

ENHANCING CLASS PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT IN SUSS UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (STUDENTS)

Why this matters and who it applies to

1. Why is there a need to enhance class participation and engagement among undergraduate students?

In an increasingly AI-driven world, human qualities such as curiosity, creativity, empathy, teamwork, and judgment remain highly valued. To help students develop these qualities, SUSS emphasises interactive and practice-based learning, where active class participation is central to a meaningful learning experience.

Much of this learning happens through discussions, debates and presentations, typically in a classroom. Being in class gives students the opportunity to listen, contribute, ask questions, and learn alongside their peers. Regular attendance matters: it is the starting point for the kind of engagement these activities are designed to foster.

As one of the ways to enhance class participation and engagement, SUSS is introducing class participation requirement for undergraduate courses where participation is integral to the learning experience.

2. Who is the class participation requirement applicable to?

The class participation requirement applies to all students who are taking undergraduate courses, including FTUG, PTUG and CET students. This will take effect from the July 2027 semester onwards.

What class participation includes

3. What is the class participation requirement?

Class participation has two parts: (i) attendance and (ii) quality of your participation. Both will count towards your Overall Continuous Assessment Score (OCAS), and from the July 2027 semester onwards, they will constitute at least 15% of the course grade.

Attendance is the foundation - you need to be present to take part, but it is the quality of your participation, not simply being in the room, that we wish to recognise.

4. How will quality of participation be determined?

The quality of your participation will be determined by a holistic rubric set for the course. You are encouraged to participate meaningfully and to help stimulate thoughtful discussions, rather than to focus on how often you speak. It is the substance of your participation, not its frequency, that matters.

5. Is there a basic class attendance requirement that students need to meet?

Yes. Unless otherwise stated, you are expected to attend at least 60% of scheduled sessions for each course. This supports our aim of deeper learning through regular participation and engagement.

60% is a **guideline**. Please refer to the table below for the minimum number of sessions required to attend for a course.

Number of scheduled sessions	Minimum number of sessions to attend
1 to 2	1
3 to 4	2
5	3
6 to 7	4
8 to 9	5
10	6
11 to 12	7
13 to 14	8
15	9
16 to 17	10
18 to 19	11
20	12

For example, if your course has 6 scheduled sessions, you will need to attend at least 4 sessions to fulfil the basic class attendance requirement.

6. Is the basic attendance requirement applicable to international students who are student pass holders?

Yes. International students who are student pass holders are required to attend at least 90% of the scheduled sessions for each course. This higher threshold is not set by SUSS but is stipulated by the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) as a condition of the student pass.

7. Is the basic attendance requirement applicable to SkillsFuture-funded courses, where students are required to achieve a minimum attendance rate of 75%?

No. For SkillsFuture-funded courses, students must achieve a minimum attendance rate of 75%. This requirement supersedes SUSS's basic attendance requirement.

If you're finding it difficult to attend or participate in class

8. What happens if I do not attend class regularly or participate in class?

In general, you will do well in class participation if you attend regularly and participate actively in class.

If you do not meet the basic class attendance requirement, your participation marks will be reduced. If you do not participate actively in class, you will also have lower participation marks. This is because much of the value of these sessions — the discussion, questioning, and exchange of ideas — depends on you being present and involved. If you find it difficult to participate, please refer to Q10 for the support available to you.

9. Will I fail a course if I fail my class participation?

No. Failing your class participation alone will not cause you to fail the course. However, you will fail the course if you do not attain a passing OCAS and/or Overall Examinable Score (OES), or if you do not fulfil the mandatory requirements of the course.

10. I have difficulty participating or expressing my thoughts in class. What should I do?

We understand that participating in class does not come easily to everyone, and support is available. You are encouraged to speak with your instructor about your difficulties. Depending on the nature and pedagogy of the course, alternative activities may be arranged to assess your participation.

Learning support is also readily available in SUSS. You can sign up for a one-to-one coaching session at the Learning Success Clinic¹ conducted by the Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC), where an academic coach can offer tips on note-taking, concentration and participating more confidently. You may also refer to the available learning support provisions² such as SDW114 *Mastering Office Hours Consultations & Class Participation for Effective Learning*, which helps to enhance your communication skills and explore different ways of participating in class.

11. I have a disability or medical condition which affects my ability to attend or participate in class. What should I do?

If you require access arrangements or learning accommodation, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) at sas@suss.edu.sg to discuss your accessibility needs with an Accessibility Advisor. You are encouraged to reach out early so that support can be provided in a timely manner. For more information, please visit the Accessible and Inclusive Learning website at <https://www.suss.edu.sg/life-at-suss/health-safety/Accessible-and-Inclusive-Learning>.

When you can't attend

12. I am unable to attend class due to unforeseen circumstances or a prior commitment. Will my marks be deducted?

We understand that you may not be able to attend class due to unforeseen circumstances and prior commitments. Sessions you miss with a valid reason will be excluded from the attendance computation, so you are not disadvantaged for circumstances beyond your control.

Please refer to the list below for some examples. Other reasonable grounds will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Unforeseen circumstance/prior commitment	Examples of supporting documents
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¹ Please visit the Learning Success Clinic's website at <https://www.suss.edu.sg/about/engagement-collaboration/centres/teaching-learning-centre/learning-support/learning-success-clinic> for more information.

² Please visit [https://www.suss.edu.sg/about/engagement-collaboration/centres/teaching-learning-centre/learning-support/learning-support-student-development-workshops-\(sdw\)](https://www.suss.edu.sg/about/engagement-collaboration/centres/teaching-learning-centre/learning-support/learning-support-student-development-workshops-(sdw)) for more information.

Illness or hospitalisation	Medical certificate, discharge summary, hospital bill, medical report.
Caregiving responsibilities for a close family member who has been hospitalised	Medical certificate, discharge summary, hospital bill, medical report.
Pregnancy-related medical conditions	Medical certificate, discharge summary, hospital bill, medical report.
Death of an immediate family member (spouse, sibling, child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent or grandparent-in-law)	Obituary, notice of death, death certificate.
Shift work	Letter from employer, work roster.
Work-related travel	Letter from employer.
NS In-Camp Training or mobilisation	SAF100, mobilisation notice.

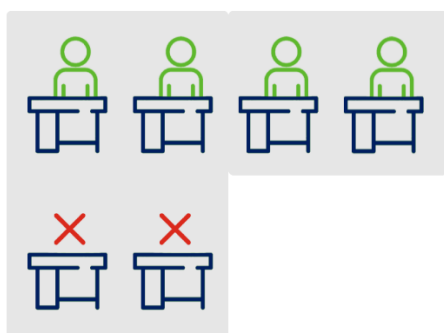
In such cases, please write to your instructor about your absence as soon as possible, indicating your programme of study, course and date of session, together with the supporting documents.

If you do not inform your instructor or do not provide a valid reason with supporting documents, you will be regarded as absent without a valid reason for that session, and your class participation marks may be affected.

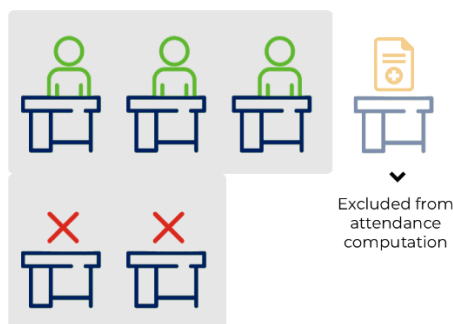
Example 1

For a course with 6 scheduled sessions, students are required to attend a **minimum of 4** sessions. A student submits a valid medical certificate for 1 session and it is approved. With this, the student is now required to attend 3 sessions to meet the basic class attendance requirement.

Attend **at least 4** out of 6 sessions



Attend **at least 3** out of 5 sessions



Example 2

For a course with 6 scheduled sessions, students are required to attend a **minimum of 4** sessions.

A student submits 2 medical certificates for 2 different sessions. One is approved while the other was rejected (e.g. the date of the session does not fall within the medical certificate period). Since the student is absent with a valid reason only for 1 session, the student is required to attend 3 sessions to meet the basic class attendance requirement.

- 13. I am unable to attend any session due to a scheduling conflict, but I am still able to keep up with the course content and complete the assignments. How will I be affected?**

You are strongly encouraged to plan your timetable ahead of time and to avoid registering for any courses where a scheduling conflict is likely. We recognise, however, that work, family and other commitments can arise at short notice. If this happens, please explore alternative arrangements with your instructor as soon as possible.

Recording attendance and getting help

14. How will attendance for face-to-face sessions be recorded?

Attendance will be recorded via the SUSS Backpack app. There are several ways to record your attendance:

Method	Details
NFC tag	NFC tags will be installed inside the front and back of each classroom. Launch the SUSS Backpack app and tap your phone against the NFC tag to record your attendance.
Bluetooth	Classrooms in SUSS Clementi Campus, Block C are equipped with computers that transmit a Bluetooth signal when switched on. Launch the SUSS Backpack app to record your attendance.
Backpack-to-Backpack via Bluetooth	If both NFC and Bluetooth are unavailable, instructors can use the SUSS Backpack app on their own device to transmit the attendance signal for you to record your attendance.
Passcode	If both NFC and Bluetooth are unavailable, instructors can generate a passcode through the SUSS Backpack app and share it with you to record your attendance. Note: You are required to turn on the location settings on your mobile phone.
Manual attendance marking by instructor	Instructors can record attendance for the class manually using the SUSS Backpack app. If you forget to bring your phone or encounter any technical issues, please inform your instructor as soon as possible, and they will take your attendance on your behalf.

For detailed information on attendance taking via the SUSS Backpack app, please refer to the user guide in the SUSS Backpack app (to be uploaded by July 2027 semester) and the Learning Services website at <https://learningservices.suss.edu.sg/backpack.html>.

15. How will attendance for online sessions be recorded?

Attendance will be recorded automatically when you sign in to Zoom with your SUSS login credentials. No further action is required from you.

16. How will attendance for SkillsFuture-funded courses be recorded?

You are required to scan a QR code at the start of each session to record attendance for SkillsFuture purposes. This is separate from SUSS's basic attendance requirement.

17. What about courses with laboratory sessions?

Not all laboratory sessions require class participation. Your instructor or school will let you know if the laboratory session(s) is/are included in attendance computation and class participation marks.

18. How will the attendance record be used and handled?

The attendance record will be used solely for attendance-marking purposes and will be retained for eight years, after which it will be securely disposed of.

19. What about courses where I am expected to learn independently, and there are no scheduled sessions with an instructor?

There will not be a class participation component for such courses. However, you should arrange consultations with your instructor to obtain feedback on your learning and ensure that you remain on the right track.

20. I arrived late for class or left early. Will my attendance still be recorded?

Yes, your attendance will still be recorded. However, arriving late or leaving early gives you fewer opportunities to participate and engage with your classmates and instructor, which is where much of the learning takes place, so your participation marks may be affected.

21. What happens if a session is rescheduled?

Your attendance and quality of participation for the rescheduled session will be included in your participation marks. Please refer to Q12 if you are unable to attend the rescheduled session.

22. What happens if I join a course midway in the semester?

Sessions scheduled before you join the course will not be included in the attendance computation. In other words, your participation marks will not be affected by sessions which you could not have attended.

23. How can I check my attendance record and participation marks?

You can check your attendance record for each course via Learnova by clicking 'More' on the course landing page and selecting 'Attendance Records' from the dropdown list. Your participation marks can be viewed under 'Grades' on the course landing page.

24. I believe there is a discrepancy in my attendance record or participation marks. What should I do?

You may submit an appeal by writing to your instructor as soon as possible, indicating your programme of study, course, date of session, and reason for appeal, together with the supporting documents.

25. Can another student or third party record attendance on my behalf?

No. Impersonating another student or allowing another student or third party to record attendance is a form of academic dishonesty. Because participation marks are meant to reflect your own learning and presence, SUSS treats such misconduct seriously, and students who do so will be subject to penalties. Keeping attendance accurate ensures the process remains fair to everyone.

26. If I face a technical issue while using Zoom or the SUSS Backpack app, who can I contact?

You may contact Learning Services at lssupport@suss.edu.sg or call them at 6330 9111 between 8:30am to 10:30pm (Mon-Fri) and 8:30am to 5:30pm (Sat-Sun).