HARTPURY

Hartpury University Student Engagement Policy

Approval & Review Cycle		
Policy Owner/Reviewer	Head of Student Academic Support	October 2026
Approved By	Academic Board	V1.1 14 October 2026
	Academic Board	V1 18 October 2023
Interim-Review	Yes	
Next Review Date		September 2027

Hartpury University Student Engagement Policy

We are committed to teaching excellence, igniting a passion for learning, nurturing achievement, and shaping the workforce of the future. We will aim to develop not only the academic skills, practical adeptness and knowledge of our staff and students, but also the behaviours and mindset necessary for success. Together, we will prepare our students to thrive in an ever-evolving professional landscape, equipped with the tools to adapt, innovate, and lead. (Hartpury University Academic Strategy 2025-2030).

1. Purpose

1.1 At Hartpury University it is our goal to purposively engage with all our students. We do this because we know that student engagement impacts positively on student success. Our Student Engagement Policy set outs our engagement and attendance approach that ultimately support student success and positive outcomes for all our student populations and support their personalised learning and student journey.

2. Scope

Hartpury Principles for Student Engagement

2.1 Academic and professional services staff will support a pervasive institutional culture of active engagement.

Our Student Charter sets out our ethos of how the University, the Student Union and individual students work collaboratively and in partnership. Ultimately the charter sets out a clear commitment to embracing the supportive culture of Hartpury where all students have access to professional opportunities, inclusive teaching and learning, and a holistic University experience that supports individual student and staff wellbeing.

2.2 The University will safeguard underrepresented and priority groups' effective engagement, participation, attendance, submission and achievement. Hartpury's approach to equality of opportunity is driven by our Hartpury University 2030 strategy, which includes:

Diversity and Inclusivity: Our vision of equity, diversity and inclusivity is an integral part of our practices and embedded in all that we do. We strive to build an enabling environment free from prejudice, discrimination and harassment. We work to recognise and support the diverse needs of our staff, students, and stakeholders. (Hartpury University Academic Strategy 2025-2030).

Our Equality, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy demonstrates a clear public commitment to a whole-provider approach to creating an inclusive, fair and high-quality learning and working environment in which every student and every member of staff belongs and can thrive. This includes a commitment to using evidence, insight and data to reduce gaps in participation, achievement, progression and experience. (www.hartpury.ac.uk/media/p0ed3lou/equality-equity-diversity-inclusion-belonging-policy.pdf).

2.3 Academic Personal Tutors (APTs) will know their students and understand and respond to individual circumstances.

Hartpury University's Student Engagement and Attendance approach (see below) sets out a scheme for developing a growth mindset that focuses on the promotion of

positive student engagement behaviours. It is about creating a personalised enhancement approach that focuses on the individual to maximise the benefits of their engagement with their academic and wider university life to support their overall wellbeing, a thriving University culture of engagement and their academic and professional success. Academic Personal Tutors (APTs) serve a critical role in understanding individual student's backgrounds and needs to best support and develop students, ensuring their engagement in attendance and participation in required activities, and active signposting to additional opportunities that lead to student achievement.

2.4 The University commits to reviewing the success of its Student Engagement Policy and regulations, and evolving its approach to engagement in response to changes in the physical, economic and social environment that may impact on student behaviour and engagement

Through current and future Access and Participation Plans, Teaching Excellence Framework preparation, and internal monitoring and modelling we will continually review our approach and policy to engagement for all our student populations. We know from recent years changes, for example, from the pandemic and cost of living concerns have impacted our student populations and behaviours, and we will remain vigilant and responsive to provide effective student engagement and positive outcomes for all. We recognise all of Hartpury University's Strategies and Policies are interlinked, and a changing need to our engagement policy will instigate a review in other strategy and policy areas.



Figure 1 – Visual diagram of Hartpury Principles for Student Engagement

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Student engagement is defined as the active commitment and purposeful effort expended by students towards all aspects of their learning, including both formal and informal activities. Positive engagement by students within their learning is an important

factor in their success in higher education, as well as enhancing their satisfaction and overall wellbeing. This policy is applicable to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students, although due to potentially different delivery patterns the operationalisation implementation of the escalation for postgraduate taught students may follow a different pattern as appropriate and determined by the Programme leader.

3.2 In the context of the vocational and applied nature of the degree programmes at Hartpury, unless undertaking a programme designed to be taught offsite, students will engage on campus to fully participate with their learning, often through practical or hands-on scheduled sessions. By being in attendance and practically engaged, the student learning experience is enhanced as is the development of their Hartpury graduate attributes.

3.3 The regulations are clear that attendance will be required in line with programme and module specifications and may be required during evenings, weekends and outside standard term time. Students are not permitted to undertake a distance learning mode of attendance unless the programme or module on which they are registered has been formally approved for delivery via distance learning and Hartpury has given written permission that the student may do so.

3.4 Students should be aware that the main communication channels used by Hartpury to provide accurate, relevant and timely information are the virtual learning environment (VLE) and student email account. Students are expected to check the VLE and their Hartpury student email account at least twice a week. If students do not activate and check this account, or choose to automatically forward emails to a different email account, then Hartpury will not be responsible if important information such as details about classes, assessments, examinations, fees, enrolment etc. is missed.

3.5 The Student Engagement and Attendance approach is a model with a growth mindset that focuses on the promotion of positive behaviours regarding student engagement and attendance. Indeed, the underpinning ethos of this strategy is to support students in enhancing their engagement with their academic studies (as well as wider university life), for the betterment of their university student experience, and ultimately their academic success. The Student Engagement and Attendance approach (see Figure 2) comprises two key elements: ‘organisational tools’ and ‘personalised actions’.

3.6 <u>Organisational Tools</u>

Hartpury has established expectations regarding student engagement and attendance. Students are made explicitly aware of these expectations by Subject/Programme teams, who brief students on the importance of engagement and attendance (including the completion of online registers) as part of their induction programme. Module Leaders remind students in scheduled sessions. Academic Personal Tutors (APTs) reinforce the importance of attendance and engagement through a personalised approach, making use of the online register system during group and 1:1 tutorial sessions. Information about the importance of student engagement (and the need to attend) is included in the Student Handbook and Student Charter.

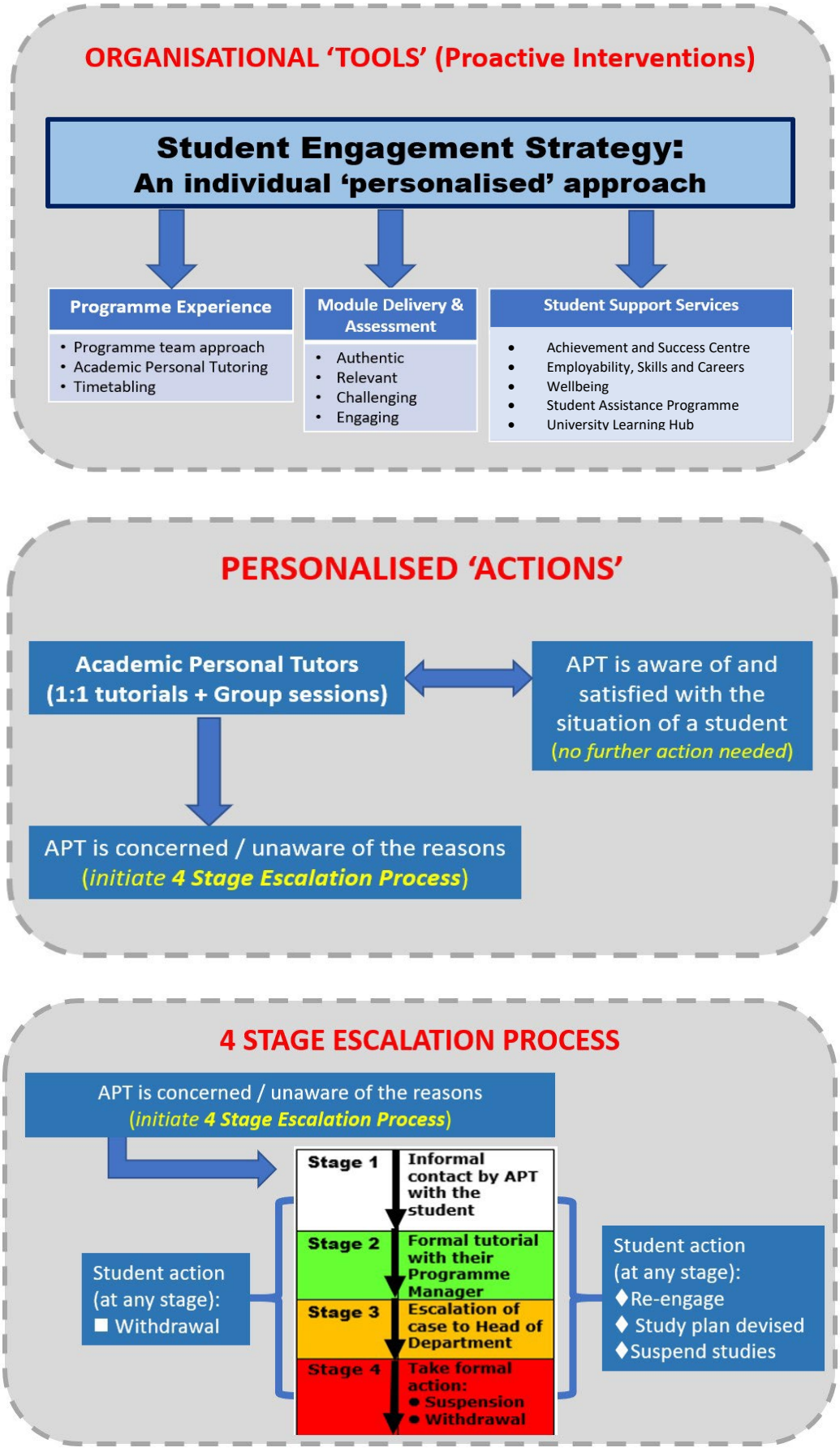


Figure 2: Hartpury University Student Engagement Approach.

It is expected that all students:

- Take personal responsibility for entering the 3 word online attendance code, to register their attendance for each scheduled session they attend;
- Be aware, and reflect upon, the impact of their attendance on the learning experiences of their fellow students, as well as themselves;
- Contact their APT if they are experiencing issues and challenges with their ability to attend scheduled sessions in-person;
- Respond promptly (i.e. within 5 working days) to academic staff who contact them, if the escalation process has been initiated.

Students' engagement with their APT through both group-based sessions (either embedded in modules or separately timetabled) and 1:1 tutorials is imperative and will provide positive interactions including: creating a platform for self-reflection and critical-reflection; signposting to wider student support services; and a deeper level of understanding, support and motivation for an individual student's success.

The work of APTs is directed by four guiding principles, shown in Figure 3:

i. Knowing their students;
ii. Supporting their development;
iii. Signposting them to appropriate support services;
iv. Preparing them for life beyond their university studies.

The main purpose of both group-based sessions and individual 1:1 tutorials is for APTs to facilitate a student-centred and student-driven approach, which incorporates a co-creation approach to group and 1:1 session content design. APTs will principally act as a facilitator and will create a safe space for students to engage. At the same time, students will act independently and take responsibility, as they engage in a range of activities, focused upon self-reflection and critical reflection activities.

As part of our institutional strategy to further support student engagement and attendance consideration is given to timetabling patterns for students and to limit where possible scheduled sessions over the course of the whole working week. We aim to do this to provide students with the time and space to manage other commitments.

Know	**Support**
• Building positive academic and professional working relationships, through positive and personalised interactions. • Developing awareness of students. • Being mindful of students' academic and support needs. • Being inclusive. Valuing all students as individuals. • Attending to the challenging and complex individual issues that students present. • Helping students to develop their learner identity.	• Providing relevant and timely support. • Being an inclusive and constructive 'critical friend' / 'supportive ear'. • Respecting the student voice. • Listening to student's issues or concerns sensitively. • Providing encouragement. • Engaging students in critical thinking. • Enabling students to participate in critical reflection. • Nurturing independent learning. • Co-creating learning and development solutions through a student-staff partnership. • Providing a space for students to utilise and demonstrate their

	Hartpury University Graduate Attributes.
Signpost	**Prepare**

• Directing to appropriate expert Hartpury University support services, including (as required):
  ○ Study skills and learning support. Academic guidance in a broader sense, and student progression (Achievement & Success Centre - ASC).
  ○ Careers, employability and enterprise services (Innovation, Careers, Enterprise - ICE).
  ○ HU processes i.e. extenuating circumstances, extension, disciplinary procedures etc. (Student Advisors).
  ○ Mental health support. Counselling support services (Wellbeing).
• Reporting issues and/or concerns via MyConcern
• Sharing information about relevant external support opportunities and relevant organisations.
	• Supporting students in planning for life beyond their university studies.
	• Stretching and challenging students to achieve more.
	• Championing lifelong learning.
	• Developing the critical skills required for lifelong learning.
	• Making connections between their current interests and future goals.
	• Supporting students to develop their employability (transferable) skills.
	• Directing to employability support from the ICE team (e.g. KASE programme).
	• Engaging with employability support from the ICE team within group-based sessions.
	• Acting as a referee for their students.

Figure 3: Features of the four guiding principles of the APT process.

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As part of our institutional strategy to further support student engagement and attendance, consideration is given to timetabling patterns for students and to limit where possible scheduled sessions over the course of the whole working week. We aim to do this to provide students with the time and space to manage other commitments.

3.7 Personalised actions

The use of feedback tools allows for the early identification of students at risk, who may be struggling with their attendance/academic studies, and who may require additional support and assistance. Feedback tools such as existing data sources, including, HE entry status (i.e. Level 3 grades), demographic data, ASC screening, fitness to practice questionnaires, HU accommodation questionnaire, etc., can be utilised to identify, early, those students at risk. Another key feedback tool is the monitoring of student attendance,

which is conducted via the use of the online student registers. Register completion is compulsory on all undergraduate and postgraduate modules.

The Hartpury University expectation is for a minimum of 80% attendance of scheduled sessions across their programme for undergraduate students. If a student does not meet this expected attendance requirement, then the student may be unable to participate in practical-based module assessments due to professional expectations and/or health and safety concerns.

For postgraduate students, attendance data should be utilised to facilitate 1:1 tutorials with their APT, and programme teams should consider this data at an individual student level.

To provide delivery of personalised actions, APTs are required to develop a comprehensive understanding of the circumstances for each of their tutees. In order to do so, APTs will require feedback and updates as appropriate from academic colleagues, including Programme Managers and Module Leaders. In addition, feedback and updates from professional services staff (e.g. ASC, Employability, Skills and Careers) help build a complete awareness of their tutees' circumstances.

There is also a requirement to be aware of the academic achievements of their tutees via a monitoring of their assessment activities, including submission records and grade attainment.

This 360 approach to understanding the circumstances of individual students allows for early personalised intervention needs to be identified and support put in place on the student journey and avoid retrospectively trying to retrieve less than ideal circumstances.

3.8 APTs will monitor each of their tutees' attendance against the 80% attendance target. As such, they will be provided with a weekly attendance report, specifically identifying those students who have fallen below the 80% attendance target. Information and data regarding the attendance behaviours of students will be available to staff.

3.9 If an APT is aware of, and satisfied about, the reasons why a students' attendance is below 80% target, then no further action is needed … until a point is reached whereby the APT is no longer aware of, or satisfied, and feels the need to initiate the escalation process. However, if a student falls below the expected requirement of 80% attendance of scheduled sessions, and their APT is unaware of the reasons why student attendance is below the 80% target, then an escalation process – for those students flagged as a cause for concern due to their levels of attendance – will be initiated.

3.10 At any point during escalation process, a student has various options open to them, as they can:

- re-engage with their studies (demonstratable by their attendance moving above the 80% attendance target);
- facilitate re-engagement with their studies by adhering to a study plan designed for them;
- suspend their studies;
- choose to withdraw from their programme.

3.11 If a student does not satisfactorily engage with the escalation process and align their attendance with Hartpury policy the student is likely to receive notification they are being withdrawn from their programme of study.

Freedom Of Speech
As part of this policy, Hartpury reaffirms its commitment to the principles of freedom of speech and academic freedom, in accordance with the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 and guidance from the Office for Students (OfS). Hartpury will take all reasonably practicable steps to secure the right to express lawful views and engage in open debate without fear of censorship or institutional discipline for staff, students, and visiting speakers. In addition, this policy prohibits the use of non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) in any situation that would prevent staff from speaking out about misconduct, harassment, or other matters of public interest.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
As with all Hartpury policies and procedures, due care has been taken to ensure that this policy is appropriate to all members of staff and students regardless of their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender status.

The policy will be applied fairly and consistently whilst upholding Hartpury's commitment to providing equality to all. If any employee or student feels that this or any other policy does not meet this aim, please contact the HR Department (staff) or an academic tutor (student).

Hartpury is committed towards promoting positive mental health by working towards the MINDFUL EMPLOYER Charter, holds the Student Minds University Mental Health accreditation and has signed the AoC Mental Charter. Hartpury aims to create a culture of support within the workplace where employees can talk about mental health problems without the fear of stigma or discrimination.

Document Approval and Review Cycle

Version	Student Engagement Policy V1:1
Date last approved	14 October 2026
Approving committee	Academic Board
Status	Approved
Effective from	October 2026
Policy owner	Head of Student Academic Support
Next review date	September 2027

Change Log

Section	Description of change
Policy owner	Policy owner amended from Academic Registrar to Head of Student Academic Support.
Section 1	Content and references to Hartpury University Academic Strategy 2020-2025 updated to Hartpury University Academic Strategy 2025-2030.
Section 2.2	Content and references to Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy 2021 updated to Equality, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy 2026.
Section 3.6	"Spiral induction programme" updated to "induction programme".
Section 3.7	"I.C.E" replaced with "Employability, Skills and Careers".
Figure 2	"I.C.E" replaced with "Employability, Skills and Careers". “University Learning Centre” replaced with “University Learning Hub”
Policy transferred onto the current template	Addition of the Freedom of Speech section. Updates to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion section to align with the current template.