Tier 4 Students
Monitoring Guidance for Schools

This guidance outlines the monitoring policy that needs to be applied to members of our Tier 4 student population.

Students on Tier 4 face monitoring requirements under the terms of their visa that are imposed by the Home Office. This requires us, as their visa's Sponsor, to ensure our policy and processes comply with Home Office regulations to ensure both our Sponsor Licence is maintained and that our students' visas are not put at risk.

Tier 4 and immigration regulations can appear complicated and we would actively encourage any staff member to contact the Immigration Team in Student Support for clarification on how holding a Tier 4 visa impacts our students.

It is important to remember that providing "visa advice" is regulated by law and it is illegal to provide immigration advice unless expressly permitted to do so.

The Immigration Team are happy to provide training, presentations and further support at all levels in Schools.

Contents

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This guidance is split into 3 main sections covering Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Students:

Additional information has been provided on the use of the C6 and C7 process to formally monitor students; contact details of who to speak to with questions and queries; and a suggested version of how the new monthly PGR Engagement process should work:

Finally, at the end of this guide we have included a selection of frequently asked questions on Tier 4:

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

How do we monitor UG students?

Given the nature of taught courses, we monitor UG students the same way regardless of immigration status. The School needs to ensure they monitor **all** students registered on a course, not just those on Tier 4.

Formal attendance monitoring should take place in all small group teaching sessions, such as a tutorial, lab, seminar, workshop or practical session. This follows the student monitoring system applicable across the University, which applies to all students.

Sign-in sheet - Confirming attendance can take the form of a sign-in sheet, circulated at each small group session. This should clearly outline the following information:

- the course code and title;
- the name, date and time of the class;
- all students expected (with ID numbers) and space for signature against their details; and
- the signature of the staff member responsible at the class confirming students who have signed were present.

The class leader must return these to the School admin team as soon as possible so that they can identify any students as not engaging. These sheets should be retained (original or scanned) as they are required in the event of a UKVI audit. We suggest scanning attendance sheets at the end of the year for each course and saving this file centrally so you can retrieve them quickly.

QR Code - The new QR Code scan in system is also an acceptable way of recording engagement at classes where available. This system helps provide a centrally accessible, real-time, method of monitoring student engagement. Processes are in place to ensure the robustness of the QR code process and stop students being able to abuse this.

How and when do we report students for missing an expected contact with us?

Issuing a C6 is the first step in the process to get a student to re-engage with their studies. **It should not be seen as a last resort or punishment and early intervention is key.** A C6 should be applied as soon as the threshold for reporting is reached so that we are able to maintain our reporting duties with the Home Office. More details on using the C6 process, called Formal Monitoring, is available later in this guide.

You must apply a C6 when a student misses: a second small group teaching session (without prior approval); or over 25% of all teaching sessions for the course. You should apply a C6 immediately if a student fails to submit a summative/substantial formative assessment.

What term dates apply to UG students?

UG Students are permitted to be absent from campus during non-term time. For UG students this includes the winter, spring and summer breaks. Details of terms dates are available on the University Website.

Students taking time away from Aberdeen during these breaks do not need authorisation to do so. They also do not need special permission to leave the UK during these periods.

What about absences during term time?

Students can report short absences using MyAberdeen and if they meet the normal monitoring tolerances this does not cause an issue for Tier 4.

Where a student requests a long period of absence (greater than 1 week during term time), you should discuss this with the Immigration Team in advance.

What if small group teaching doesn't take place at a particular point during term or for a particular course?

At some points of the year, it is possible that a student will not have any small group teaching due to the nature of the course. This could be because they are engaging in a formally recognised work placement, field course or writing a dissertation or completing a project.

The School must ensure that an alternative method of engagement monitoring is in place for this course, likely using a sign-in process. UG students should be asked to report at least once every 10 working days. An example sign-in sheet for Taught students has been provided on Staffnet.

Students on an Erasmus or Study Abroad programme

Outgoing - The School does not need to monitor Tier 4 students who take time away from studying in Aberdeen to engage with an Erasmus or Study Abroad partner. The Erasmus and Study Abroad teams arrange for student monitoring in these cases and liaise directly with the Immigration Team.

Incoming – Schools should monitor students visiting the UK on an incoming Erasmus or Study Abroad programme normally where they appear on their course lists.

Students engaging in medical electives, industrial placements or study away from our campus

The School must continue to monitor students engaging in a placement away from campus as part of their programme. You can decide how this takes place – usually by a sign-in at the temporary study location. You must be prepared to provide a record of the sign-ins or engagement upon request from the Immigration team.

You need to notify the Immigration team as soon as such an arrangement is established and no less than 10 days before the date of departure, or commencement, of the time away from campus. A template report is available on Staffnet showing the information we must be told.

POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT STUDENTS

How do we monitor PGT students?

Given the nature of the taught element of PGT programmes, students are monitored the same way regardless of immigration status. The School needs to ensure they monitor **all** students registered on a course, not just those on Tier 4.

All students registered on a course need to be monitored by the School to which that course belongs. Formal attendance monitoring should take place in all small group teaching sessions, such as a tutorial, lab, seminar, workshop or practical session. This follows the student monitoring system applicable across the University.

Confirming attendance normally takes the form of a sign-in sheet, circulated at each small group session. This should clearly outline the following information:

- the course code and title;
- the name, date and time of the class;
- all students expected (with ID numbers) and space for signature against their details; and
- the signature of the staff member responsible at the class confirming students who have signed were present.

Some Schools use SRS or MyTimetable class lists, which can also show student photos to assist with identification – especially helpful in larger classes or at the start of teaching.

Sheets should be returned to the course's administrator as soon as possible so that students can be identified as missing. These sheets should be retained (original or scanned) as they are required in the event of a UKVI audit. We suggest scanning attendance sheets at the end of the year for each course and saving this file centrally so it can be quickly retrieved in the future.

How and when do we report students for missing an expected contact with us?

Issuing a C6 is the first step in the process to get a student to re-engage with their studies. **It should not be seen as a last resort or punishment and early intervention is key.** A C6 should be applied as soon as the threshold for reporting is reached so that we are able to maintain our reporting duties with the Home Office. More details on using the C6 process, called Formal Monitoring, is available later in this guide.

You must apply a C6 when a student misses: a second small group teaching session (without prior approval); or over 25% of all teaching sessions for the course. You should apply a C6 immediately if a student fails to submit a summative/substantial formative assessment.

What term dates apply to PGT students?

PGT Students are permitted to be absent from campus during the winter and spring breaks. They are not, however, entitled to time off during the summer break. Details of terms dates are available on the University Website.

Students taking time away from Aberdeen during these breaks do not need authorisation from the School to do so. They also do not need special permission from the University to leave the UK during these periods.

How do we monitor students during their project or dissertation?

Students must continue to be monitored during the project/dissertation as their visa still requires them to be engaging, full-time, on campus. This extends right through the summer period as, for PG students, the summer break does not apply.

For those that have been monitored by class attendance previously, the most suitable method of monitoring during this time is through the use of a sign in sheet. PGT students should be asked to report at least once every 10 working days. An example sign-in sheet for Taught students has been provided on Staffnet.

It is important to remember that a Tier 4 visa requires its holder to be engaging on campus to complete their programme. Students should be actively discouraged from leaving Aberdeen during their project or dissertation as it will have implications for their visa.

What if my student wants to return home to complete their project/dissertation?

If a student wishes to return home to complete their project or dissertation away from Aberdeen, the student's visa will be reported to the Home Office as no longer needed to study, and the student will not need to meet any monitoring requirements. They will not be able to re-enter the UK on this visa and should not need to return during their studies when taking this decision. It would not, therefore, be an option for a January start student who needs to return for teaching in September.

The student must tell the School and the Immigration Team they wish to take this option, telling us when they will leave the UK and confirming that they understand their visa is being relinquished as a result.

Students can be supported to return to the UK for their graduation on a visiting visa.

What if a student submits their project/dissertation early?

Once a student submits their dissertation or project they no longer need to maintain sign-ins. For January start students they will next sign in during classes in September. If a student submits significantly early, over 4 weeks ahead of the usual submission date, this must be raised with the Immigration Team as this could impact their visa.

What about absences?

A PGT student can take a maximum of 4 weeks absence during their programme. This is in addition to the time off they get during the winter and spring breaks. Absence must not exceed 4 weeks throughout the programme if multiple, smaller absences are authorised.

An authorised absence cannot impact a student's ability to complete their programme within the normal timescale.

To request an absence, the student should complete an absence request form and have this authorised and recorded by the School. A template absence form is available on Staffnet. PG Registry and the Immigration Team do not need to be told about absences authorised in line with the above.

Schools must ensure that students are not abusing the absence system to avoid signing in – especially over the summer period. Students cannot take four separate weeks of holiday that coincide with a

signing-in week in order to maximise their time away from campus. Students should sign in immediately upon return from an authorised absence before resuming their agreed sign-in pattern going forward.

Can a PGT student be regarded as being "off-campus" to study?

In some rare instances it is possible for a PGT student to engage in activity that is academically required for their programme away from campus. There must be **exceptionally** strong academic reasons for this and how it links to their programme and its completion.

As such, occasions should be very rare and each instance should be discussed with the Immigration Team directly to ensure that it can be approved under their visa. During the time away the student must still be monitored by the School. Engagement could be monitored by: email correspondence; phone calls; or Skype meetings, as examples. You must be prepared to provide a record of the sign-ins or engagement upon request from the Tier 4 team.

Any off-campus study must be agreed with the Immigration Team in advance of the student's departure. Due to strict reporting deadlines imposed by UKVI, any requests received late and/or after the student has left campus will be automatically rejected and the School will be responsible for the student's immediate return.

A template PGT Off-Campus form is available on Staffnet for these very rare cases.

What if my student has a work placement?

A student can be absent from campus when they are on a Work Placement which forms a recognised and assessed part of their degree. Work Placement has a specific meaning with the Home Office and the placement must meet certain criteria for it to be classified as a Work Placement for Tier 4.

Work placements in this context must be an integrated element of their programme and form an assessed part of their degree outcome. Evidence of how this placement is assessed (and the credits assigned to it) should be clear at the point of admission.

Details of placements should be notified to the Immigration team as soon as they are known and no less than 10 days before the date of departure, or commencement, of the time away from campus. A template report is available on Staffnet showing the information we must be told.

Students who wish to partake in any other form of work placement or internship should seek advice from an International Student Adviser as it may not be permitted under the terms of their Tier 4 visa.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

How do we monitor PGR students?

Due to the lack of class teaching at PGR level, we have to establish an alternative monitoring and engagement process to satisfy Home Office requirements. This is done on two levels: engagement & academic progression; and physical presence on campus.

Monitoring engagement and academic progression

This should be done by the student's supervisory team who should flag any concerns to the School office or Immigration Team when it arises. This could be a missed meeting, a failure to submit work, or a significant concern over progression in their programme. You must keep a record of engagements and be able to supply this upon request from the Tier 4 team or for audit purposes.

Monitoring physical presence on campus

To monitor this, Schools need to arrange a sign-in system that requires PGR Tier 4 students to attend a central location at least once a month (every 4/5 weeks) to sign a register confirming their attendance on campus.

This process must:

- Be conducted in front of a staff member, confirming that the student was seen (confirming their identity with their ID card if they are not known to them) and signed-in on the date indicated;
- Ensure students cannot sign either after, or before, the required period; and
- Be reviewed monthly to flag any missed interactions.

The administration of the PGR sign-in system is left to each School so that this fits in with their own resources. A suggested template for signing in can be found on Staffnet. As always, the Immigration Team are happy to talk through how to operate your sign-in system.

When and how do I formally monitor a PGR student?

One missed monthly sign-in, without authorisation, is enough to commence the formal monitoring process. This should be done by placing a C6 against the course code(s) on their student record and does not need to be discussed in advance with the Immigration Team.

In what circumstances can a student miss a sign-in?

Authorised absence

If a student is ill, wants to take a holiday or has personal circumstances that require some time off, they can request an authorised absence. The maximum period permitted is 60 days in any rolling twelve month period, provided the School are assured that the absence will not impact on the student's ability to complete their PhD on time. The rolling period starts on the date the student registers and is not the same as the academic or calendar year.

Written confirmation of the School's approval of an absence must be kept and noted on the engagement form. PG Registry and the Immigration Team do not need to be told about absences authorised in line with the above.

As soon as the student returns from a period of absence they are required to sign in, and then resume their normal sign in pattern going forward.

Suspension of studies

Used when a student wishes to "pause" their studies. It effectively stops the clock and extends their submission date in line with the period suspended.

Students holding a Tier 4 visa can suspend for a maximum of 60 days over the duration of their visa. This does not mean they can suspend for 60 days per year, but during the entirety of their PhD. Suspension cannot be used in addition to an authorised absence to extend the period of leave.

Suspensions longer than 60 days will require us to stop sponsorship of their visa. These situations must be discussed with the Immigration Team in advance. Similarly if a student wishes to extend a suspension beyond 60 days, or request a subsequent extension taking them over this threshold, this must be discussed with the Immigration Team.

Retrospective suspensions cannot be used for Tier 4 Students and where these are submitted they will be rejected.

As soon as the student returns from a period of suspension they are required to sign in, and then resume their normal sign in pattern going forward and the normal student monitoring process should resume.

Off-campus study

A student may need to engage in data collection or research for their degree and they may be able to apply for off-campus study for a portion of their study. To request this an off-campus form must be completed and returned to Registry **BEFORE** the student's period of off-campus study is due to commence. We must report all periods of off-campus to the Home Office before it starts.

Wishing to return home or live away from Aberdeen, due to cost or other reasons of convenience, are not legitimate reasons for a Tier 4 student going off-campus. Should they wish to make such a move this will result in the cancellation of their Tier 4 visa.

Students who are off-campus must still be monitored while they are away and none of the School's obligations are removed when off-campus arrangements are put in place. This monitoring can take a number of forms and can include: Skype meetings, telephone calls, emails and in person visits by supervisors. The form of intended monitoring must be noted on the off campus form and recorded on the student's monitoring file. As with standard monitoring, failure to keep in contact on at least a monthly basis must be reported through formal monitoring. It is the School's duty to keep a record that they are maintaining engagement during their off-campus period.

A template monitoring form has been provided for PGR students engaging on off-campus study, which could be used to meet these requirements. This would be given to the student to complete and return each month during the usual sign-in week in place of a physical signature. This form must be

completed fully with detailed outlines of the work that has been undertaken while they are away. You must ensure that you are happy this provides a detailed overview to meet your monitoring obligations. You should ensure this form is kept on the student's School file and you should be prepared to provide this upon request from the Tier 4 team or for audit purposes.

For new students, it is important that Admissions and Registry are informed if off-campus study is known in advance of registration. Intended off-campus study may impact the type of visa the student should apply for and, in some cases, could save significant time and money in inappropriate visa applications being made.

As soon as the student returns from a period of absence they are required to sign in, and then resume their normal sign in pattern going forward.

What happens during writing up and viva?

We are still required to monitor Tier 4 students during their writing up period and viva – right until the completion of their studies, including during any period of corrections.

Completion takes place once corrections are approved and Registry has completed the student on the SRS. You can confirm that this has taken place by the student being removed from the monthly PGR report sent by the Immigration Team to the Schools, or by contacting postgraduate@abdn.ac.uk.

FORMAL MONITORING - C6/C7 PROCESS

All Tier 4 students should be formally monitored using the C6/C7 process on the SRS. Formal monitoring raises an alert to both the student concerned and Registry that there are issues over the student's engagement. This ensures that a formal process is initiated and that students are treated fairly and consistently across the institution.

> **Formal monitoring using the C6/C7 process, should not be viewed as a last resort by staff and it is designed to flag issues to the student early and will, when applied properly, give them the opportunity to get back on track with their studies.**

Regardless of the student's level (UG, PGT or PGR) the C6 should be inserted against the appropriate course in which the student has breached the monitoring. For PGR students this should be placed against the course code(s) on their student record.

To insert a C6 on a student's record you should use the Departmental Monitoring screens on the SRS. You can access these by logging into the SRS, clicking on *Maintenance Screens; Departmental Student Monitoring.*

It is the School's duty to ensure that the C6/C7 is entered properly, and at the appropriate stage, to initiate the monitoring process. This ensures that any possible appeal made by the student can be quickly dealt with and we can ensure that the correct policy has been followed in case of an appeal.

Sometimes a student may have compelling reasons for missing classes however it is crucial that when viewing a student's attendance and engagement with a course, their ability to meet its learning outcomes is the overriding factor in deciding to formally monitor a student and on the decision to reinstate them onto a course/programme.

What happens once a C6 is applied to a student's record?

Once the C6 is applied an automated email is sent to the student from Registry advising them on how to resolve the situation. In the vast majority of cases a student will resolve their C6 by contacting the School to explain their absences, with no further action being taken against their studies or visa should the situation not happen again. It is critical, therefore, that formal monitoring is applied quickly and not viewed as a last resort or punishment.

Where a C6 is not resolved, either due to the student not getting in touch or the School not removing it, it will turn into a C7, removing their class certificate and authority to attend classes.

KEY CONTACTS

Department	Contact details	Type of enquiry
Student Immigration Compliance Team Student Support	tier4@abdn.ac.uk Extension: 3935	- Monitoring and Engagement - Student absences - Student registration - Suspensions and withdrawals - Change in mode of study - Change of Degree - Staff training and information sessions - Authorising extensions to existing students' visas
International Student Advisers Student Advice & Support Office	Student.international@abdn.ac.uk Extension: 3935	- Visa applications - Visa extensions - Doctoral Extension Scheme visas - Police Registration - Visa terms and conditions - Post-study work options
Student Recruitment and Admissions	sras@abdn.ac.uk Extension: 2090	- Recruitment of new students - English language assessment - Sponsoring new students on a visa - Information for prospective students
Post Graduate Research School	pgrs-engagement@abdn.ac.uk	- Change of circumstances - Student progression

Frequently Asked Questions

These are some of the questions that the Immigration Team get asked most frequently by staff across the University. If you have a question that is not answered in this guidance, contact details of the correct team to ask are provided on page 10.

1. *What is the monitoring process?*
2. *Who does the monitoring process apply to?*
3. *Why does Tier 4 matter?*
4. *Who is a Tier 4 student?*
5. *What do the Home Office view as appropriate attendance?*
6. *What timeframes do the Tier 4 Team work to?*
7. *How do students know about the monitoring process?*
8. *When do our obligations to monitor Tier 4 students start?*
9. *When do our obligations to monitor Tier 4 students stop?*
10. *What if a student is involved in an emergency or unexpected situation?*
11. *What if my student has questions about their visa?*
12. *What if a student wants to change their programme or study mode?*
13. *What records do I need to keep to provide upon request or during an audit?*

1.   What is the monitoring process?

The monitoring process is intended to ensure that all our students are engaging with their programme and continue to make academic progress throughout their studies. It allows us to check that the learning outcomes of their programme are being achieved and that students are progressing in order to obtain their desired qualification.

The monitoring process is not meant to be punitive and once a student has been formally reported though the monitoring process ("formally monitored") there is still opportunity for this to be reversed; assuming the student can still meet the learning outcomes of the course/programme. The critical aspect at the heart of monitoring is ensuring that students have met the required learning outcomes and have put in the appropriate work and engagement to: be awarded the credits for that course; continue with their research; or achieve the final award of their programme.

In addition to these academic considerations, which apply to all our students, Home Office regulations also require students holding a Tier 4 visa to be present on campus, engaging as a full-time student during their sponsorship. This guidance note, and the processes it outlines, hopes to balance these two needs.

2.   Who does the monitoring process apply to?

The University's monitoring process applies to all our students, regardless of their immigration status. Details on the general policy can be found on Staffnet. This Guidance Note outlines specific procedures that must be applied for our Tier 4 student population due to the additional considerations relating to their visa.

3.   Why does Tier 4 matter?

We support all our Tier 4 students by sponsoring their visa while studying with us in the UK. This sponsorship places extensive duties on the University to ensure, amongst other things, that the

student is here in the city, actively engaging with their studies on our campuses and making academic progress towards their qualification.

It is important that all our Tier 4 students are meeting the terms of their visa, which itself is dictated by the programme they been sponsored for. Where a student is no longer following the terms of their visa, or is not studying on campus full-time without approval to be absent, we will likely need to withdraw the sponsorship of their visa as it is no longer being used for the purposes it was issued for. This determination is what drives the majority of decisions regarding our ongoing sponsorship of students on Tier 4: are they still using their visa as it was initially intended?

A Tier 4 visa is not an unrestricted right for a student to remain in, and travel to and from, the UK. If we cannot show that their visa is required for the reasons outlined in our offer of sponsorship, both the student and the institution can face strict action by the Home Office.

We can, at any time, be asked to provide a timeline of our Tier 4 student's history with us, extending from the date of application through to graduation. This Tier 4 timeline is important as it allows us to demonstrate to the Home Office that we are meeting our obligations of Sponsorship. It is helpful to think of this Tier 4 timeline when reviewing this guidance and the importance of eliminating any gaps within it where a student's circumstances cannot be clearly evidenced.

4.   Who is a Tier 4 student?

Tier 4 is the main visa route used by international students (those from outside the EU/EEA) to study in the UK. Tier 4 students make up the majority of our international student population, though it is important to note that not all international students will hold this type of visa.

The Immigration Team can confirm what immigration status a particular student has, and will provide lists to the Schools each half session with details of students who hold a Tier 4 visa. We will also send out a monthly report showing our PGR students on Tier 4, as they can register with us throughout the Academic Year. This information is also held on the Student Records System ("SRS") under: *Portals; Registration; Student Status Lookup; General Visa Information Tab*.

5.   What do the Home Office view as appropriate attendance?

For Tier 4 purposes, monitoring has two distinct concepts: physical presence on campus; and engagement and progression with studies.

The Home Office rules speak in terms of "expected contacts" that we have with the student. These rules equate to the University having to provide a minimum monitoring point that applies to all students. Where a student misses monitoring points without appropriate cause this will push them outside the Home Office tolerance for attendance and this must be reported through formal monitoring. Further details on this are outlined in the specific sections for UG, PGT and PGR students.

It is important to remember that a Tier 4 visa is issued only for full-time programmes, and Tier 4 visa holders are expected to be on campus on a full-time basis to complete their programme for it to remain valid. Exceptions to this, including PGR off-campus study, are outlined in the student specific sections.

Academic progression and engagement is more of a general concept and is viewed through a student's interaction with their studies and their progression from one year, or stage, of study to another. Issues

over progression or general lack of engagement can be raised with the Tier 4 team even if a student is attending classes and is physically present.

6.   What timeframes do the Tier 4 Team work to?

We are required by law to report certain activity to the Home Office within 10 days of it occurring. It is, therefore, especially important that you act upon any request from a Tier 4 student relating to their studies, or a breach of student monitoring, quickly.

To ensure we meet this statutory timeframe it is important that all forms (including suspension and off-campus forms) are returned to Registry in advance of the intended activity so this can be factored into a decision relating to a students' visa. Failure to submit such items on time, and in advance, may result in us having to take action against the student's visa that could otherwise have been avoided.

7.   How do students know about the monitoring process?

It is essential that all students are aware of the monitoring process during their studies (especially those on a taught course) as these apply regardless of immigration status. Information on monitoring should be stated in School/Course handbooks and ideally outlined to them at the start of their studies.

Please see [Staffnet](#) for more information on the student monitoring system and how it should be raised with students.

Tier 4 student guidance is also available on the [Infohub website](#), and is highlighted to Tier 4 students on the visa check card we give them each academic year.

The ultimate responsibility of ensuring students adhere to their visa conditions rests with them, but as their Sponsor we have a large part to play in ensuring they meet the requirements.

8.   When do our obligations to monitor Tier 4 students start?

When sponsoring a student under Tier 4 we provide them with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies number (CAS) as confirmation of our willingness to sponsor their visa. This CAS confirms a wealth of information to the Home Office about that student's programme of study; including its academic level, course fees and on-campus duration. Our obligations relating to monitoring start on the students study start date as outlined in that CAS; which for most UG/PGT students is the start of term for each half session. PGR students start dates can vary and are shown on the SRS. It is, therefore, critically important that students who are delayed let us know and that Schools update the Tier 4 Team and Admissions with this information if received to them directly, so that we can ensure a note of this is made, updating this as appropriate to the Home Office.

9.   When do our obligations to monitor Tier 4 students stop?

Our duties only stop when a student has formally completed their programme or they have had their status as a registered student removed. This could be through termination, withdrawal etc.

For individual courses the duty ends when a student has been removed from the course either through the awarding of a final grade or through withdrawal (voluntarily or by the application of formal monitoring).

If a student withdraws from study (or has their studies terminated by the University) monitoring can stop on the date this is processed through the Student Record System. You should continue to monitor them until such a point as you confirm with the Immigration Team that the student is no longer registered.

Simply providing a student with a withdrawal from, or receiving an email form them indicating an intention to withdraw, does not end our duty to complete monitoring and this must be maintained until The Immigration Team have confirmed that the student's studies have ended and the visa has been reported.

Given that the appeals process can, and indeed has, overturned decisions to terminate a student's studies it is critical that monitoring is maintained throughout the appeal process. If the outcome is that the student's appeal is not upheld, then monitoring can stop when the student is withdrawn on the system. If the student's appeal is upheld, then monitoring will, of course, continue.

The above equally applies to students voluntarily leaving a course or appealing against a C7.

10.   What if a student is involved in an emergency or unexpected situation?

You should contact the Immigration Team as soon as you are alerted to any issue involving a Tier 4 student that impacts on their ability to maintain engagement with the University. Where a student faces an emergency (family situations, healthcare issues etc.) that may result in them missing an expected contact, it is important that we are alerted to ensure the correct approach is taken with a student's visa. There are very few situations that we cannot work through with a student when we are involved at the outset.

11.   What if a student has questions about their visa?

If a student has a question about their Tier 4 visa, including the restrictions placed on them as a Tier 4 visa holder; their ability to work in the UK; extending their visa; bringing family to the UK etc. please direct them to our International Student Advisers located in Student Support. They can be contacted on student.international@abdn.ac.uk

If the student wants to know more about their studies and how their Tier 4 visa impacts their ability to: take time away from their studies; go off-campus; suspend their studies; change their course or mode of study; and any other academic related query please direct them to the Immigration Team on tier4@abdn.ac.uk

If the individual is not yet registered, and is still regarded as an applicant or prospective student, you should refer them to our Student Recruitment and Admissions Team on study@abdn.ac.uk

12.   What if a student wants to change their programme or study mode?

When we sponsor a Tier 4 Student, we outline in the CAS the programme that the student is coming to study. It is very difficult to change this programme once the student has commenced their programme and these situations should be discussed with the Immigration Team as they arise to assess if this is possible.

Students on Tier 4 visas can only be full-time and any request to move to part-time study (or move to a distance learning option) will result in the sponsorship of their visa being withdrawn.

13. What records do I need to provide upon request or during an audit?
Undergraduate Students

Normally records for undergraduates will comprise class registers, sign-in sheets or MyTimetable information. Where records are requested for more than one student and these students attend the same tutorial or lab groups a separate copy of class sign-in sheets must be provided for each student. Photocopies are acceptable. Copies must be arranged in chronological order for each student.

PGT Students

For taught elements, records may include class registers, sign-in sheets or MyTimetable information. Where records are requested for more than one student and these students attend the same tutorial or lab groups a separate copy of class sign-in sheets must be provided for each student. Photocopies are acceptable. Copies must be arranged in chronological order for each student.

For students who are writing their dissertation or completing their project, sign-in sheets must be provided along with any logged engagement information. This can include engagements with supervisors, formative/summative exercises or similar.

Where students have exceptional permission to study off-campus, a record of their engagements and progress must be provided. This can include a log of contacts with the School or supervisors, emails, Skype records or check-ins.

PGR Students

For on-campus students, alongside the monthly sign-in sheets a record confirming engagement is essential. This can include a log of supervisor meetings, either formal or informal, progression meetings or exercises/activities within the School. This may vary from student to student, but clear evidence of engagement **must** be provided for every student.

For students who are off-campus, a full engagement log is necessary. You can assess the best way of doing this for each student based on their circumstances, but this can include email information, logs of Skype contacts, supervisor visits or logs of reports from the student for example.