



Supporting student learning
through information:
A student guide



**Newman
University**
BIRMINGHAM

Your Campus Supporting student learning through information: a student guide

This document tells you about important developments in the use of information Newman University holds about its students. You should take time to read this guide and understand how that information is used to support students throughout their studies. Newman University, like other higher education institutions, has for many years collected and used data to support students and help them to succeed. The University is expanding this approach to include using student engagement data¹ coupled with student characteristics (such as age, sex and ethnicity) to understand learner activity to further support students in their personal learning journeys towards achieving their degree.

The benefits of using student data

Newman University is committed to the values of respect for others, social justice and equity, with student success and at its heart. Newman's approach to using student engagement data recognises students as real, diverse people and acknowledges that responsibility for achievement comes from an active partnership between staff and students in all aspects of the curriculum.

Using student engagement data can help identify points on the study path where individuals or groups may need additional support as well as inform how modules are taught and assessed. For example, modules may be redesigned due to topics used and seen to cause issues of understanding; feedback systems developed to provide greater clarity to students in moving forward; and students contacted if an important assignment deadline is missed to check that all is well and to offer appropriate information, advice and guidance.



¹ This may involve using software systems known as 'learning analytics platforms'.

What data is being collected?

The University collects a range of information about students at registration and with subsequent student updates. This produces 'behaviours' information from how students engage in a variety of ways with the University through their study. The University will use some of the information collected about you to generate student engagement data. For example, personal data used about you will most likely include sex, ethnicity and age. This will sit alongside data about your activity, such as: access to the campus via door swipes; your activity in Moodle, the library and on Mynewman. However, any use of information collected about your religion and sexual orientation is restricted under the Data Protection Act 1998 and therefore will not be used in this way.



Is my personal information safe and secure?

The University will adhere to existing data protection principles, respect privacy and use personal information sensitively. Data will only be used where there is likely to be an expected benefit to students' learning and progression.

Any organisation working with student information on behalf of the University is bound by data protection legislation and strict contracts. Tutors and student support staff have access to students' data in order to provide appropriate support. The University also passes data to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as part of its regulatory reporting duties.

Students are informed about how their data will be processed when they agree to the Data Collection Notice as part of their conditions of registration (as has happened for many years, see the [FAQs](#)). Student engagement data will be collected and analysed in compliance with the University's data protection policies as outlined in more detail within the [Using Student Engagement Data policy](#).

Our [Using Student Engagement Data policy](#) sets out how student data is used in an ethical way to support student learning, and is founded on the following eight principles:

1. Using student engagement data is an ethical practice and aligns with our focus on formative education that seeks to develop the whole person through transformative learning	2. Students are real, diverse people who cannot be wholly defined or limited by representations of their data nor any interpretations of it	3. In the spirit of mutual trust and respect, students should be active partners in the design and implementation of systems and activities informed by data use and analysis	4. The source, use and process of using student engagement data will be transparent and clearly explained to all stakeholders
5. Using student engagement data will be based on informed consent explicitly requested at the point of initial registration and re-enrolment	6. The use made of student engagement data will be clearly defined and assigned to specific individuals or groups, however, overall responsibility and accountability for the use and analysis of data at Newman University rests with the University Registrar	7. Effective use of student engagement data is dependent on up-to-date data and thus, staff and students alike are responsible for maintaining accurate student records	8. Data will be generated and used appropriately and responsibly without bias and in accordance with data protection and equality legislation

Any further questions?

Please do consult the [FAQs](#) for answers to any further queries or concerns. If you cannot find a suitable answer, please email: foi@newman.ac.uk