

SPTI Attendance & Engagement Policy

Purpose

SPTI values learners as active partners in their professional and personal development. This policy aims to support and monitor student attendance and engagement across all training programmes, recognising that regular participation and engagement are essential for successful completion of both academic and professional elements of study.

Attendance and engagement are not only academic requirements — they are central to professional formation as psychotherapists, counsellors, and practitioners working within ethical, relational, and experiential frameworks.

This policy seeks to:

- Promote consistent attendance and engagement as key to learning and development.
- Identify when a student may be struggling and provide early, supportive intervention.
- Ensure SPTI meets the requirements of its validating and professional bodies (including University of Staffordshire, UKCP, BACP, UKATA, and SEG).

Scope

This policy applies to all SPTI students enrolled on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Specific attendance and engagement requirements are determined by each programme in line with its accrediting and professional bodies.

Attendance Expectations

Students are expected to attend all scheduled workshops, tutorials, and study days forming part of their programme. Attendance is part of professional responsibility and contributes to the learning experience of the whole group.

Engagement also includes:

- Active participation in workshops and group process.
- Completion of clinical placement hours and supervision requirements.
- Timely submission of academic work.
- Attendance at tutorials, research supervision, and study skills sessions.

SPTI recognises that its learners are adults balancing complex personal and professional commitments. Occasional unavoidable absences may occur; however, frequent or unexplained absences can compromise learning, assessment, and progression.

Recording Attendance

Facilitators will record attendance at every workshop or study day. Students are expected to remain present for the full duration of the session.

If a student must arrive late or leave early, they should inform their Facilitator in advance where possible. Persistent patterns of partial attendance will be followed up by the Programme Leader.

Monitoring Engagement

Attendance and engagement are monitored throughout the academic year. Where concerns arise, the Programme Leader (or nominee) will contact the student to explore what is happening and how SPTI can offer support.

SPTI Attendance & Engagement Policy

Interventions may include:

- Discussion with the Programme Leader or Academic Administrator.
- Agreement of a short-term re-engagement plan.
- Referral to support services (e.g. student wellbeing, supervision or study support).

The purpose of monitoring is supportive, not punitive — our goal is to help students remain engaged and succeed in their studies.

Absence and Communication

If you are unable to attend due to illness or other personal circumstances, please inform your Programme Leader or Facilitator as soon as possible. Extended absence may require a temporary break in studies (see below).

We understand that life events can affect study. Open and timely communication helps us to respond supportively and prevent issues escalating.

Break in Study

Students may apply for a break in studies for health, personal, or professional reasons. This can help maintain progress while protecting wellbeing. Guidance on this process is available from your Programme Leader or the Academic Administrator. Alternatively, this information is available in the Student Handbook or on the University of Staffordshire website (under Academic Regulations).

Non-Attendance or Non-Engagement

If a student does not attend or engage and no contact has been made, SPTI will reach out via multiple channels (email, phone).

If no response is received within two weeks, or engagement does not improve, an action plan will be initiated. Continued lack of contact or participation may ultimately result in withdrawal from the programme.

Where withdrawal occurs, students will be notified formally in writing and given information on appeal routes (see below).

Appeals and Reviews

Appeal Stage

If you are withdrawn due to non-engagement, you may appeal within two weeks of notification. Appeals should include any evidence explaining your circumstances.

Appeals will be reviewed by a senior member of staff not previously involved in your case. Possible outcomes include:

1. Permission to re-engage and resume study immediately.
2. Permission to return at the next available point guided by academic regulations.
3. Confirmation of withdrawal if engagement concerns remain unresolved.

SPTI Attendance & Engagement Policy

Review Stage

If you believe the appeal procedure was not followed correctly or the decision was unreasonable, you may request a review by writing to julie.dearden@spti.net within two weeks of the appeal outcome.

Reviews are jointly considered by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and may, if appropriate, be referred to the University of Staffordshire for further review.

Further Routes

If dissatisfied after internal review:

- You may submit a complaint to the University of Staffordshire within one year of the decision.
- You may also refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) once all internal and University procedures are completed.

Ongoing Monitoring After Re-Engagement

Where a student successfully re-engages or appeals a withdrawal, their attendance and engagement will continue to be closely monitored.

If concerns reoccur within 12 months, SPTI may withdraw the student without issuing another formal warning. The student will retain the right to appeal this decision.

Summary Statement

SPTI is committed to supporting adult learners in ways that respect autonomy, recognise life circumstances, and uphold professional standards. Attendance and engagement are vital both for individual development and for maintaining the integrity of our training community.