



UCP-ASS007 Higher Education Student Intermission of Study Procedure

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 It is the expectation of University Centre Peterborough (UCP) that a student will complete their course in one continuous period of uninterrupted study. However, it is understood that students may encounter personal difficulties or situations which may seriously disrupt their studies. This procedure outlines the process to follow when a student needs to take a break for their studies, referred to as Intermission. This procedure sets out the steps to be followed so that if the period of Intermission is approved, a student can stop studying for an agreed period of time before resuming their studies.
- 1.2 The purpose is to have a clear procedure that will:
- a) Apply a uniformity and consistency of treatment across UCP
 - b) Provide clear guidance on the process to be followed when a student fails to satisfy progression criteria, or initiates intermission from their studies at UCP
 - c) Enable up-to-date student information to be available.
 - d) Serve as a UCP procedure statement to any interested third parties.
 - e) Enable accurate data to be provided for statistical and audit purposes.
 - f) Provide evidence for the appropriate funding body that students are on programme.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies exclusively to all Higher Education provision offered by University Centre Peterborough including to sub contracted provision.
- 2.1 This procedure applies to students registered with UCP.

3. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- FORM-Intermission Form
- ADMIN LETTER-Successful Intermission Claim
- ADMIN LETTER-Unsuccessful Intermission Claim
- UCP-ATT001 Higher Education Student Attendance Procedure
- Awarding Body Regulation:
 - The Open University (OU) - [Academic Regulations for Validated Awards](#)
 - Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU) <https://www.bishopg.ac.uk/about-bgu/policies-and-procedures> Pearson Higher Nationals – [HN Guide to Quality Assurance](#)

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 All staff who are responsible for the collection, storage, processing of student data and for providing advice to students are responsible for ensuring that this procedure is complied with.

5. RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 This policy is required to ensure that student's attendance registration is updated when they intermit and the correct procedure is followed.

Analyse risks of non-adherence to this policy

Failure to have this policy in place or non-adherence may result in inconsistency practices leading to dissatisfaction and poor reputation and non-compliance with Academic Regulations.

Staff training needed

- 5.2 UCP will ensure that those who need to see the information will have received appropriate guidance and training.

6. DATA PROTECTION

- 6.1 UCP complies with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation Data Protection Act, 2018. As such, applicants' and student data are treated as confidential by all staff involved in this process and is not divulged unnecessarily or inappropriately. However, the aforementioned Act requires UCP to release certain information to UK authorities upon request in order to assist those authorities with the prevention and detection of fraud or other crimes. We will release the requested information on receipt of an appropriate request from UK authorities such as (but not limited to) the police, Home Office (for immigration and related matters), local authorities, and the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 6.2 Intermission applications, including any evidence, are treated as confidential, unless for the protection of a student or other individuals), there are circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be maintained.
- 6.3 We may use anonymised data collected as part of student's application for intermission for the purpose of fulfilling statistical and reporting requirements.

7. TERMINOLOGY

- 7.1 Intermission is sometimes referred to by awarding bodies as a break in study, interruption of studies (OU) or intercalation (BGU). It refers to when a registered student is either considering or intending to stop study for a specific period of time, but they intend to resume studies with UCP at a future date which has been agreed by UCP.
- 7.2 Withdrawal refers to where a student voluntarily wishes to leave UCP permanently and terminate their studies at UCP. It is also where a student is required to leave UCP. This may be for academic or other reasons (i.e. a student can be withdrawn by the Awards Board/Exam Board after exhausting all assessment attempts or after non-engagement or communication from the student in response to attendance monitoring messages).

8. Academic Regulation for Intermission

- 8.1 The Open University (OU)

See section 8 of The Open university- Academic Regulations for Validated Awards.

- a) Referred to as Interruption of studies by the OU;
- b) A student on a degree programme may apply, or be required, to take a study break for a maximum period of twelve consecutive months under the agreed procedure for reasons of ill health or other extenuating circumstances (see Section F of the Academic Regulations for Validated Awards). This may be extended in exceptional circumstances as agreed between The OU and UCP.
- c) A student on a micro-credential module may apply, or be required, to take a study break for a maximum period of one third of the duration of the module under the agreed procedure for reasons of ill health or other extenuating circumstances. This may be extended in exceptional circumstances as agreed between The OU and UCP.

8.2 Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU)

(Code of Practice for Intercalation -Suspension of Studies).

- a) Referred to as intercalation and suspension of studies by BGU.
- b) Intercalation is not to be used for students who are failing to meet the academic or skills requirements of the programme. Additionally, it is not to be used for students who are excluded pending investigation under the Student Disciplinary Procedure. The procedure for extenuating circumstances should normally be followed in cases where the issue can be resolved more efficiently.
- c) On recommencing their studies, students must complete with attendance all modules for the full year or, where the first semester has been satisfactorily completed, for the second semester only. Any marks previously awarded in respect of assessed work for incomplete modules assigned to the year or semester for which study has been intercalated may not be carried forward. Students may not resubmit work which has already been presented for assessment.
- d) Intercalation is granted for a period of up to one calendar year in the first instance. A second application may be made to extend this period by up to one calendar year if the evidence, medical or other, indicates that the student would benefit from a further period of intercalation.
- e) Intercalation shall not normally exceed the maximum period which is allowable between initial registration on a programme and its completion.

8.3 Pearson Higher Nationals

- a) Pearson do not have specific Intermission regulations but full-time students can be registered for a period of 5 years. Therefore, a student can only intermit for a period which allows them to complete their qualification within 5 years (N.B When a student moves from HNC to HND the registration period restarts).

9. UCP Intermission Process

Before Applying for Intermission

- 9.1 Students wishing to intermit from their studies are encouraged to speak to their Course Leader to discuss any course related issues that are impacting on their studies before they formally apply for intermission. The Course Leader is involved in the assessment of a claim once submitted.

- 9.2 Wherever possible, a student should apply for intermission before they stop attending taught sessions. Some interruptions, however, are not predictable and a student may need to ask for intermission after difficulties have already come to light. In these circumstances the student should seek the advice of UCP Student Support as soon as possible to discuss options. However, retrospective applications for intermission will not be considered without a credible and compelling explanation as to why the student was unable to complete or apply before the beginning of the proposed period of intermission.

Applying for Intermission

- 9.3 To start the process of intermitting, the student needs to contact UCP Student Support and speak to a Student Adviser. A student can make an appointment with a Student Adviser by:
- Peterborough: support@ucp.ac.uk or via Canvas. Alternatively, you can attend a drop-in session depending on availability.
 - Stamford: emailing support@ucp.ac.uk or via Canvas.
- 9.4 On receiving an enquiry from a student regarding Intermission, a Student Advisor will arrange a meeting to determine the best course of action. Intermission may not be the best form of support available. The student should explain the main reason for intermitting and provide any supporting evidence. Students should discuss with a Student Adviser when their intermission should start and end.
- 9.5 Acceptable supporting evidence includes:
- Medical documentation such as a letter from a doctor;
 - Original (not photocopied) documents written and signed by an appropriate third party, giving details of the circumstance, its duration, and, where possible, its impact. An appropriate third party would be one who knows the student in a professional capacity or one who can verify the circumstances (e.g., Employer, GP, University Counsellor). Statements from the Course Leader and Module Tutors cannot be used.
- 9.6 The Student Advisor will liaise with Curriculum Staff and the Academic Office concerning the viability of the proposed Intermission. It is important that a student who is seeking Intermission is not disadvantaged in the long term. The Student Advisor assesses the evidence then makes a recommendation to the HE Manager.
- 9.7 It is the student's responsibility to respond promptly to communications from UCP. Delays in student responses to an Intermission application can have an impact on the viability of the request.

Last Date of Engagement:

- 9.8 The students last date of engagement is recorded as the date the student last engaged with their academic studies. There must be a record of the engagement i.e., register mark. This includes, but is not an exhaustive list:
- Lectures, tutorials, practical /lab sessions, workshop;
 - Attending a presentation, exam, in-class test;
 - Meeting with a member of staff for an academic related matter;
 - Submission of an assignment;
 - Attendance at placement.

Review of Intermission Application and Decision Making

- 9.9 If the Student Advisor recommends Intermission, Curriculum Staff will review the request to determine viability. Factors which will be considered by Curriculum Staff when reviewing a request for intermission will include the following:
- The nature of the recommendation – whether it is serious and likely to be a long-term issue.
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 - The performance, attendance, and engagement of the student up to the point of the request. Students who do not regularly attend, are not engaged, or who are struggling to perform academically will be considered a very high risk in relation to an intermission and it may be more appropriate for them to withdraw entirely from study;
 - The overall duration of the course;
 - Any planned major or substantive changes to the format of the course;
 - modules are subject to change and may not be timetabled for the same semesters in subsequent years, this may have consequences for the date of return to the programme of study;
 - modules may no longer be running and so the student may study different modules on return;
 - the validating body may have changed so the student ultimately may ultimately need to withdraw from their original course in order to move to a similar course with the new validating body via an Accredited Prior Learning application;
 - Any actions or plans necessary for resumption of studies. The module enrolment structure the student is expected to follow when they return must be checked. This is to make sure that the intermission does not affect the student's ability to complete their course.
- 9.10 While UCP will take into consideration the needs of the student, the expected date of return will ultimately need to be a curriculum decision.
- 9.11 Registered students may apply for a period of intermission of up to 12 calendar months.
- 9.12 An approved return date must take full account of the academic coherence and requirements of the course for which the student is registered.
- 9.13 The HE Manager makes a final decision based on the recommendations of the Course Leader and Student Advisor. A student Advisor informs the student of the outcome of their Intermission application, their right to appeal if rejected, and completes an approval form which is then sent to the student for signature.
- 9.14 Final authorisation is recorded on the Intermission Approval Form and sent to the relevant teams for processing. The Student Advisor ensures that the Academic Office and MIS are aware of the Intermission so that the student's records can be updated.

Appeals Procedure

- 9.15 If a student's application for intermission is refused or the student does not agree with the period approved of intermission, they have the right to appeal the decision. The student should follow the UCP-ASS005 HE Academic Appeal Policy available from www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/.

Access to Resources and Facilities During the Intermission Period

- 9.16 During an approved period of intermission students will not be registered at UCP. Access to IT and Library services will stop. Students should not undertake work on UCP premises (this includes all sites under the Inspire Education Group) as they will not be covered by insurance arrangements.
- 9.17 Students are not entitled to certain other benefits or services related to their studies e.g., exemption from Council Tax. Where relevant, a student must also abide by Funding Body guidelines, e.g., Student Finance England.
- 9.18 An intermitted student is unable to submit either formative or summative assessments during their intermitted period.

Financial Impact of Intermission

- 9.19 During a period of approved intermission, no tuition fee is charged. The process for calculating intermitted student's tuition fee liability and any refund for fees paid beyond the students last date of engagement or effective date (as determined by Student Finance England) is outlined in the UCP-FIN0001 Higher Education Tuition Fee Policy available from www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/.
- 9.20 It is expected that students will liaise with Student Finance or their employer to resolve any financial or funding issues as a result of their intermission.

Contact with UCP During Intermission Period

- 9.21 It is the student's responsibility to respond to communications regarding Intermissions or return from Intermission in a timely manner.
- 9.22 A Student Adviser will attempt to contact intermitted students by email or telephone at least one calendar month prior to the students expected date of return to study to offer support relating to resumption of study.

Resuming Study after Intermission

- 9.23 Students who intermit are expected to return and register to study at a date agreed at the time of the intermission.
- 9.24 Intermitting students who do not return to re-register for their course within 20 working days after the approved date of return from their period of intermission will be withdrawn from their course. Where a student fails to re-enrol, the last date of engagement is recorded as the first day of the new academic year.
- 9.25 Before resuming their studies, the student is required to complete the following steps. Failure to do this may result in a delay to resuming their studies.
- Attend a meeting with a member of the Curriculum Staff and a subsequent meeting with a Student Adviser if deemed necessary.
 - Complete registration processes within 20 working days of the agreed date of return from intermission.
 - Engage with an agreed plan for resumption of studies.
- 9.26 Any modules/assessment grades achieved prior to the intermission period will be presented to the Exam Board at the next opportunity to ratify the results.

- 9.27 A student who has not completed all teaching on a module before intermitting should on return take the module again. The reasoning being that if they have not had all of the teaching then it is not reasonable to expect them to be able to complete the assessments.
- 9.28 If a student intermitted after teaching on a module was concluded but before an assessment was submitted must submit any outstanding assessment in the next assessment period after their return.

Extending Periods of Intermission

- 9.29 A request by a student to extend their agreed intermission period will only be considered in extenuating circumstances.
- 9.30 The student must reapply to intermit by contacting Student Support following the process outlined above. An extension to an Intermission is not guaranteed.
- 9.31 When reviewing the application, Curriculum Staff must assess whether the total duration of the absence affects the currency of study and their proficiency in any required professional skills and experience.
- 9.32 Undergraduates have a maximum period in which to complete their studies. This is set at the point they enrol and is normally the length of their programme of study for UCP's validating partners the maximum period of:
- a) OU – 3 years beyond expected duration of study;
 - b) BGU – twice the length of the programme, i.e., 4 years for a 2-year study programme;
 - c) Pearson – 5 years for each Level.
- 9.33 A maximum period of study can only be exceeded with approval from the validating partner. Repeating a stage (or not having enough credits to progress to the next level) counts as an additional year. Intermission for part or all of a year extends the maximum period of registration by the length of the intermission.