



Interruption of Studies Policy

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A. Introduction

1. We offer a range of services to support students to complete their course but we recognise that, on occasion, students may need to take a break from their studies. This may be because they have medical conditions, injuries or personal reasons which affect their ability to continue with their course.
2. Students may request a break, or staff may decide that a break is required (via the Support for Study process). Students may also be required to take a break because they have not engaged satisfactorily with their course or have not paid fees.
3. An authorised break for a defined period of time is called an Interruption of Studies. We refer to it informally as an 'interruption'.
4. This policy sets out the support available for students, the grounds for taking an interruption, the process for interrupting, the services available to a student while on an interruption and the process for returning to study.
5. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents, available on the [Policies page of our website](#):
 - a. Support for Study Policy
 - b. Physical Injury Reporting and Return from Injury Procedure
 - c. Disability Policy
 - d. Attendance Policy
 - e. Fee Policy
 - f. Safeguarding Policy
6. The above list is not intended to be exhaustive and, where appropriate, other policies

and procedures should be considered.

7. All policies are carried out in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy, Data Protection Policy and Code of Practice for Freedom of Speech.

B. Support Available for Students

8. Students may contact their **Personal Tutor, Head of Year or Course Leader** if they wish to discuss any concerns.
9. Students may also wish to contact the **Student Support team** on studentsupport@artsed.co.uk for an informal conversation or to discuss the wide range of services we offer.
10. Students may contact the **SpLD Study Skills Coordinator** for advice and guidance whether or not they have a diagnosed neurodivergence. Students can contact studyskills@artsed.co.uk.
11. Students may seek advice from the **Physical Health & Wellbeing Coordinator (Strength & Conditioning Coach)** about physical wellbeing, including exercise, nutrition and physiotherapy.
12. The **Student Counselling Service** offers a confidential space for students to discuss and seek advice on their psychological wellbeing. This includes:
 - a. Short term 1-2-1 counselling which can help students work on immediate problems;
 - b. Assistance with developing healthy coping techniques;
 - c. Support with gaining understanding of underlying issues; and
 - d. Assistance with developing a longer-term treatment plan, if necessary.

Students can book a session with our Counselling Service via the counselling referral form on the [Wellbeing pages of our website](#) or emailing counselling@artsed.co.uk.

13. The **Support for Study** procedure provides a structured way to assess what support a student may need to engage fully with their course and complete it successfully wherever possible. It also allows us to consider what we can do to help if a student's health or behaviour is having an impact on other people.
14. On occasion, we may not be able to offer the support that is needed for a student to continue with their course. In this case, the student may request an interruption, or we may decide, after careful consideration, that the student is required to take an interruption.

C. Considering an Interruption of Studies

15. Before considering an interruption, students should seek support as set out above. In many cases, it may be appropriate for the student to be supported via the Support for Study procedure to ensure that we have done all we can to support them to complete the course as planned.
16. Students should be aware that taking an interruption may have financial and visa implications and should seek guidance from the Head of Admissions & Student Records if needed.

17. After Support for Study meetings with relevant staff, or having considered other support, the student may still decide that an interruption of study is the best option. Students are encouraged to meet their Personal Tutor (or other relevant member of their School) and the Student Support team to discuss their proposed interruption and a return to study plan.
18. Students may only apply for one period of interruption during their course.
19. Students may **request an interruption** for one or more of the following reasons:
 - a. Health reasons (mental or physical), serious injury or other medical reasons
 - b. Maternity, paternity, parental leave or adoption
 - c. Unforeseen family responsibilities
 - d. Financial hardship which is likely to be resolved before the student is due to return to study
 - e. Other personal mitigating circumstances that would have an impact on their studies for a period of time
20. Once a student has discussed and agreed the interruption arrangements in principle, they should formally apply using the Interruption of Study request form included at the end of this document.
21. Students may be required to submit evidence to support their application for an interruption. This may include, for example, independent medical evidence from appropriately qualified professionals.
22. If a student discloses circumstances during their request for an interruption, and may require further support, they will usually be asked if they are happy for the information to be shared with the Student Support team so that appropriate follow-up guidance and support can be offered.
23. Students may also be **required to take an interruption** for one or more of the following reasons:
 - a. Failure to engage fully with the course in line with the Attendance Policy
 - b. Failure to pay fees in line with the Fee Policy
 - c. A decision that a student is not able to engage with their course for some other reason in line with the Support for Study procedure

D. Approving an Interruption of Studies Request

24. The Course Leader (or nominee) will review the student's individual circumstances and the potential impact of interruption on the student's learning experience and will make a recommendation on whether to grant an interruption. The Head of Admissions & Student Records (or nominee) will be responsible for approving or rejecting all requests for interruption. It may be appropriate to consult the Director of the School for guidance where agreement cannot be reached.
25. We want to be confident that the interruption will be beneficial and that the student will be in a better position to succeed when they return. For this reason, we will not usually approve interruptions if the student is experiencing circumstances which are unlikely to change during the interruption.

26. Additionally, requests for interruptions will not usually be approved in the following circumstances:
- a. The student has changed their mind about the course
 - b. The student has been offered work
 - c. The interruption would mean that the course exceeds the maximum period of registration for the course. Students are required to complete a CertHE course within two years of registration, a BA course within five years of registration and an MA course within three years of registration. Exceptions to the maximum period allowed may be considered on an individual basis and would be overseen by the City St George's, University of London Course Board.
27. Interruptions are normally granted for one year but could be up to two years in exceptional circumstances.
28. Interruption does not reduce the amount of time a student will need to spend on achieving their qualification.
29. Following the interruption, the student will typically return to their studies at the beginning of the respective term at no additional charge. For example, an interruption at any point in the winter term will typically require that the student return at the beginning of the winter term the following year.

E. Assessments

30. A student may interrupt after completing a term of teaching but before assessments have taken place. In this case, the student may opt to take those assessments as planned. This is to enable the student to take assessments as close to completing their teaching as possible and to minimise the impact on other students wherever possible.
31. Alternatively, we will make other arrangements to complete the required assessments before the student returns.
32. Any assessments that have already been attempted and marked before interruption will still stand (i.e. they will be recorded as an attempt and remain on the student's record) even if the student repeats some teaching.
33. However, if the assessments were affected by any unforeseen circumstances, including those that have led to interruption, the student should submit a claim for extenuating circumstances (EC) in the usual way. Subject to the EC claim being accepted by the Assessment Board, the student would then take the affected assessments again as first attempts on their return. Students should consult the EC Policy for further guidance, noting that the outcome of an EC claim is separate from the outcome of an Interruption of Studies request and one does not guarantee the other.

F. During an Interruption of Studies

34. During interruption, students are considered 'dormant'. This means that they are not expected to continue studying and will not be eligible for other student entitlements such as council tax exemption.

35. Students on an interruption will retain access to:

- a. Their ArtsEd email address – students should check this on a regular basis for communication from ArtsEd
- b. Student Support services including the Physical Health & Wellbeing Supervisor, SplLD Study Skills Coordinator, counselling and physiotherapy.

Other facilities in the building may be offered as required, and this will be discussed with students individually.

36. Students remain subject to ArtsEd's regulations, procedures and policies during their Interruption.

37. No fee is charged while a student is interrupted, but all fees up to the point of interruption must be paid in full. Fees paid for the term in which the interruption was approved will be retained to pay for the term when the student returns to the programme. No additional charge will be incurred if a student repeats up to one term of teaching by returning at the beginning of the term during which they interrupted.

38. If a student interrupts for a year or more, and tuition fees have been raised in the intervening time, we may charge the higher fee rate for the remaining term(s).

39. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that anyone providing funding or sponsorship is informed. ArtsEd's Finance Department will ensure that the Student Loans Company is informed of a Change of Circumstances for UK students in receipt of a student loan. Students in receipt of funding via ArtsEd (including a Dance and Drama Award) should contact the Head of Admissions & Student Records at he_admissions@artsed.co.uk to seek advice about their funding when they return.

G. Returning to Study and the Support for Study Procedure

40. Students will be contacted by ArtsEd's Registry Team via their ArtsEd email address at least one term before they are due to return to their studies and will be required to complete a Return to Study form which can be found at the end of this document.

41. We have a responsibility to ensure that a student is ready and well enough to engage fully with their studies following a period of interruption. Where we have concerns of this nature, it is likely that the student will have been supported via the Support for Study procedure and interrupted their studies as set out there. This procedure details the approach we take to supporting students to return and what evidence we may need to ensure that a student is ready to return.

42. However, there may be cases where a student has interrupted their studies without input from the Support for Study procedure, e.g. in the case of a sudden change in circumstances or where they have sought external support themselves and then reached a decision that they wish to interrupt.

43. In these cases, we may require evidence confirming that they are ready and well enough to return. For example, we may require medical evidence confirming that someone is now fully recovered from an injury, or evidence that fees have been paid in full. We will advise on whether evidence will be required in each case. In these cases, the Head of Admissions & Student Records and Course Leader will agree together whether the evidence provided is sufficient for the student to return.

44. Regardless of whether a student was supported by the Support for Study procedure when considering their interruption, they will be supported via Stage 1 of the Support for Study procedure on their return so that regular, supportive check-in meetings are scheduled and they are given the best chance to succeed.

Appendix 1: Interruption of Studies Form

Part A: For completion by the student			
Important: Before completing this form, please ensure you have spoken to a member of staff (e.g. student support staff) in your School about your request to interrupt studies.			
Surname:		School (MT / SOA):	
First Name(s):			
Course:		Year of Study:	
On which date would you like interrupt?			
On which date will you to return to study? (usually the start of the term during which you interrupted)			
I will be interrupting my studies for the following reason:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic / attendance reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Physical health / injury <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health <input type="checkbox"/> Personal / caring responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Maternity / paternity / parental / adoption leave <input type="checkbox"/> Financial difficulties <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)			
Supporting Statement: Please explain why you wish to interrupt your studies and how your circumstances will be different when you return to study.			
Evidence: Please supply evidence to support your request or explain why evidence is unavailable.			
Student Declaration: By signing this, I confirm that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that requests need to be considered and approved. • I have spoken with a member of staff before completing this form. • The information I have given is correct to the best of my knowledge. • I understand the implications of interrupting from my current programme (including implications of resuming my studies). • I understand that if I hold a Student Visa my interruption will be reported to the Home Office as a change of circumstances. 			
Student Signature:		Date:	
PART B: For completion by the Course Leader			

Date form was received by the School:	
<input type="checkbox"/> I recommend interruption because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student has demonstrated circumstances that would prevent them from being able to properly engage in their studies and would reasonably require a period of interruption; <i>and</i> • The student has provided satisfactory supporting evidence for their request or provided a satisfactory explanation for why evidence is unavailable; <i>and</i> • I have discussed a return to study plan with them. 	
OR	
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not recommend interruption for the following reason:	
Any further School information/comments (e.g. consideration of existing support arrangements/reasonable adjustments)	
If interruption is recommended: <p>The marks for the following assessments will be carried forward. Note that if the students assessments have been attempted but may have been impacted by these or other circumstances, they should submit a claim for Extenuating Circumstances.</p> <p>The following assessments have not yet been attempted and will need to be completed when the student returns:</p> <p>The following is required in order for the student to return to study: (e.g. evidence of health/wellbeing, support arrangements on return)</p>	
Course Leader Name: Date of Recommendation:	
Part C: for completion by Head of Admissions and Student Records	
Decision: I approve / reject the interruption. If reject, please provide a rationale:	

Course Start Date:		New Course End Date:	
Course Fees Owed On Return:			
Is a Student Loans (SLC) Change of Circumstances Form Needed? Y/N			
ArtsEd Bursary: Y/N			
DaDA: Y/N			
Head of Admissions and Student Records Name:			
Date of Decision:			

Appendix 2: Return to Studies Form

Part A: For completion by the student			
Surname:		School (MT / SOA):	
First Name(s):			
Course:		Year of Study:	
On which date will you to return to study? (usually the start of the term during which you interrupted)			
Supporting Statement: Please provide a brief description of your current circumstances and your readiness to return to study.			
Evidence: If you were required to provide evidence to confirm your readiness to return to study, please include it when you return this form.			
Student Declaration: By signing this, I confirm that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information I have given is correct to the best of my knowledge. • I understand the implications of returning to my course. • I have made all necessary financial and visa arrangements. 			
Student Signature:		Date:	

PART B: For completion by the Course Leader and Head of Admissions and Student Records	
Date form was received by the School:	
Decision: Where conditions needed to be met and/or evidence was required, the Course Leader and Head of Admissions and Student Records must agree whether the student is eligible to return to study.	
<input type="checkbox"/> The student is permitted to return because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have demonstrated that their circumstances are now such that they are able to properly engage in their studies; <i>and</i> • The student has provided satisfactory supporting evidence and/or met conditions specified at the time of interruption; <i>and</i> • The student will be supported in their return via the Support for Study Policy. 	
OR	

☐ **The student is not permitted to return for the following reason:**

Any further School information/comments (e.g. support needs identified for return to study:

Course Leader Name:
Head of Admissions and Student Records Name:
Date of Decision:

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