engagement at laboratories.
A suggested four-stage escalation schedule is described below, comprising an informal stage of enquiry followed by two further stages, each requiring investigation of the situation and becoming increasingly formal. The Final stage may lead to exclusion of the student.

Each stage of escalation should be recorded in the appropriate numbered escalation tab in EUCLID. If after investigation it is found that a case should be closed as engagement is found to be satisfactory after all, the issues need be progressed no further and this should be recorded in EUCLID.

Note that a student may also be excluded by Student Administration due to failure to attend a census or failure to confirm attendance at matriculation.

1. **First Stage**

   If one scheduled contact point is missed without explanation or following significant delay, then an informal email message from the School should be sent to advise the student that active participation is expected on the programme and to highlight how to contact relevant members of support staff to discuss any issues.

2. **Second Stage**

   If two expected or scheduled contact points are missed without explanation, or following significant delay / chasing, then a formal email message from an appropriate School contact should be sent to advise the student of his/her responsibilities to attend the chosen programme. It would be at this stage that a reiteration of the Tier 4 sponsor/student relationship is appropriate and that a discussion of the requirement to report exclusion through non-attendance, and the implications of this for the student, would be proportionate. The student should be invited to discuss any issues affecting attendance/engagement with a relevant member of staff.

3. **Third Stage**

   If a student misses three consecutive contacts or reaches a third missed contact point during the year, then attendance/engagement could be reasonably deemed to be inconsistent and of concern. At this point, further investigation by an appropriate School contact should be undertaken, using all available engagement and attendance data, to determine whether the student is otherwise progressing with his/her programme and whether a more formal discussion with a Personal Tutor or Supervisor is merited.

4. **Fourth (Final) Stage**

   This is the stage where a student has consistently missed contact points or his/her attendance / engagement or progress more widely is at a level deemed unacceptable. This could include where the student did not attend a required Third Stage meeting or could provide no satisfactory evidence of willingness to engage.

   In such cases, the School will immediately refer the case to the College, via a College form, for consideration by the Dean of Learning and Teaching or Dean of Students as appropriate, as soon as possible. The Dean will consider the student's overall progression in relation to academic policies, including the Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies (see in particular sections 17 – 21 of that policy).
If the student is excluded, his/her record in EUCLID must be updated immediately to reflect the new status and the Immigration Compliance Manager alerted, so that sponsorship is withdrawn. A report to the Home Office follows within 10 working days of the date of decision to exclude. Tier 4 students who are excluded should be referred to the International Office for appropriate advice, via visahelp@ed.ac.uk

- Responsibilities

The School Tier 4 Contact Officer has overall operational responsibility for overseeing School based compliance in relation to the University's legal duties and obligations as a sponsor within the UK immigration system, as described above. In practice, some of tasks relating to defining of engagement points, entering engagement point data into EUCLID, reviewing of data and following escalation procedures may be undertaken by members of the Teaching Organisation, Graduate School or Student Support Team staff. It is important that there are clear lines of operational responsibility and the School Engagement Monitoring Plans must specify which person or section has operational responsibility for these tasks.

The Plan should also detail who would cover for the designated Tier 4 contact and other staff with operational responsibilities in the case of absence through illness or holidays.
University Contacts

**STUDENT ADMINISTRATION CONTACTS**

- Kate.Monroe@ed.ac.uk  
  Operations Manager (Immigration Compliance)
- Craig.Shearer@ed.ac.uk  
  Head of Student Administration Service
- compliancestaff@ed.ac.uk  
  Queries by staff
- immigrationcompliance@ed.ac.uk  
  Queries by students

**INTERNATIONAL OFFICE CONTACTS**

- Euan.Fergusson@ed.ac.uk  
  Tier 4 policy and guidance
- Alison.McDonald@ed.ac.uk  
  Student immigration and Tier 4 guidance
- isas@ed.ac.uk  
  Staff queries on Tier 4 matters

**COLLEGE CONTACTS**

- Joy.Candlish@ed.ac.uk  
  Operational responsibility for compliance and engagement across all Schools in CSE
- Vacancy  
  College Student Engagement Officer – main contact for Schools on Tier 4 matters

**STUDENT SYSTEM CONTACT**

- Lisa.Dawson@ed.ac.uk  
  Student Systems: Tier 4 Tools for PGR, PGT and UG recording

**COLLEGE WIKI GUIDANCE ON STUDENT ADMINISTRATION**

[http://www.ed.ac.uk/science-engineering/current-students/academic-affairs](http://www.ed.ac.uk/science-engineering/current-students/academic-affairs)

**INTERNATIONAL OFFICE TIER4 MANAGED MIGRATION WIKI FOR STAFF**

[https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?title=Tier+4+Managed+Migration%3A+Staff+Information+Home&spaceKey=T4MMSI](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?title=Tier+4+Managed+Migration%3A+Staff+Information+Home&spaceKey=T4MMSI)

- Note that accessing this link requires EASE authentication.
Frequently Asked Questions on Student Monitoring

Note: More general guidance on the implications of the Tier 4 regulations as they apply to sponsored students is contained in the Tier 4 Managed Migration wiki operated by the International Office (which requires EASE authentication) at:
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?title=Tier+4+Managed+Migration%3A+Staff+Information+Home&spaceKey=T4MMSI

1. What are the differences between Short Term Study and Tier 4 Visas?

We have the full range of sponsor monitoring duties for all students on a Tier 4 visa, as laid down by the Home Office. This covers collecting and recording passport/visa information and monitoring.

We have no such monitoring duties towards students on a Short Term Study Visa, e.g. visiting students who intend to study at the University for fewer than six months and who enter the UK with “Short Term Study” status. They will be monitored as part of the school’s general duty of care. They do not fall under the requirements of the UK Visas and Immigration Points Based System. However, we do have a duty to collect and record passport/visa information and the range of academic and pastoral duties, as towards any student.

2. How should we monitor Tier 4 students at Edinburgh on joint or collaborative degrees?

For a Tier 4 student on a joint degree within the University of Edinburgh, the School that owns the joint degree (as designated in EUCLID) has overall responsibility for monitoring the students.

For a student on a collaborative degree, there should be a Memorandum of Agreement which will specify which is the sponsor institution that will have overall responsibility for reporting continuous absence to UKVI. In cases where the student is taught at Edinburgh but sponsored by another institution, the partner institution should be notified of any regular unauthorised absence or non-engagement, and will investigate and if necessary report it.

3. How should we monitor Tier 4 students on Work Placements and Fieldwork?

Tier 4 students are permitted to carry out field work, internships, work placements or work based learning activities that are more than 20 hours per week during the academic year, where this is a required and an integral part of the programme as confirmed in the Degree Regulation and Programmes of Studies (DRPS) and as indicated in the Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) or reported to UK Visas and Immigration where relevant. The placement must be a mandatory requirement for the successful completion of the programme.

No other options for full time work away from the University exist for a Tier 4 student during their academic year and if permitted could cause serious difficulties for a student’s immigration record and the University’s Tier 4 Home Office licence.
The University still retains the obligation to monitor the engagement of students on field work or placements. In some instances, the process for monitoring attendance may need to be adapted to take account of the mode of study.

For Work Placements, the School should ensure that the placement providers will inform the School if the student does not arrive for the placement or has unauthorised absence.

For Fieldwork, the fieldwork tutor will monitor students’ attendance if they are participating in fieldwork away from the University. Any absences will be followed up at briefings and progress meetings that make up part of this activity.

4. **How should we monitor incoming Tier 4 Erasmus students?**

Monitoring of incoming Tier 4 Erasmus students should enable the School to determine that the students are engaging with their studies. As Erasmus students will be registered on courses, engagement monitoring for such students by Schools should be no different from that in place for other full-time students registered on the courses within the same School.

5. **How should we monitor incoming Tier 4 Study Abroad / Exchange students?**

It is the University’s responsibility to have oversight of the attendance and engagement of incoming Tier 4 exchange/visiting students during their stay at Edinburgh. The “owning” School (i.e. the School providing the Personal Tutor) is responsible for monitoring students in the same way as other students on courses within the School. However, these students are likely to show up in EUCLID as “College-owned”, so an extra BI report could be needed to ensure that these students are included in the monitoring.

6. **How should we monitor Tier 4 study away or “Leave of Absence” students?**

Even where students are studying elsewhere, the University still has a responsibility to monitor their progress, to identify where students may need additional support, or where they are failing to follow their course with due diligence.

Where the student is a Tier 4 visa holder, the requirement to monitor attendance regularly during periods of work or study placements (whether they are located in the UK or abroad) is a legal one and failure to evidence monitoring arrangements could have serious implications for the University’s Tier 4 licence and the student’s sponsorship.

Both ‘Study away - Whole Year’ and ‘Study away - Part Year’ students remain the responsibility of the “owning” School. Monitoring of such students should enable the School to determine that the student is engaging effectively with their period of study or work away from the University. The School will need to decide what type and frequency of interaction(s) will best suit monitoring of any such students. This is likely to include obtaining reports/confirmation from local supervisors/placement managers/contacts, and maintaining some contact, for instance by email or instant messaging, with the student. A record should be made to show that there has been a satisfactory link using the appropriate UG/PGT/PGR EUCLID engagement tab. On some degree programmes the level of monitoring will be determined by professional requirements.
7. How should we monitor Tier 4 students on English language pre-sessional courses in Office of Lifelong Learning (OLL)'s Language Centre?

OLL is responsible for creating Monitoring Plans appropriate for these courses, and for monitoring these students’ attendance and engagement. If students are absent without giving a reason, they will be contacted by the Language Centre at OLL by telephone, e-mail or letter. If no response is received, the students’ details will be escalated and handled in exactly the same way as for any other non-attending student. Such students could also be excluded from the University and reported to the UKVI for non-attendance/engagement.

8. How should we monitor Tier 4 students on project or dissertation work?

Such students, usually final year Hons UG and PGT, are not expected to attend classes, but are allocated a supervisor with whom they should regularly discuss progress. The supervisor should report any non-attendance or engagement to a School officer who is responsible for following up absence issues in discussion with the student and supervisor.

9. What are Schools’ duties to Tier 4 ’interrupted students’?

Schools have pastoral support duties to any students who have interrupted their study. The usual definition of a student who has interrupted is one who is ill, or has possibly suffered a family bereavement. Such students should not undertake any work during this time of approved interruption.

It is likely that a Tier 4 student would still be in the UK if it was an absence of 60 days or less. During that time, we have no UKVI sponsor monitoring duties.

However, Schools do have pastoral support duties to any student in this position, and so there should be some low-key emails querying about the student’s health/progress / expected date of return. If students are on interruption of a week or two due to ill health or a bereavement, then there is no requirement to contact them - unless the tutor wished to do so for purely pastoral or supportive reasons. (Approaching such students would need to be done with care and sensitivity.)

10. What are Schools’ duties to Tier 4 students with interruption of over 60 days?

If a Tier 4 student requires longer than 60 days, this becomes a UKVI issue and has to be reported as soon as possible to the University via the on-programme change of details request form on EUCLID. This alerts the University’s Immigration Compliance Manager, who then reports to the Home Office, that the student’s Tier 4 sponsorship should be cancelled. The Home Office tells the student that s/he must leave the country, giving him/her a further 60 days during which to leave. Responsibility for contacting the student to advise that reporting has taken place lies with the University’s Immigration Compliance Manager, once a visa has been cancelled.

The School’s role during the period of greater than 60 days, when the student is planning to return home and then later is abroad, would again be the occasional supportive email checking on the student’s health/ progress/expected date of return. When the student is ready to return and has been certified fit by a doctor (if appropriate), then a new CAS may need to be requested from the Immigration Compliance Office before the student could travel back.
Students in this position should be referred to the International Office for immigration advice – contact isas@ed.ac.uk or ask students to contact visahelp@ed.ac.uk

11. What are PGR Supervisors’ Responsibilities for Tier 4 students?

The Principal Supervisor (or Lead Co-Supervisor) has the responsibility for recording each Engagement point in the EUCLID Engagement tab in the student’s EUCLID record. The following information is required:

- Event Type (Meeting or Other);
- Event Description (the name of the Engagement point);
- Event Date;
- Organiser (Supervisor);
- Completed (Yes or No); and any
- Notes.

The Notes field must contain a minimum of two sentences explaining the details of the engagement point. Supervisors must not report or upload any confidential information/documents (e.g. annual reports, for which there is now a separate system available).

12. How should a writing up year for a Tier 4 PGR student be handled?

Such a Tier 4 student would have a CAS/sponsorship which permits this writing up year (4th year for a PhD, maybe 5th year for an EngD or PhD with Integrated Study) - which could be spent in Edinburgh, the UK or at the student’s home abroad.

Our sponsor duties continue throughout this year. The student would pay a matriculation fee but no tuition fee and would automatically be called to the censuses (being out of UK is, obviously, a valid reason for not attending). The supervisor would be expected to have regular meetings/skype calls or emails with the student, checking up on progress with the thesis, and to report these on the PGR Engagement Tab on EUCLID.

Throughout the period of writing up, the supervisor is required regularly to monitor the students’ engagement up to the point of completion of the degree. This is in line with the current Code of Practice for Supervisors & Research Students.

13. Does monitoring continue when a Tier 4 student is writing up the thesis from home?

Sometimes students wish to return to their home country to write up the thesis. This is acceptable, provided that the supervisor is in agreement; there is an agreed plan for how the supervisor can continue to provide the students with support and supervision at a distance, and provided that the students have requested and been granted a period of authorised leave of absence.

The latter requirement is to ensure that the University holds a central up-to-date record of where all students are on the student record system, and that the School is able to demonstrate plans to monitor to prove that students are engaged with their studies, as they are still registered with the University. Refer the Leave of Absence FAQ above.

14. What are our duties to Tier 4 PGR students in periods of extension or resubmission?
The nature of monitoring for students in periods of extension (including a period of corrections following a viva) should be determined by the School in consultation with the student, and be clearly stated in the student’s extension work plan. That plan should be submitted to the relevant Graduate School at the point of requesting the extension.

For Tier 4 students in a period of resubmission, a monitoring plan should be determined by the School, taking into account the recommendations made by the examiners, the number of months permitted for any resubmission and the Tier 4 regulations.

15. Does Tier 4 monitoring continue when a Thesis has been submitted and the viva is awaited? What happens after the viva?

Sponsored students who have submitted their thesis and awaiting a viva normally retain their Tier 4 sponsorship (unless the visa has expired and not been renewed) and so the requirement to monitor their attendance and engagement remains in place. Having submitted their thesis and whilst awaiting their viva, they are recorded on the student system as “Interrupted - thesis submitted”.

Following the viva, there are a number of possible outcomes, some of which may require continued monitoring.

- If students pass without any further amendments, the award will be confirmed as soon as the examiners’ reports have been received and approved by the College. Once the award has been entered onto the student record system and a report of this made to the Home Office, there will be no further requirement to monitor attendance or engagement.

- Where Regulation E (Resubmission) is recommended, another oral is always required and a time given for corrections. In cases of Regulation D (Deficiencies in thesis – no oral re-examination) a period for corrections is given.

In both these cases, supervision is expected to continue during the resubmission or correction period and, for those we continue to sponsor (ie. they have a current Tier 4 visa), there should be some engagement monitoring/contact during this period in line with the regulations. This need not be face-to-face and may mainly comprise the supervisor receiving updates on progress and/or reviewing the amendments (depending on the nature and extent of the amendments).

Where students are outwith their period of study, and their CAS will expire before the approved period of resubmission or corrections, they will in all likelihood have to re-matriculate through a formal extension and the CAS be extended. Where the student does not need to remain in the UK (ie. they intend returning home to undertake the corrections and the School agrees that it is appropriate), then they will no longer be on a Tier 4 visa and engagement/monitoring is not essential, however best practice is to have some form of engagement.

16. When do monitoring arrangements for Tier 4 PGR students cease?

Our responsibility to monitor students stops when the student successfully completes his/her degree or (in the case of PGR students) their award is confirmed, and this is recorded on the student record and reported to the Home Office. Until that point, students are monitored according to the School’s Engagement Monitoring Plan.
Annex 1: Guidance to Tier 4 students’ on University duties as a Tier 4 sponsor concerning attendance and engagement

Duties

When you apply for your Tier 4 General student visa, your name is added to the University’s sponsor licence. If you are a Tier 4 student, you cannot study at the University of Edinburgh unless you have a Tier 4 General visa with this University’s sponsor licence number on it.

Our role as your Tier 4 Sponsor

The University as your Tier 4 sponsor has a legal duty to ensure that we - and as far as possible, you - comply with UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) requirements. We are required to report to the UKVI if students listed on our sponsor licence:

- fail to enrol on their course;
- are absent for a prolonged period or miss some or all of the expected contact points;
- withdraw from or suspend their studies, including withdrawal or suspension resulting from overdue tuition and accommodation fee payments;
- defer studies after arrival in the UK;
- change their programme of studies
- are excluded from study
- change their immigration status.

If the UK Visas & Immigration Office receive a report from the University for any of the reasons above, your visa may be curtailed or cancelled. In addition, the University must keep an up-to-date copy of students’ passports, visas and biometric cards with the student record (known as EUCLID).

Your role as a Tier 4 Student

As a Tier 4 General Student in the UK, it is essential that you comply with the conditions of your Tier 4 general student visa:

Registering and matriculating

- You must be fully registered and enrolled on your course by the required date, including paying relevant tuition and accommodation fees, to ensure continued registration.

Attendance and progress

- You need to be in satisfactory attendance and making progress on your course within the University's academic rules.
- The University will arrange census points for students holding Tier 4 visas. Students who are required to attend these census points will be notified in advance, and it is very important that you attend (or notify the University why you are unable to do so).
- Your School will monitor your engagement with your studies and if they are concerned about lack of engagement they will arrange a meeting with you to explore the reasons.
- You must tell your School office about any planned or unplanned absences that mean you can't attend classes.
• If you are studying on campus and need to be absent for 14 days or longer, you have to request permission to be absent from your School. In considering whether or not to authorize absence, your ability to submit assessments, sit examinations and progress normally will be considered.

• Authorised absence (known as an Interruption of Study) must be approved in advance by your School or College. If the interruption to your study is for 60 days or more (in total), the University will normally have to withdraw your sponsorship which will usually result in the UKVI stopping your visa.

• A temporary period of study away from Edinburgh (Leave of Absence), e.g. on fieldwork or at a partner institution, must be approved in advance by your School or College.

• If you complete your studies earlier than the expected date on your CAS, the University must inform the UKVI who may curtail your visa.

• If you withdraw from your study, you are not attending and the University must tell UKVI, who will cancel your visa.

Informing the University of changes

• You must keep your contact details on the student portal up to date so that the university can contact you when required.

• It is very important that you notify the University of any changes that could affect your immigration status. If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect, then please contact an international student advisor in the Student Advisory Service Team at the contact details below.

Consequences of poor attendance or engagement

• If you receive a communication from the University concerning you registration or attendance and engagement, it is essential that you respond promptly as requested. Failure to respond may result in your risking your Tier 4 sponsorship and therefore your ability to remain in the UK.

Student Withdrawal and Exclusion from Study Policy
http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Withdrawal_Exclusion_from_Study.pdf

Further advice

If you are concerned about your ability to comply with your student visa conditions, please contact the Student Advisory Service Team in the University’s International Office at 33 Buccleuch Place for confidential advice, using visahelp@ed.ac.uk