



Interruption of Study Policy and Procedure

This policy is of relevance to staff / applicants / students

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1. Purpose

An interruption of study is the formal method through which a student can take a temporary break from their studies. This policy explains why a student may wish to take such a break, implications to consider, and the process.

2. Scope

This policy covers the process in situations where a student wishes to take temporary time away from their studies. Separate policies apply where a student is suspended under the [Principal's Emergency Powers](#) or needs to take an interruption because of a [Support to Train and Study](#) or [Fitness to Practise](#) procedure. Students only needing a short period of time away should apply for a Leave of Absence on [eGo](#), and if applicable a deferral of any assessments.

3. Introduction

- 3.1. An interruption of study is used where a student needs a longer period of time away from their studies. Depending on the circumstances and the programme of study, this is likely to be a year or the start of the equivalent term in the following academic year. For taught programmes this will fit in with the teaching and assessment that is delivered once a year. For research degree programmes interruptions can be for a minimum of one term but must be for whole terms. The maximum period of interruption is normally two years, provided that this does not make the total duration of the student's studies longer than the maximum period of registration. Further information on interruptions and maximum periods of registration are available in the [Academic Regulations](#).

4. Process

- 4.1. Before applying for an interruption of study, students should discuss their reasons with their Head of Department. There could be a number of reasons why a student might wish to take a break from their studies, including health, financial and maternity/parental leave, but Departments can also consider and approve for other acceptable circumstances.
- 4.2. Applications for interruption from research students for circumstances including fieldwork, a lack of progress, changing their research topic or for undertaking training or work experience where this is part of the research programme would not normally be approved.
- 4.3. Students considering an interruption of study should ensure that they understand all the potential academic and other implications prior to applying. Advice is available on [MyGuildhall](#), from their Department, or [Registry](#).

- 4.4. In particular, students considering an interruption of study can also get advice from Registry on the effect this may have on their [visa](#) or on their [student funding](#).
- 4.5. There is further information on tuition fee liability if a student interrupts in the [Tuition Fee Enrolment and Debt Collection Policy](#).
- 4.6. A student can apply for an interruption of study and upload any supporting evidence via [eGo](#), which will then go to their Department for approval.
- 4.7. All requests will be regarded as confidential and information will only be shared with individuals who have a valid reason for being informed.
- 4.8. Applications for interruption of studies will normally be approved where there are good reasons for the interruption. When making a decision, the Department will take into consideration the academic and personal circumstances of the student, along with the structure and requirements of their programme, to ensure that the student has the best chance of being able to successfully complete their studies.
- 4.9. Once an interruption of studies has been approved this will be processed by Registry. This will happen at least seven days after the application has been submitted to allow for any changes.
- 4.10. Once processed the student will receive a notification email, including the expected return date.

5. Student status on an interruption of studies

- 5.1. Students on an interruption remain registered with the School but are not enrolled students.
- 5.2. As such they:
- 5.2.1. Are not entitled to attend virtual or in person classes and teaching sessions, or research supervision.
 - 5.2.2. Will have access to ASIMUT but will not be able to make bookings.
 - 5.2.3. Will have their library account paused
 - 5.2.4. Will not be permitted to borrow AV equipment

5.2.5. Will not have access to Student Services

5.2.6. Will not normally be permitted to live in Sundial Court.

5.3. The exception to 5.2 above is where a student is required to complete referred or deferred assessments, but not teaching, prior to returning to studies. In this case library services will be available to prepare for assessment, as will limited access to Student Services.

5.4. For full details see the [student status and access to facilities](#) document and the advice on [MyGuildhall](#)

6. Returning from an interruption of studies

6.1. During an interruption, a student will normally have limited contact with their Department, mainly to facilitate a return to studies and to ensure that the student receives any relevant information regarding the programme. They will also be able to confirm and provide further information on any conditions related to returning to studies, such as medical evidence that the student is able to return, a re-entry audition or any outstanding assessments and support for these.

6.2. The term before a student is due to return (or during the summer vacation if the student is due to return at the start of an academic year), the Department will confirm to Registry that any conditions have been met and that the student is due to return as expected. Registry will then write to the student providing details of how to re-enrol and the deadline to do so.

6.3. If a student does not re-enrol as expected and does not communicate with the School to discuss their situation, they may be withdrawn from their studies.

6.4. If a student is unable to return at the expected date, it may be possible to request an additional interruption, provided that this will not mean the student exceeds the maximum period of registration for their programme. Students in this position should discuss this with their Department.

6.5. If a student decides that they do not wish to return, or an additional period of interruption is not approved or possible, then the student should speak to their Department about formally withdrawing from their studies.

7. Changes to programmes/modules

7.1. Although generally the School will only introduce significant changes to programmes for new cohorts of students, occasionally changes may need to be made that affect current students.

- 7.2. Where this is known before a student goes on an interruption of study, this should be discussed with the student in terms of what the changes are, any implications for their studies and what options are available to the student.
- 7.3. If a change is implemented during a student's period of interruption, this should be highlighted to the student, ideally by meeting with them, as soon as possible, and providing them with the reasons behind the change and any benefits, as well as the options available to them.