



Regulations for Taught Student Registration, Suspension of Studies and Withdrawal

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| Other documents referenced | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for Research Students and Regulations for Higher Degrees • Code of Student Discipline • Fees and Refund Policy • University Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate programmes • University Assessment Regulations for Taught Postgraduate programmes • Student Attendance and Engagement Policy |
| Related documents | University Assessment Regulations Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate |

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| V1.0 | 7.08.2014 | Registry | First published version |
| V1.1 | 01.09.2020 | Academic Quality | Update to Section 2.7.3, to reflect minor amendment to Max. period of study. |
| V1.2 | 26.01.2022 | Quality Assurance & Enhancement | Minor update, reference to, 'Head of Registry' revised to, 'Academic Registrar'. |
| V1.3 | 25.08.2022 | Quality Assurance & Enhancement | References to MITS replaced by Fit to Sit. |
| V1.4 | 02.05.2023 | Quality Assurance & Enhancement | Registration deadline updates: Section 1.1.7 |
| V1.5 | 01.09.2023 | Quality Assurance & Enhancement | Minor update, 2.7.5, to note that reasonable adjustments to the maximum period of study may be required under the Equality Act 2010. |

1 Registration

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Only a fully registered student may undertake a programme of study leading to a University award, have access to relevant services and facilities (including attendance at classes, and assessment), and be entitled to the rights and privileges of University membership as a student.
- 1.1.2 These regulations cover students who are undertaking a credit bearing taught programme or module of study awarded by GCU. For awards jointly made with another institution, these regulations will be used where GCU is the administrating institution in such a partnership.
- 1.1.3 Upon admission a student must complete a formal registration process (in 2 parts). They will then be a registered student.
- 1.1.4 This regulation relates to taught students. Students on a Research Degree programme, should refer to the [Guidelines for Research Students and Regulations for Higher Degree Awards](#).
- 1.1.5 A student's registration will be withdrawn if they breach any of the registration requirements.
- 1.1.6 Thereafter, until the end of their programme of study at the start of each academic year, a student is required to complete again the formal online registration process, unless for other reasons set out in regulations such registration is not allowed or is not appropriate¹. Completing the re-registration process will renew their status as a registered student for that academic year.
- 1.1.7 The University will publish the final date for Registration for the next academic year. These deadlines will normally be as follows:

New Students:

For Academic Year 2023/24, final registration dates are as follows:

Trimester A – End of the first week of teaching;

Trimester B – Start of the first week of teaching.

From Academic Year 2024/25 onwards, final registration for new students will be the first day of GCU Induction.

Continuing Students:

All continuing students must have completed registration by the end of the first week of teaching in Trimester A.

- 1.1.8 Dates will be published on the Student and the Registry web pages.
- 1.1.9 If a student fails without good reason to complete the formal registration process (as defined in regulation 1.2 below) by the deadline, they will not be a registered student for that academic year and they will be suspended from study. Such a student will be allowed to register for that academic year in exceptional circumstances, approved by the Academic Registrar via supporting documentation from the appropriate school and may be required to pay a late registration fee.

¹ For instance a student owing fees will not be allowed to register, or a student who suspended their studies need not re-register.

- 1.1.10 During an academic year a registered student may stop being a registered student either temporarily or permanently, in circumstances specified by regulations. Re-Registration does not imply satisfactory completion of a previous stage of study.
- 1.1.11 Re-Registration for continuing students is subject to decisions to allow progression, made by a Progression and Award Board or other approved mechanism.
- 1.1.12 Students on taught programmes with optional module choices are also required to undertake a formal module registration process. Details of modules available and how to register choices will be provided within each student handbook. Students who fail to complete the formal registration process by that deadline will be registered for modules determined by their Programme Leader.
- 1.1.13 A student wishing to register on a second programme to be taken concurrently must seek advice in advance from the School with which the student is initially registered. Students will not be permitted to register on two full-time programmes at the same time.
- 1.1.14 Students who require a visa to study at GCU must adhere to the regulations and responsibilities under which their visa has been granted.
- 1.1.15 A student's registration will be withdrawn if they are in breach of the law in a manner that makes them ineligible to satisfy the attendance requirements of their programme of study.

1.2 Registration Process

1.2.1 In order to complete the formal registration process students must undertake the processes as outlined below:

| | All New Students* | Home/EU Students continuing on same Programme | International Students (new & continuing) |
|---|-------------------|---|---|
| <p>A. Complete the online registration process. During this process, students will be asked to:</p> <p>i. Confirm that they will obey the Regulations of the University which are in force during their period of study, including those governing the payment of fees and other sums due to the University, those governing attendance, conduct and progress in studies, and those covering the use of University Computer Facilities.</p> <p>ii. Check for accuracy and completeness the information held by the University regarding their relevant personal details, their programme of study and payment of their fees and add or amend such information as necessary, using an approved method.</p> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <p>B. Attend University Registration Event with any documents advised in joining instructions and published on university website (e.g. passport, UK drivers' licence, visa) and receive their student ID card (registration part 2) (Unless specifically exempted from such attendance in their joining instructions, e.g. distance learning and some other programmes.)</p> | ✓ | | ✓ |

*A new Student is defined as someone who is commencing a new Programme of study, with the exception of transfers within a suite of programmes.

1.3 Contact Details

- 1.3.1 It is essential that the University has accurate and up to date information about each student's address and contact details, in order to contact them in a timely manner about matters relevant to their programme of study and their membership of the University. Students must keep the University informed of any changes to personal details including permanent & term addresses and emergency contact details. Details of the procedure for students to update their contact details are available via the Registry website
- 1.3.2 In order to complete each formal registration process a student must amongst other things check for accuracy and completeness the information held by the University regarding their relevant personal details, their programme of study; and amend such information as necessary using an approved method.
- 1.3.3 It is a condition of continuing as a registered student during an academic year that a student keeps the University informed both of their current term time address (where they may be contacted during the academic year) and of their permanent home address (where they may be contacted outwith the academic year) and associated telephone numbers, including mobile.
- 1.3.4 Registered students are strongly encouraged also to provide up-to date information on a person (such as their next of kin) who may be contacted in an emergency.
- 1.3.5 Students who are studying with limited right to remain in the country where the programme is hosted must ensure that they provide their permanent address in their home country.
- 1.4 **Attendance**
 - 1.4.1 Students must organise their residential arrangements to facilitate attendance as required by their programme.
 - 1.4.2 The University monitors the attendance & engagement of its students and where required to will report non-attendance to appropriate authorities.
 - 1.4.3 Only fully registered students can attend classes. Where an attendee cannot provide a valid student ID at a class, they should be directed to their Programmes Office.
 - 1.4.4 Some programmes have specific attendance requirements beyond the overarching University policy. These will be detailed in individual Programme Handbooks.

2 Suspension of Studies

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Students may, for a variety of reasons, want to suspend their studies. Students should make their request to their School via their Programme Leader or Level Tutor, and it is for the School to decide whether or not to approve the suspension, taking into account the guidance below.

2.2 Effects of Suspension of Studies

- 2.2.1 When a student's studies are suspended, their registration with the University will be temporarily suspended and all relevant authorities will be informed. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that any sponsor or legal requirements are complied with during the period of suspension.
- 2.2.2 A student whose registration is suspended is not entitled to attend any teaching or take any assessments and will not pay tuition fees in accordance with the University's Fees and Refund Policy. They are subject to relevant regulations of the University, such as Library and IT and the University's Code of Student Discipline. In the UK they

are not normally eligible for student support funding, but should contact the relevant agency for more information on the impact of suspension on their current and future funding.

2.2.3 The timing of a student suspending their studies may have an impact on their academic outcome and ability to progress, as per paragraph 2.6.3.

2.3 **Reasons for Agreeing to Requests to Interrupt Studies**

2.3.1 The considerations to be applied by the School in making this decision should include:

i. Whether suspension of studies is inevitable owing to extenuating circumstances such as injury, illness, or unavoidable family commitments

or

ii. The reasons cited by the student indicate that it would genuinely be in their best academic, financial, or personal interest to interrupt their studies

and

iii. Significant syllabus changes are not likely to occur during the period of interruption such as to make it difficult for the student to resume their studies.

2.3.2 Schools may wish to consider or request supporting evidence for instance from medical or counselling services before agreeing to an interruption.

2.4 **Implications for the Immigration Status of Overseas Students in the UK**

2.4.1 If a student is from overseas and is being sponsored by the University to study in the UK, suspension of studies has serious implications for their immigration status and they are not permitted to remain in the UK if they are no longer studying. Students in this position must consult with both their School Academic Advisor and The University's International Student Support Services for immigration advice before submitting their suspension request. A student's ability to repeat modules as detailed in paragraph 2.9.1 may be limited by immigration policy and this should be taken into account when considering a request for interruption.

2.5 **Funding Issues**

2.5.1 Schools should always remind students of the need to consult their funding body before interrupting their study, and remind them that the University is not able to guarantee the resumption of any external grant or loan. If a student suspends their study and returns to repeat a stage/semester the student will be charged the appropriate tuition fee for the repeat period of study

2.5.2 Students whose studies are suspended, will be liable to appropriate tuition fees, as per the Fees and Refund Policy

2.6 **Timing of Suspensions**

2.6.1 The interruption of study of taught course students will normally begin from the end of a Trimester (ie after the end of the examinations attached to that Trimester) so that there is a clearly identifiable point at which a return to studies should occur.

2.6.2 An interruption of study may begin immediately in cases where a student's absence from the University is unavoidable or urgently required.

2.6.3 Students who suspend their studies after the midway point of a module delivery will be deemed to have attempted the module assessments. Students can make an extenuating circumstances submission, under the [Fit to Sit Policy](#), to their host Department to request that an attempt is not counted in such circumstances. Such requests will be considered by the Head of Department in consultation with the School's Associate Academic Registrar.

2.7 **Period of Suspension and Maximum Period of Study from Initial Registration**

2.7.1 A suspension from studies will normally only be granted for a maximum of 1 academic year.

2.7.2 Students will normally only be granted only 2 non-concurrent periods of suspension from a programme of study.

2.7.3 Students may suspend their studies up to a total of:

- in the case of an award for which the period of study is specified as 2 years or less, 1 year;
- in the case of awards for which the period of study is specified as more than 2 years, by a maximum of 2 years.

2.7.4 Where it would seem insensitive to designate a date of return to studies, the student may be informed that the suspension is for an indefinite period but subject to review after a 12 month period. In this case, Registry should be informed by the School on an annual basis whether the suspension is continuing. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the School to require a student to provide medical certification of fitness to return to study before allowing re-registration to occur.

2.7.5 The University requires all students to complete their programme within a set period after initial registration. These maxima are laid down in the University's Assessment Regulations. A School should refuse to allow a student to suspend their study if that would result in it being impossible for that student to complete their studies within the defined timeframes or those imposed by external requirements or individual programme specifications. Reasonable adjustments to the maximum period of study may require to be made in line with the Equality Act 2010.

2.8 **Non Voluntary Suspension of Studies**

2.8.1 There are circumstances when it is necessary for the University to suspend the studies of a student for a period of time.

2.8.2 Such circumstances include:

- i. Awaiting the outcome of a Senate (Student) Disciplinary Committee hearing.
- ii. A student requiring a visa to study on campus and no longer has valid leave to remain.
- iii. Other instances where the student is not able to attend University for a period of time but unable to go through the voluntary suspension process

2.9 **Return to Study**

2.9.1 When a student returns they should be aware that changes to the curriculum of their programme and individual modules may require them to re-take some elements, as per section 17.2 of the University Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate programmes and section 16.2 of the University Assessment Regulations for Taught Postgraduate programmes.

2.10 Criteria and Conditions

2.10.1 During a period of suspension of studies the following conditions will apply unless specific permission for a variation has been given by the Academic Registrar in consultation with the School.

- i. Students are expected to spend their time away from the University.
- ii. Students are expected to leave University accommodation. (with the exception of non-voluntary suspensions)
- iii. Students are not permitted borrowing rights from the University Library.
- iv. Students are not permitted to attend classes either formally or informally.
- v. Students are not permitted to access Computing Service facilities.
- vi. Students will continue to have access to their GCU email facility.

3 Withdrawal

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The University has in place a range of policies, procedures and guidance to support students who are uncertain about whether to continue with their programme or who are not engaging adequately with their programme. The University recognises, however, that some students will decide to withdraw from their programme and that some students will demonstrate a level of engagement that is not compatible with their continued enrolment on their chosen programme.

3.1.2 Withdrawing from a module is not the same as withdrawing from a Programme of Study. Students wishing to withdraw from a module of study should contact their Programme Administrator to ascertain the necessary local procedures to follow.

3.1.3 The procedures provide for four distinct categories of withdrawal from the University:

- i. Withdrawal at the request of the student;
- ii. Withdrawal by a Progression and Award Board in situations where a student has consistently demonstrated an unacceptable level of engagement.
- iii. Withdrawal by a Progression and Award Board in situations where a student has failed academically and has exhausted all attempts to pass a module.
- iv. Withdrawal by the University through the Procedure for the Expulsion of Students for Disciplinary Reasons, where sufficient grounds are established under the Code of Student Discipline for removing a student from his or her programme without the possibility of re-admission in a future academic session.

3.2 Withdrawal at the request of the student

3.2.1 Students who are considering withdrawing from the University are advised to discuss the matter with their Academic Tutor or Programme Leader before they make a final decision. Depending upon the reasons the student has for considering withdrawal, the Academic Tutor or Programme Leader may be able to refer the student to sources of specialist advice such as the School's Learning Development Centre or University's Positive Living Service, Student Funding Support or the Student's Association Welfare service.

- 3.2.2 Students considering withdrawal should also be given a copy of the booklet 'Considering withdrawing from your course?', which can be found on the Student web page and which sets out the options that are available, identifies sources of help within the University, and describes the financial implications of withdrawal.
- 3.2.3 Students who wish to discuss the detailed financial implications of withdrawal should be advised to contact Student Financial Support in the first instance.
- 3.2.4 Students may still be liable to pay tuition fees and should refer to the Student Fee and Refund Policy in the first instance
- 3.2.5 If a student decides to withdraw then he/she should:
- i. Complete a Student Withdrawal Form, available from the Student Records page on the Registry website (www.gcu.ac.uk/registry).
 - ii. Submit the completed form to their School Programme Administrator
 - iii. For Students who are only in the country based on a visa sponsored by the University, then this sponsorship will cease at the point of withdrawal and the student will have to return home. In such circumstances the student must seek advice from the International Student Support Service immediately.
- 3.2.6 The School and Registry will then follow the appropriate Standard Operating Procedure relating to the withdrawal of a student, including informing external agencies (such as funders, Immigration authorities as necessary).
- 3.2.7 Students who withdraw and then wish to re-join, must make a fresh application to the University. There is no guarantee that an offer of a place will be made.
- 3.3 Withdrawal by the University due to lack of engagement (academic or otherwise)**
- 3.3.1 The University may withdraw students who fail to demonstrate an acceptable level of engagement either academically or otherwise.
- 3.3.2 Such Situations include:
- i. Lack of attendance at expected classes or lack of engagement/attendance while on Placement (as per the Student Attendance & Engagement Monitoring Policy)
 - ii. International students who are in the country based on a visa sponsored by the University and fail to attend the necessary "Attendance Check Points" will be deemed to no longer be engaging with the University, irrespective of their attendance level at classes and will be withdrawn. Please refer to the International Terms & Conditions.
 - iii. Students who fail to return to the next stage/level/year of their studies and do not apply for a suspension
- 3.3.3 For students who are failing to engage via the Student Attendance & Engagement Monitoring Policy (3.3.2 i), the University shall follow the procedures as laid out in that policy
- 3.3.4 For international students who are in country with a visa sponsored by the University and fail to engage at an attendance check point (3.3.2 ii), the Registry will withdraw the student, informing the student, the School, ISSS and all necessary external agencies).
- 3.3.5 In such circumstances the student's visa sponsorship will cease and they will have to return to their home country. Their last date of attendance will be based on their last date of attendance card swipe

- 3.3.6 Students who are expected to return to the next stage of their studies, but fail to register within the necessary timescale, (as per 1.1.7 above), will be deemed to have withdrawn from their studies.
- 3.3.7 In such circumstances, the School will confirm a list of non-returners to Registry. Registry will then formally withdraw the student, using the end date of the previous exam diet as the formal last date of attendance.
- 3.3.8 Registry will inform the student and external agencies of the withdrawal.
- 3.3.9 For any international students who are in country with a visa sponsored by the University, their sponsorship will cease and they will have to return to their home country.

3.4 Withdrawal Due to Academic Failure

- 3.4.1 Where a student has failed academically, as per the Assessment Regulations, then the appropriate Progression and Award Board will require the student to withdraw.
- 3.4.2 In such circumstances, the student will receive notification of the decision of the Progression and Award Board via the normal notification of results process.
- 3.4.3 In such circumstances Registry will formally withdraw these students using the last date of the preceding Exam diet as the last date of attendance.

3.5 Withdrawal by the University due to a Major disciplinary action

- 3.5.1 A student may be withdrawn from their studies, following the outcome of a major student disciplinary action considered by the Senate Disciplinary Committee (SDC) as per the Code of Student Discipline. This will be the case when the penalty is expulsion.
- 3.5.2 The Code of Student Discipline outlines the policy and associated procedures
- 3.5.3 For any international students who are in country with a visa sponsored by the University, their sponsorship will cease and they will have to return to their home country.

3.6 Appeal against Withdrawal

- 3.6.1 Students who believe that there was an administrative procedural error leading to their withdrawal by a Progression and Award Board should use the Academic Appeals route to appeal the decision.
- 3.6.2 The Code of Student Discipline contains a process for appeal and should be followed if a student wishes to appeal a SDC decision of expulsion.