



Withdrawals, Deferrals and Transfers Policy and Procedures (Awarding Body – Buckinghamshire New University)

Version 7

Approved by the Board of Governors

Last Amendment: September 2023

The following sets out the School's policy and procedures for withdrawing students from study programmes before completion. It also sets out the procedures for approving and managing students' deferrals and transfers to other study programmes. It has been compiled with due regard for requirements of *England's Regulatory Framework for Higher Education*, in particular the need to ensure that students are supported to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

These procedures do not apply to applicants who have not completed the enrolment process, or who are unsuccessful in their application to study with the School.

Document Information

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*The document owner is responsible for maintaining and updating the content of this document and ensuring that it reflects current practice at the School.

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1. Definitions

- 1.1. “*Withdrawal*” refers to the cessation of study on a particular programme with no intention of continuing at a later date. Withdrawal from a study programme can be initiated at any time, by either the student or by the School.
- 1.2. “*Deferral*” also known as “*interruption of studies*” refers to a delay in a student’s enrolment/commencement of a programme of study, until a later semester/year.
- 1.3. “*Interruption / Intermission*” refers to a temporary break from studies where the student plans to resume their studies at a future date.
- 1.4. “*Resumption of Study*” refers to the commencement of a study programme following a deferred start or a period of interruption/intermission.
- 1.5. “*Internal Transfer*” refers to the process of a student moving from one programme of study to another. This may be to start another programme, or to join a programme at an advanced stage where a student has sufficient academic credits and enrolment rules permit this.
- 1.6. “*Awarding body*” refers to a higher education provider with degree awarding powers. LSST delivers programmes under award validation and franchise agreements with recognised university partners; procedures for reviewing and approving withdrawals, deferrals and transfers may therefore vary between programmes, depending on the programme’s awarding body.
- 1.7. “*Exit Award*” refers to any partial award that may be given where the student has not achieved sufficient credits to claim the full award sought although, has successfully completed some components. A student may withdraw or be withdrawn from their programme with an exit award, which may include a:

- **Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE):**

A CertHE is awarded after one year of full-time study (or equivalent) at a university or other higher education provider.

If a student has been awarded a CertHE, they will have obtained 120 credits at Level 4 on the National Qualifications Framework (or over 120 but less than 240 credits) and have confirmed fails in their assessment record that prohibit further progression toward obtaining the intended degree or award.

- **Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE):**

A DipHE is awarded after two years of full-time study (or equivalent) at a university or other higher education provider.

If a student has been awarded a DipHE, they will have obtained 240 credits at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework (or over 240 but less than 300 credits) and have confirmed fails in their assessment record that prohibit further progression toward obtaining the intended degree or award.

Students who have been awarded an exit award, will be sent a certificate and academic transcript of results.

- 1.8. Where the term Registrar is referenced in this policy, this includes the authorised nominee from the Registry department. In most cases, this will be the Assistant Registrar.

2. Principles

- 2.1. Those processing withdrawals, deferrals/interruptions of study and transfers at LSST will be guided by the following principles:

- i. The School will consult with all students seeking to withdraw, interrupt their studies or transfer to another course and/or provider to ensure they fully understand the academic and financial implications.
- ii. The School will ensure that students seeking to withdraw, interrupt their studies or transfer have exhausted all available student support options and reasonable adjustments have been considered prior to committing to proceed with the withdrawal/interruption of studies.
- iii. The School will respect a student's decision to voluntarily withdraw from a programme or transfer to another provider without exerting undue pressure to remain and will readily assist the student in proceeding.
- iv. Where a student leaves their programme before completion, the School will ensure they receive any exit award that may be due to them, as well as a transcript of their achievement to date from the awarding body.
- v. Where the School seeks to withdraw a student from a programme, it will do so only as a last resort when all possible remedial interventions and attempts at reconciliation have been exhausted.
- vi. All procedures for involuntary withdrawal will give the student in question the opportunity to present their case to the deciding panel by completing and submitting an appeal with relevant supporting evidence. Please refer to the School's *Appeals Policy - Buckinghamshire New University* for further detail on this process.
- vii. Where LSST has taken a decision to withdraw a student, they will be notified of their right of appeal and the correct means of doing so. Please refer to the School's *Appeals Policy - Buckinghamshire New University* for further detail on this process.

- viii. In circumstances where the student has paid tuition fee in excess of the duration that they were enrolled LSST will determine the overpayment amount and make effort to refund this to the student, or hold the funds for a student's future study should a return to study be agreed. In equal measure, the student remains liable to the awarding body or LSST for the payment of any fees that are due for the study period, dependent on the point of withdrawal or study interruption during the academic year. Furthermore, any entitlement a student may have for grants, bursaries, and/or loans on the basis of their enrolment on the programme of study will be stopped once their request has been processed.
- ix. For a student to officially request withdrawal, interruption of studies or course transfer, the necessary forms must be completed correctly and submitted directly to Registry or to their campus student support team who will inform Registry on their behalf. Should the necessary forms not be completed and submitted by the student, no action will be taken and the student will remain active and enrolled on their current course. As an active student they will remain liable to any tuition fees incurred, and must adhere to the engagement, attendance and submission requirements of the course.
- x. Student initiated withdrawals, deferrals or transfers cannot be backdated and will be processed from the date of signature on the form which must align with the date the form is received by Registry and/or Student Support teams. Only in exceptional circumstances will a different date be considered and, in most cases, extensive evidence will be required to accompany the request.

3. Withdrawal from Study

3.1. Where the student initiates withdrawal:

If a student is contemplating withdrawing, the School will make every effort to offer appropriate advice and to make enquiries about whether any additional assistance could be provided that would enable the student to continue on the programme. Students are advised to speak to [Student Support](#) for advice about any further assistance that might be available. It is at this stage that students will be advised of the academic and financial implications of such a decision.

If, after consulting Student Support, the student decides to proceed with the withdrawal, they must complete the BNU Withdrawal Crib Sheet, and BNU Withdrawal Form and submit it to Student Support; the form can be downloaded from the Student Portal, LSST Connect, and/or completed online using the LSST E-form System. Alternatively, students may visit their campus students support office for assistance during operational hours.

All students who are not enrolled on a Buckinghamshire New University validated programme, should consult the Deferrals/Interruption of Studies, Transfer and Withdrawals Policy relevant to their programme and awarding body. This policy only applies to students registered on a Buckinghamshire New University programme/course.

3.2. **Where the School initiates withdrawal:**

The School may initiate the process of withdrawing a student in the event that:

- the student has failed to progress academically, and all assessment opportunities have been exhausted
- the student has failed to satisfy LSST's attendance and/or engagement requirements
- the student has repeatedly and/or severely breached the School's code of conduct, particularly where this pertains to the health, safety and wellbeing of the student and/or other individuals
- the student has failed to return from a period of interrupted/deferred study
- the student has failed to re-enrol with the awarding body where required
- the student has not paid their tuition fees
- the student has provided false or misleading evidence in connection with their application, registration, or at any other time, which after fair investigation remains a justifiable cause for withdrawal.

Note: The above examples are not exhaustive.

3.3. **Consequences of withdrawal:**

Any student withdrawing from their programme of study should take into consideration the following consequences of withdrawal:

- Their registration with LSST and the awarding body shall be terminated, and they shall no longer be a registered student of either institution.
- Students who are withdrawn are no longer permitted to access property, services, or facilities of the awarding body or the School with the exception of areas which are signposted as being accessible to members of the public.
- The School will duly process records with awarding bodies, other external bodies, any regulatory or governing body or other agencies will be notified. For the purpose of the student's record, the date of withdrawal will be the same as the date the decision to withdraw is made or the date provided on the relevant form, unless evidence is readily available to confirm an earlier date. Continuing students who are withdrawn due to failure to enrol with the awarding body, will be withdrawn from the

end date of the previous academic year for which they successfully completed enrolment.

- Students must take into consideration and refer to Student Support for guidance on the implications of withdrawal on their student loan and their finances.

4. Deferral of Study

4.1.

- a. Students may be permitted to interrupt their studies for a maximum one calendar year. In exceptional circumstances a student may be permitted to interrupt their studies for an additional 12 months, equalling 24 months in total, however, this is subject to prior approval by the awarding body, BNU.
- b. Should an extension to this period be required, an additional request must be submitted by the student at the time of the interruption being actioned to the registry department. Extension requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Principal and the outcome will be communicated to the student within 5 working days of Registry's receipt of the request.
- c. Students who have interrupted their studies will not be permitted to submit any work for assessment, undertake an examination of any type or attend work/clinical placements.
- d. Students will be expected to return at the agreed resumption of studies date in the next academic year during their same intake to complete enrolment and SLC application. A students resumption of studies date will be no less than 12 months and no greater than 24 months from their original interruption of studies date.
- e. Students will resume their studies from their agreed deferral date in the following academic year.
- f. All finance will be paused and recalculated by SLC according to their agreed deferral date and resumption of studies date.
- g. On resumption of study, student re-enrolment will be subject to course/programme availability, curriculum and the rules and regulations in place at the point of their return.
- h. An interruption of studies will be actioned from the date that the form is signed and submitted to LSST Student Support and/or Registry departments. An interruption of studies cannot be backdated, and any form received with a deferral date earlier than the date the form is received by the Student Support and/or Registry department will be rejected.

4.2. The minimum period of interruption is one calendar year and the maximum is two calendar years.

4.3. Circumstances that could be grounds for deferral shall be the same as those for mitigation and shall include the following:

- Physical or mental ill-health
- Severe financial hardship
- Emotional/personal difficulties, e.g., bereavement
- Disability e.g., where a student's disability comes to light for the first time at the assessment
- Unavoidable absence from the School, e.g., Work commitments/requirements of employer
- Unavoidable absence from domicile, e.g., eviction
- Other serious circumstances which could not be foreseen by the student

Note: The above examples are for illustration only and not intended to be definitive or exhaustive.

4.4. Students will not be able to defer modules only. Where a student is unable to attend their module and/or submit for assessment although, will be able to submit at the next assessment point, they should refer to the School's *Mitigating Circumstances Policy*.

4.5. Students may apply to defer their studies by filling in and submitting a *BNU Interruption of Studies Form* to Student Support. The form can be downloaded from the Student Portal; LSST Connect, and/or completed online using the LSST E-form System. Alternatively, students may visit their campus students support office for assistance during operational hours.

4.6. The School, and/or awarding body deferral process records the student's deferral status and calculates the student or Student Loan Company (SLC) element of the tuition fee for refund purposes or to carry forward. In circumstances where students have a split fee liability between the Student Loans Company and the student, any refund due of any balance of fees paid by the student in excess of the reduced fee will be carried forward and credited to the next registration period. If the student or SLC element of the fee is greater than the fee paid at the point of suspension, the student will be liable for immediate payment of the outstanding amount. Failure to pay will prevent the student re-joining the programme.

Resumption of study

4.7. A date of resumption of study deadline is agreed between the student and the School at the time of the application for deferral of studies. Students will be provided with a letter at the point of deferral stating the agreed deadline. Students who fail to return to their studies by this agreed deadline, will be automatically withdrawn by the School. On resumption of study, where the student is liable for the fee, the student will be invoiced the full tuition fee for the academic session, plus any repeat fee applicable, with a discount applied equal to the tuition fee charged for the period of study prior to the deferral. Where the student is SLC funded, a new Financial Assessment letter will be required for the fee due at the point of resumption.

All assessment marks undertaken before the deferral will be brought forward to the new academic year regardless of whether the assessment mark was a pass or fail or non-submission.

Upon resumption of study students are expected to submit during their submission period. Students must remain in contact with their academic tutors to ensure they are aware of the submission deadlines upon their return from deferral.

Student finance will only resume from the agreed student resumption date.

Withdrawal following deferral

4.8. Students who wish to withdraw following the period of deferral should notify Student Support of their intention to do so. This will be done automatically by the Registry Department if a student fails to re-register on their programme of study by the agreed resumption of studies deadline.

5. Course Transfer

- 5.1. Students who wish to transfer to another BNU course are encouraged to make an application prior to the start of a new academic stage or level to the Registry Department to ensure the best chance of their request being considered. Course transfer in most cases is only available to students starting level 3, or level 4, however applications received from students of different levels will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.2. Students who wish to transfer after the commencement of their new academic stage or level, can do so within two weeks of the start date of their academic stage, but their application may be rejected due to limiting factors, such as course availability and class size. The student should be aware that they may need to consider transferring to another campus to have their request accommodated due to course and timetable availability.

- 5.3. All transfer applications are initially reviewed by the Registry department. Registry will examine the transfer application carefully, taking into account class size, course availability at another campus and other relevant factors, in particular, whether the transfer is in the best interest of the student. The Admissions department will also be consulted to ensure that the student meets the applicant criteria for the course they wish to transfer to.
- 5.4. The student will be required to attend a formal interview with the new course programme leader or campus team lead to discuss their intent and academic suitability to transfer. In order to assess this, prior to this interview, the student will be asked to provide their most up-to-date curriculum vitae and personal statement. The course programme leader may assign a member of the senior academic team on campus to conduct the interview on their behalf should they see fit.
- 5.5. Students who transfer to a new course may be subject to additional eligibility checks and/or applicant requirements which differ from those of the course they are moving from. Should the student not meet the eligibility requirements of the new course their transfer request may be rejected, and they will need to fulfil these criteria, where possible, to reapply for the course at a later date. Any additional expenses or resources needed to do so would be the responsibility of the student. The School and awarding body will not be liable for any additional fees incurred or resources needed by the student.
- 5.6. If permission is given for the transfer, the student agrees to undertake additional studies themselves to enable them to catch up with the course within a reasonable time; e.g., 4 weeks. This should be agreed between the course leader/senior campus academic staff and student at the point of interview.
- 5.7. Should a student's transfer be accepted and registry will complete the process, and from the point of process completion the student will be required to adhere to the regulations and requirements associated with the new course. As part of the process registry will formally notify the awarding body BNU.
- 5.8. If the result of the transfer entails moving to a course where the fees are reduced, a proportionate discount or refund will be given. If the result of the transfer entails moving to a course where the fees are increased, additional fees to cover the balance will apply.
- 5.9. Where a student wishes to transfer to another institution the following applies:
- Any transfer requested will be treated as a Student Initiated Withdrawal and as such must follow the relevant process (this is inclusive of any process involving tuition fees).
 - The new institution would be the entity responsible for assessing any accreditation for prior learning.
 - Where a student has passed modules on the relevant programme of study, an academic transcript of the completion of said modules would be provided by the London School of Science and Technology: Withdrawals, Deferrals and Transfers Policy and Procedures; Version 7 Page 9

awarding body. If the student has passed and completed all the required modules for any given exit award, certification will be awarded by the awarding body. As such for all University validated programmes; a Certificate of Higher Education (level 4, 1st year of degree programme), or a Diploma of Higher Education (level 5, upon 2nd year completion of a degree programme) would be awarded.

6. Campus Transfer

- 6.1. Students who wish to transfer to another LSST Campus are encouraged to make an application prior to the start of a new academic stage or level to the Registry Department to ensure the best chance of their request being considered.
- 6.2. Students who wish to transfer campus after the commencement of their new academic stage or level, can do so within two weeks of the start date of their academic stage, but their application may be rejected due to limiting factors, such as course availability and class size. Campus transfers may be considered at other stages of the academic year depending on the student's reason for doing so. The Registry department reserve the right to request further information regarding the transfer request and in some cases relevant supporting evidence. Students can request campus transfer once per academic year. However, exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Registry department on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.3. All transfer applications are initially reviewed by the Registry department. Registry will examine the transfer application carefully, taking into account class size, course availability at another Campus and other relevant factors, in particular, whether the transfer is in the best interest of the student.

7. Timetables and Timetable Transfers

- 7.1. Students who wish to transfer to another timetable are encouraged to make an application prior to the start of a new academic stage or level to the Registry Department to ensure the best chance of their request being considered.
- 7.2. Students who wish to transfer timetable after the commencement of their new academic stage or level, can do so within two weeks of the start date of their academic stage, but their application may be rejected due to limiting factors, such as timetable availability and class size. Timetable transfers may be considered at other stages of the academic year depending on the student's reason for doing so. The registry department reserve the right to request further information regarding the transfer request and in some cases relevant supporting evidence.
- 7.3. All transfer applications are initially reviewed by the Registry department. Registry will examine the transfer application carefully, taking into account the class size, course availability

at another Campus and other relevant factors, in particular, whether the transfer is in the best interest of the student.

7.4. Student timetables are available on a first come, first serve basis. While every effort is made by Registry to ensure students receive their requested timetable, students are not guaranteed their requested timetable throughout every stage of their course. Furthermore, new students who apply and are admitted late on the course (after the course start date) may receive an alternative timetable to the one they requested initially at admission due to timetable availability and class sizes. Students who are unable to attend their given timetable should contact Registry and/or Student Support at the first instance so that they can review any alternative options available to them.

7.5. Student should not attend a timetable which has not been issued to them. For example, a student who is unable to attend their Tuesday classes one week should not attend another student's Friday class. Timetables are issued in set blocks e.g., Monday & Tuesday or Thursday & Friday which vary between campuses. In this example a student could not chose to attend Monday & Friday, as they must remain in their issued set block, Monday & Tuesday. Students who are having trouble committing to their timetable block must inform Registry and Attendance at the first instance as continued non-attendance may lead to withdrawal.

8. Review and Update

8.1. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Registry; changes to it will be ratified by the School's Board of Governors.



Version History

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Original author(s): Head of Registry

Reviewed by: Executive Committee

September 2018

Version 5.0 - 5.1

Revised by: Head of Registry
Quality Audit Manager

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Approved by: The Board of Governors (TBC)

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Version 6.0

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Quality Manager

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Approved by: The Board of Governors

September 2022

Version 6.1

Revised by: Head of Registry
Quality Manager

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Approved by:

Board of Governors

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Version 7

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Quality Manager

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Approved by:

The Board of Governors

October 2023

Version

Revised by: Name; Title

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Date