

Student Guide to Learning Analytics and Attendance Monitoring

Introduction

This guide sits alongside the University of Gloucestershire's [Engagement and Attendance Policy](#) and [Learning Analytics Policy](#). A key principle is to be completely transparent about all aspects of our use of learning analytics. We want you to understand exactly what data is being collected, how it is being processed and what we will be doing with the information. This document provides these details and will be updated as our use of learning analytics develops.

Statement of Principles

- We will use Learning Analytics to help all students reach their full academic potential.
- We will be transparent about data collection, sharing, consent and responsibilities.
- We will abide by ethical principles and align with our university strategy, policies and values.
- Learning Analytics will not be used to inform significant action at an individual level without human intervention.

What is learning analytics?

Learning analytics are the “digital footprints” left when you use Moodle and other university systems, which combined with data such as grades and past academic history provide additional information to you, your lecturers, tutors and support staff to support your learning.

As a student at the University of Gloucestershire through enrollment and your engagement with your studies we already collect this data and use it to review aspects of our modules and manage our use of resources more efficiently. However, using this data for learning analytics to provide you, your lecturers, tutors and support staff with additional information to support your learning is something new.

In collaboration with Jisc, the UK's expert body for digital technology and digital resources in higher education, the University is putting your learning data into a learning analytics processor. A measure of engagement for each individual will be generated and compared with class or group averages. Results that may be a cause for concern can be identified and interventions put in place for individuals.

How can learning analytics help me?

As a student at the University, you are expected to engage with the learning opportunities offered to you. Learning analytics can give you an accurate perception of how your learning is progressing. This can be valuable information throughout your studies.

The **Learning Analytics Student App, Study Goal**, developed by Jisc, is available via MyGlos or your relevant App Store. Study Goal shows you information on your learning activities. A score is shown for ‘engagement’, calculated from the data created when you use Moodle or the library and when you attend a lecture.

Your 'attainment' i.e. your marks and grades are also displayed in the app, though these are provisional, and must be confirmed by a Board of Examiners, and, until confirmed, may change.

You have full control over any of the features you see in the Study Goal app. If you do not wish set targets or view your learning data these features can be switched off. [There is a guide available here.](#)

How can learning analytics help my tutor

Learning analytics also helps you by giving your personal tutor richer information on your learning, which they may use to discuss your progress in regular meetings or contact you to check you feel you are on track, or to arrange a meeting to review your progress.

Tutors have access to something called *Data Explorer*. This flags those students whose patterns of study suggest they may need additional tailored support. Along with other information, these "risk ratings" help tutors decide if they should contact students. It is important to note that Data Explorer only provides indicators: the model will always have a degree of inaccuracy, but it helps us to prioritise those students who are most likely to require additional help.

The types of help that will be available will include, among other things, recommendations of additional class resources, referral to specific study skills programmes, and general advice about managing workloads. You are free to consent to these interventions or not as you see fit but please be aware this could have a detrimental impact on your progress.

Learning analytics will not be used for assessment purposes. However, some of the original data sources owned by the University may be used separately for assessment purposes and for monitoring of attendance, outside of the learning analytics system. You will have been informed of this separately.

Attendance monitoring

Attending taught sessions is an expectation when you become a student at Gloucestershire ([see the Student Charter](#)) as we really want you to make the most of your time with us. Attending regularly and engaging with everything your course has to offer gives you the very best chance to succeed and get value.

It is also worth considering your fellow students and your tutor, as low attendance can impact on their experience and morale too.

We have changed the way we register your attendance at lectures, seminars and other timetabled events. Your tutor will now provide a 4-digit code at the start of the session which you can use to 'check-in' on your phone via the Study Goal app

When you download the app, 'geolocation' will be switched on. This only provides a relative measure so if everyone checks in from one location and someone else checks in from another, that person is considered absent. It **does not** provide the University with data on where you are on campus or elsewhere.

Your geolocation data should be provided with your consent and just like any app, you can choose to switch this off. Switching off geolocation will not stop you from checking in to lectures.

Looking after your data

Your personal information is safe and secure. It will only be used in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and more specifically the [University's Data Protection Policy](#) and the [Student Privacy Notice](#):

- Background information: your name, identifiers used by the University, date of birth, ethnicity, gender, declared disabilities, contact details, entry qualifications, whether your parents were in higher education, your socio-economic background, whether you are an overseas student, contact details, and a link to the photo we hold of you. Two of these data categories are sensitive or special data, Ethnicity and Disability. We are including these within our models with the aim of improving our monitoring of equality of opportunity and to improve the accuracy of the models. They will be used for **Statistical Purposes only**.
- Details about your course, the modules you are taking, and your tutors.
- Details of your assessments, marks and grades obtained.
- Details of your activity in Moodle and any other Virtual Learning Tool(s) you may use: logins, resources viewed, assessments submitted and graded, and session timeouts.
- Details about your attendance.
- Details about your library usage (only resources on reading lists and Moodle may be viewed at title level).

Only those members of staff who work in collaboration with the data processors to check the accuracy and adequacy of the modelling and those members of staff who have a professional requirement to support you are permitted to view the analytics about you individually.

Legal bases used for including data in Learning Analytics

Universities will be designated as '**public authorities**' for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 (the bill extends the definition to all bodies subject to the Freedom of Information Act).

Guidance on the GDPR from the Information Commissioner Office (see <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>) indicates that the **public task** basis is likely to apply to the data processing as learning analytics relates to the University's core learning and teaching functions plus how we support student retention, progression and attainment.