

## Interruption of Study Policy

An enrolled student may take an interruption of studies if they need to take a temporary break from their studies and intend to resume their studies in the future.

### Scope

1. The Interruption of Study Policy applies to all students, irrespective of cohort.
2. A student resitting out of attendance is not enrolled student, and as such is not able to interrupt their enrolment.
3. Periods of interruption do not count towards the minimum or maximum permitted duration of study for a programme unless regulations for a named programme specifically state otherwise.
4. A student holding a Tier 4 visa where Queen Mary issued a CAS cannot interrupt to gain work experience or to earn money to pay for their studies. Tier 4 students who interrupt their studies may be required to leave the UK, even if they are interrupting because of personal or medical reasons. Queen Mary is required to notify the Home Office of interruptions of study for students sponsored under Tier 4 of the Points Based Immigration System where Queen Mary issued a CAS.

### Permitted duration of interruption

5. A student may interrupt for a total of two calendar years across their programme of study.
6. A student may interrupt on the grounds of primary carer leave for up to one year per child, covering pregnancy and related illnesses and/or caring responsibilities. This does not count towards the maximum of two years permitted for interruption. A secondary carer wishing to take an extended period of leave may do so under the standard interruption procedures.
7. An interruption that would exceed the two-year allowance will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. This requires approval from the Academic Registrar in addition to the usual school/institute approval. Students should not contact the Academic Registrar directly; the school/institute is responsible for seeking this approval and has discretion over whether or not to make such a request.

### Procedure

8. A student considering interruption should contact their school/institute in the first instance to discuss the process and explore their options. Support is also available from the [Advice and Counselling Service](#), which can provide detailed guidance on the effect of interruption on issues such as student funding and visa issues. The Advice and Counselling Service publishes specific guidance on interruption for [home and EU students](#) and for [international students](#).
9. A student on a taught programme of study may not both interrupt and return from interruption during the same academic year (eg a student cannot interrupt for the semester one only returning in semester two). This restriction does not apply to postgraduate research students, who may interrupt and return within the same academic year but can only interrupt for whole months at a time; more information is available from the [Research Degrees Office](#).
10. A student who has decided to interrupt must complete the official interruption of study [form](#) and return it to their school/institute by the specified [deadline](#).

11. A student who has completed a module, as defined in the [Academic Regulations](#), cannot repeat a module as an outcome of interruption.
12. A student who interrupts partway through a year may have completed the teaching for some modules. Where that is the case, the student has the option of taking any remaining assessments for those modules during the period of interruption or taking them after their return. A student must elect either to register for all such assessments or for none of them and must indicate their choice on the interruption of study form.
13. The school/institute will consider the interruption request and, if it gives approval, it will submit it to the Student Records Team (or the Research Degrees Office, for postgraduate research students) to process. Conditions may be placed on the interruption in some cases, eg a requirement for a student to provide evidence of fitness to study before resuming their studies.
14. Until a student has formally interrupted they remain an enrolled student of Queen Mary and are responsible for payment of all or part of the full year's tuition fee and - where appropriate - residence fees. Funding regulations change frequently, and it is important that a student understands how their decision might affect their entitlements in the future. The [Advice and Counselling Service](#) publishes useful guides and their Welfare Advisors can provide up to date advice on eligibility for student finance.

### Status of a student on interruption

15. A student who takes an interruption of study is not enrolled but remains registered for their programme of study. This has a number of effects; while interrupted, a student:
  - i. is not entitled to attend lectures or other classes.
  - ii. is not normally permitted to live in halls of residence.
  - iii. will have their Transport for London discount revoked.
  - iv. may have limited borrowing rights from the Library.

### Returning from interruption

16. The Academic Regulations in place when a student first began their programme of study remain in place after their return from a period of interruption.
17. A student due to return from an interruption of studies must complete re-enrolment by the appropriate deadline. Failure to re-enrol will normally result in the student being deregistered from Queen Mary.
18. A student returning from interruption may only re-enrol at the start of a semester, as set out in the Academic Calendar. Exceptions to this rule will only be granted under the provisions of the Equality Act (2010). This restriction does not apply to postgraduate research students.
19. Queen Mary may require a student due to return from interruption to produce medical evidence of their fitness to study. If this evidence is not produced or is found unsatisfactory, the student will not be permitted to return. In such a case the student may extend the interruption of study (if interruption allowance remains) or else will be deregistered from the programme of study.
20. Programmes and modules are amended over time, and modules may not run every year. A student returning from interruption may need to take different modules to those that originally formed part of the programme of study.

Approved by the Senate of Queen Mary, June 2019