



## Interruption of Studies Policy

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### A. Introduction

1. On occasion, students may wish to request a break from their studies for a defined period of time if they have medical conditions or personal reasons which affect their ability to continue with their programme of study.
2. An Interruption of Study (hereafter referred to as an Interruption) allows a student to take an authorised break in their studies. This is normally for one year but could be longer in exceptional circumstances. Following the interruption period, the student will typically return to their studies at the beginning of the respective term. 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.
3. Grounds under which an interruption will be considered include:
  - professional engagement;
  - health reasons (mental or physical), serious injury or medical reasons;
  - maternity, paternity or adoption;
  - unforeseen family responsibilities; • other personal mitigating circumstances.

4. Students may only apply for one period of interruption during their programme of study.
5. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
  - i. [Fitness to Study Policy](#)
  - ii. [Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
  - iii. [Disability Policy](#)
  - iv. [Physical Injury and Recovery Procedure](#)
  - v. [Attendance Policy](#)
  - vi. [Safeguarding Policy](#)

## **B. Considerations regarding Interruption**

6. During Interruption, students are considered to have the status of unregistered students (though they remain students of ArtsEd) and are not expected to continue studying. If a student wishes to continue to use the library facilities, they should seek approval in advance from the Course Leader and the Learning Resources Manager. Students will continue to have access to their ArtsEd email address throughout their Interruption. Students remain subject to ArtsEd's Regulations, Procedures and Policies during their Interruption.
7. It is essential that students continue to check their ArtsEd email regularly (at least weekly) during Interruption, as they will continue to receive important information from the Institution.
8. 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. If a student interrupts for a year or more, and tuition fees have been raised in the intervening time, the higher fee rate will be payable for the remaining term(s).
9. Permission to interrupt may be granted at any point in the programme, but if a student interrupts their studies in the middle of a module, or before the assessment of that module has been completed, then on returning to the programme, the student may be required to repeat that module before being permitted to progress to the other modules missed.
10. Students can interrupt for a maximum of two years. Exceptions to the maximum period allowed may be considered on an individual basis and would be overseen by the City University Course Board. When the student wishes to return to the programme, they must complete a [Return to Study form](#).

11. Interruption does not reduce the amount of time a student will need to spend on achieving their degree.
12. It is the student's responsibility to ensure their sponsor (any funding source) is informed. If they are a UK student, then they will need to complete a Change of Circumstances Form for their funding body. Students who normally live in England should go through '[Student Finance England](#)'.
13. If a student is an international student, they should also seek advice from the Head of Admissions and Student Records as there may be implications for their visa. Students should send an email to [he\\_admissions@artsed.co.uk](mailto:he_admissions@artsed.co.uk) for further guidance.

### **C. Requesting and Approval of an Interruption**

14. Before formally requesting an Interruption, students should, where practicable, meet with their Personal Tutor (or relevant member of their School) to discuss their proposed Interruption and a return to study plan.
15. Once a student has discussed and agreed the Interruption arrangements in principle, they should formally apply using the Interruption of Study request form.
16. The decision on whether to grant an interruption by the Registrar or their nominee will be based on a student's individual circumstances and the potential impact of interruption on the student's learning experience.
17. A student's request to interrupt in the middle of a module might not be approved if this would affect other students, for example if the student is part of a group preparing for a seminar presentation.
18. Students may be required to submit evidence to support their application for an Interruption. In certain circumstances, independent medical evidence from appropriately qualified professionals may be required in support of a formal application.

### **D. Extenuating Circumstances before or during an Interruption of Studies**

19. If a student wishes to have extenuating circumstances considered for assessments attempted before or during an interruption of studies, they should submit a claim as detailed in the Extenuating Circumstances Policy. Students may also wish to submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim for assessments taken, or scheduled to be taken, whilst applying for an interruption of studies.

20. Where a student has submitted evidence to support their application for an interruption of studies that also relates to extenuating circumstances, this evidence may also be considered as part of a separate Extenuating Circumstances claim.
21. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel may make a recommendation to the Assessment Board for consideration when reviewing the student's results for any relevant assessments submitted in the period prior to or during their interruption of study.
22. Where a student has submitted an extenuating circumstance claim and it has not been considered by an Extenuating Circumstances Panel ahead of an Assessment Board, this may be undertaken after the Assessment Board has met. The Extenuating Circumstances may be applied to the relevant assessment via Assessment Board Chairs' Action.
23. The outcome of an Extenuating Circumstances Panel recommendation is separate from the Interruption of Studies process. An Interruption of Studies decision is not dependent on an Extenuating Circumstances Panel recommendation nor vice versa.

## **E. Returning to Study**

24. 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](#).
25. ArtsEd has a responsibility to ensure that a student is able to engage safely with their studies following a period of interruption. If a student has interrupted their studies for medical reasons, ArtsEd may require satisfactory evidence confirming their fitness to return to study. ArtsEd will advise on whether evidence will be required in each case.

## **F. Underlying Principles**

26. ArtsEd will provide the appropriate support to students who wish to interrupt their studies. Each matter will be dealt with based on its individual circumstances. Any decision reached about a student's circumstances will be made wherever possible through an inclusive process involving the student and other individuals such as relevant academic staff, health care professionals and the relevant ArtsEd Registry Team, as appropriate.

### **i. Duty of Care**

27. ArtsEd takes its duty of care seriously. Students who wish to interrupt their studies should be supported to do so in a considerate manner.

28. Where a student discloses complex mental or physical health challenges and/or severe and complex life circumstances as part of their request to interrupt their studies, this information will be shared with the Student Support Team. The team will contact the student to offer follow up and appropriate support. Please also see **Paragraphs 30 to 32** below.

**ii. Equality Act and Human Rights Act**

29. We are mindful of our legal obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all our activities and processes. We will promote equality regardless of any protected characteristic and/or diverse background. We will ensure:
- a. that our practices and functions including the administration of the Interruption of Studies Policy and process are accessible and barrier free.
  - b. that we make reasonable adjustments for our disabled students who use this Procedure, noting our enhanced duty to make reasonable adjustments when responding to and managing situations where a student's request for interruption of studies is relating to a student's disability.
  - c. that student carers of disabled people and students with dependants who may need to use the Interruption of Study Policy can do so, and any relevant adjustments will be made for them where necessary.
  - d. that in the coordination and decision-making processes we will fulfil our commitments to the Equality duty.

**iii. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

30. All information obtained as part of this Interruption of Studies Policy will be held in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection legislation and our **Student Privacy Notice**. We will ensure that matters handled by us as part of this process are undertaken with the appropriate level of confidentiality (unless doing so could put the student and/or others at risk) and information will only be made available to those who need it for the purposes of managing and responding to the Interruption of Studies process such as the Student Support Team.
31. In some instances, aspects of a student's interruption of studies request may need to be disclosed to other relevant staff such as the Student Support Team and external organisations as part of the management of a student's assessment. Where there are elements which are particularly sensitive and the student has concerns about their confidentiality, the student can raise this with the Registrar who will discuss how disclosure can be minimised, if possible and appropriate to do so.
32. Where we need to liaise with and obtain information from a third party as part of the Interruption of Studies Process, we will only give the third party as much detail about the student and their situation as is necessary to obtain the evidence required. Staff

will ensure that discussions held about the student's claim are undertaken with the appropriate level of confidentiality, unless doing so could put the student and/or others at risk.

#### **iv. Reporting and Monitoring**

33. An annual summary report of the number of the Interruption of Studies requests and overall actions taken to resolve them will be received by the City Course Board, the Higher Education Committee and the Board of Trustees. There will be no reference to individual cases. The reports will show trends and make recommendations for improvements where necessary. A confidential record will be kept separately of individual cases as determined by the general data protection requirements

### **G. Support Available for Students**

34. ArtsEd has a duty of care to ensure that the necessary guidance and support is available for students.

- i. **Student Support:** Students should be directed to the Student Support and Engagement Team where there is a concern. The student can contact the Student Support Team by sending an email to [studentsupport@artsed.co.uk](mailto:studentsupport@artsed.co.uk).
- ii. **Student Counselling:** Personal Tutors can encourage students to seek counselling. Students can also self-refer to ArtsEd's Counselling Service. Students can book a session with the Counselling Team by sending an email to [Counselling@artsed.co.uk](mailto:Counselling@artsed.co.uk). The Student Counselling Service offers confidential space for students to seek advice about, and discuss matters impacting, their psychological wellbeing. Students are offered:
  - 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.
- iii. **Togetherall:** Togetherall is a clinically-managed, online community designed to improve mental health. Students can access the 24/7 online support via our Student Services Online Platform or by visiting [www.togetherall.com](http://www.togetherall.com).
- iv. **Fit to Study Policy:** The Fitness to Study Procedure may be commenced in line with the requirements of the [Fitness to Study Policy](#). The aim is to respond to and manage any concerns regarding a student's health or behaviour where it is thought that it is seriously impacting their ability to study.

It may also be used where a student's health or behaviour is having an impact on other people, such as other students at ArtsEd and staff members. The procedure is intended to be supportive and is in place to enable students to successfully complete their studies, where possible.

35. Students who have any questions about this Interruption of Studies Policy should contact [HEcourseoffice@artsed.co.uk](mailto:HEcourseoffice@artsed.co.uk).

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