

17 May 2012

Request for amendment to the Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence

Purpose of Paper

1. APRC is asked to **consider**, and if thought appropriate, **approve** a number of revisions to the Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence with effect from 2012/13 academic session.

Proposal Outline

2. That the Code of Practice on be amended as per the attached paper at Appendix 1. The changes are substantively to update the Code of Practice in line with changes to the Points-Based System (PBS) used by the UK Border Agency. Therefore, amendments have been made to the Reasonable Diligence procedure, the procedure to be followed by the School when a non-EEA student has missed 2 or more contact points, and the steps that Registry will take to notify relevant parties following a student's permanent withdrawal from a programme.

Background and Consultation

3. The current Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence was written three years ago, and due to the ever-changing requirements of the UK Border Agency in relation to non-EEA students has become increasingly out-of-date.
4. Schools and Colleges are now required to have local-level immigration groups (which in turn will report into College Boards, the Institutional Immigration Compliance Group, and ultimately UEB), and hence the importance of embedding one procedure that could be applied to all students, but which also supported PBS requirements, has become of critical importance. This requirement has been communicated to Schools and Colleges via Directors of Operations.

Argument to Support Proposal

5. The Code of Practice requires revision to ensure that:
 - (i) the procedure for addressing problems with student attendance and reasonable diligence is fully in accord with the requirements laid down for Schools and Colleges in relation to compliance with the Points Based System;
 - (ii) the procedure is equitable for all students irrespective of their nationality, and;
 - (iii) problems with students attendance and engagement is identified as soon as possible in order that the necessary remedial steps can be taken to ensure student welfare, holistic support and all aspects of statutory compliance.

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