

The Academic Regulations Appendix 26: Withdrawal Procedures

2023-2024



Edge Hill
University

The Academic Regulations

Appendix 26: Withdrawal Procedures

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Summary

Withdrawal procedures provide students with clear guidance on how to complete the withdrawal process and how to seek a review of the decision to withdraw them from their studies.

The University endeavours to make the withdrawal process as smooth and transparent as possible.

Glossary of terms

Term	Meaning
Academic Registry	Administrative department that facilitates the student journey from enrolment to award conferral
Appeal	a procedure which allows a student, in certain circumstances, to ask for review of a decision
Assessment board	the University board that considers assessment marks. They decide on whether a student can progress or to make a final award
Attendance	a subset of engagement, this refers to physical attendance at scheduled academic taught sessions
Bias	where there is unfairness or a perception of unfairness in the way a decision has been reached
Disengagement	when a student has stopped participating in academic sessions and the learning environment
Engagement	this refers to active participation with academic sessions, learning environment, study and related opportunities including submission of coursework assessments
Irrecoverable	when a student is in a position where it is impossible for them to successfully complete their studies
Mitigating circumstances	where circumstances beyond a student's control prevented them from engaging with their studies
Procedural irregularity	where the University has not followed its own procedures properly, and error or mistake has affected the outcome
Student Census	the University's official survey conducted to clarify the status of all registered students
Studies	the work a student does while at university
Tuition Fee	money that a student pays to the University for their teaching. Eligible students may borrow from the Student Loans Company to pay their tuition fees
Withdrawal	the permanent cessation of study and termination of a student's registration with the University. This may be initiated by the student or the University
Working days	the official days the University is open, normally Monday to Friday and excludes statutory holidays and any concessionary days e.g. when the University is closed between Christmas and new year

Purpose

These procedures provide a set of overarching principles for managing student withdrawal. For departments and faculties, it provides information to explain the withdrawal procedure and guidance on advising students. It provides guidance to students on how to complete the withdrawal process and explains how to seek a right of appeal.

Regulations

1. Introduction

This withdrawal procedure provides:

- students with clear guidance on how to complete the withdrawal process and how to seek a review of the decision to withdraw them from their studies
- staff with information to explain the withdrawal procedures and guidance on advising students how to seek a right of appeal

The University is committed to ensuring that all students gain the maximum benefit from their course. We work in partnership with students to support their learning and wider university experience and achieve success.

Sometimes, students experience personal or course-related difficulties that impact on their ability to continue their studies. In these cases, students are strongly advised to seek support from their department or the Student Support Team in the Catalyst who can provide dedicated support to students during difficult times.

However, there are occasions when students decide that they can no longer continue with their studies and seek a full withdrawal from the University. This is the permanent end of their registration from both their course and modules. In such situations, the University endeavours to make the withdrawal process as smooth and transparent as possible.

There may also be times when a student's lack of attendance and/or engagement with the University means it is reasonable to assume they have withdrawn. In such cases, the University may instigate a withdrawal. Please consult the Academic Programme Engagement Framework (APEF) for guidance as to what constitutes an appropriate level of engagement at the University.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all Edge Hill students (except Postgraduate Researchers who are subject to the Research Degree Regulations) from the time they complete their initial course enrolment until the end of their University registration.
- 2.2 The procedure does not cover instances where a student has been failed and withdrawn by an assessment board or University panel, or where

they have been excluded under other University policies, procedures, and regulations. It applies solely to cases where a student initiates the withdrawal process or where the University instigates the withdrawal process specifically due to a student's lack of engagement.

- 2.3 The procedure does not cover instances where the University brings a Postgraduate Researcher's (PGR's) registration for a research degree to an end (termination of registration). This procedure applies to PGR's who bring their own registration for a research degree to an end.
- 2.4 In all cases the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) authority regulations presides over the University's normal processes. The requirements for Student Visa and visa-controlled students are therefore subject to the UKVI's jurisdiction. This is explained further throughout this document.

3. Student-Led Withdrawal

- 3.1 Students who decide to withdraw must complete a withdrawal notification form stating their reason for leaving and last date of engagement. Notification of Withdrawal forms are issued by the Student Support Team. The University will only accept a withdrawal notification directly from a student and not from someone else on their behalf. The Head of Academic Registry may agree to make an exception for students with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2 Students must ensure that their last date of engagement is accurately recorded as it is used to calculate tuition fee liability and any maintenance loan, bursary and/or grant entitlement. More information on how the last date of engagement should be recorded is included in section 5.
- 3.3 In exceptional circumstances, and where approved by Academic Registry, students who are unable to complete a withdrawal notification form may send an email from their University account stating their intention to withdraw. The email must also state their last date of engagement (as defined in section 5) and their reason for leaving.
- 3.4 Students must submit their withdrawal notification form as soon as possible following relevant discussions with their department and the Student Support Team. This is to ensure students are not in receipt of funding they are not entitled to, and to ensure the correct tuition fee is calculated and applied. Further details on how tuition fee liability is calculated are provided in the [Tuition Fee Regulations](#).

- 3.5 Once a student submits a withdrawal notification form this will be sent to the student's department who will confirm the last date of engagement.
- 3.6 Academic Registry will then process the withdrawal, update the student record, and notify relevant bodies, as explained in section 6.
- 3.7 Once Academic Registry has processed the withdrawal, confirmation will be sent to the student's personal email address and the withdrawal process is then complete.

4. University Led-Withdrawal

- 4.1 The Academic Programme Engagement Framework sets out the University's position on monitoring student attendance and engagement. It details the University's approach to supporting students where their attendance and/or engagement suggests they may be at risk of either
 - leaving the university; or
 - being in an irrecoverable position in terms of their ability to complete the course.
- 4.2 Staff must consult the APEF before instigating a University-led withdrawal.
- 4.3 A University-led withdrawal may be instigated where:
 - interventions have been exhausted and a student has failed to re-engage with their studies; and/or
 - a student's lack of engagement means they will not be able to successfully complete the programme.

Heads of departments are responsible for identifying staff who will initiate this process.

- 4.4 UKVI visa-controlled students are expected to maintain their immigration status throughout their period of registration. Where a student is unable to provide evidence, or the University has reasonable grounds to believe their immigration status is not being maintained, Academic Registry will withdraw the student. The decision will be reviewed if the student provides Academic Registry with appropriate evidence to confirm their status within 10 working days from the date of the withdrawal notification.
- 4.5 For Student Visa holders faculties/departments must contact the [Compliance and Immigration Manager](#) in the International Office for

advice before commencing the withdrawal process. This will ensure the University fulfils its responsibilities under its UKVI Sponsor Licence.

- 4.6 University-led withdrawals can be actioned via the student records system (SID Admin Online). Should staff require any technical advice on how to initiate a student withdrawal they should contact the Academic Records Team in Academic Registry.
- 4.7 Faculties/departments must complete the University-led withdrawal process promptly when withdrawing a student. This is necessary to prevent the inappropriate release of funds to the student and/or University which may result in overpayment and need to be repaid.
- 4.8 Academic Registry processes all University-led withdrawals and notifies students of the outcome and their right of appeal against the decision and/or the last date of engagement recorded.
- 4.9 The University undertakes census checks at designated points in the academic calendar to ensure that central records remain accurate. The University census complements the ongoing work of departments to monitor attendance and engagement, it does not replace local systems for tracking student engagement.

5. Last Date of Engagement

- 5.1 Faculties/departments are responsible for confirming a student's last date of engagement. Students are encouraged to discuss and agree their last date of engagement with their department before submitting a withdrawal notification form.
- 5.2 Accurately recording the last date of engagement is essential as this informs the financial support available to the student. It is the basis upon which the University works out a student's liability for tuition fees and is used to calculate any maintenance loan, bursary and/or grant entitlement. Eligibility for funding will usually cease from the last date of engagement.
- 5.3 The last date of engagement is defined as the date that the University can confirm the student last engaged with their academic studies. This includes:

- classroom based study, lectures, seminars, tutorials, practical or studio-based sessions, workshops, group work, presentations, or occasional sessions where visiting speakers are invited to present supervision/mentoring
 - submission of coursework and/or attendance at an examination
 - academic engagement with the virtual learning environment including accessing Lecture Capture
 - meeting or communicating with a member of staff on a course related matter
 - for research students, normally any course related contact with the Director of Studies
 - attendance at clinical, sandwich, professional practice or work placements
 - studying overseas as part of an Erasmus exchange or study abroad programme
 - representing the Students' Union at a course board or similar meeting
- 5.4 To comply with Home Office UKVI Sponsor Licence requirements, the last date of attendance/engagement for international students is normally recorded as the date the student submits their withdrawal form.
- 5.5 For students who suspend their studies (interruption of studies) and withdraws within the same academic year, the last date of engagement is recorded as the start date of the period of interruption.
- 5.6 Where a student fails to re-enrol, the last date of engagement is recorded as the first day of the new academic year.

6. Administration

- 6.1 Withdrawals are processed by Academic Registry, who will:
- i) update the University's central student records system
 - ii) notify the Student Loans Company and/or other funding bodies as appropriate, confirming the last date of engagement
 - iii) confirm details of the withdrawal in writing to the student, along with information on the appeals process
 - iv) notify external and regulatory bodies as appropriate
 - v) retain a record of the withdrawal
- 6.2 The University's Compliance and Immigration Manager will report to the Home Office (UKVI) when a Student Visa holder withdraws, this report must be made within 10 working days after the withdrawal date.

7. Withdrawal Appeal Procedure

- 7.1 An appeal is a request from a student to review a withdrawal case. This may be to review a University decision to withdraw a student or to dispute the last date of engagement recorded.
- 7.2 An appeal can only be submitted on one or more of the following grounds:
- i) the University has not followed its own procedures properly, including through administrative error, and this has clearly affected the outcome. This is called a 'procedural irregularity'
 - ii) circumstances beyond a student's control prevented them from engaging with their studies. Good reasons of significant relevance also prevented them from informing their faculty/department before the withdrawal decision was made. These are known as 'mitigating circumstances'
 - iii) unfairness or a perception of unfairness in the way the faculty/department has reached the decision to withdraw the student. This is also known as 'bias'
 - iv) where issues do not fall neatly into the above categories, students are encouraged to raise them for consideration by the relevant head of department or nominee
- 7.3 A withdrawal appeal cannot be submitted against decisions made under the:
- Student Disciplinary Regulations
 - Fitness to Practise Procedures
 - Support to Study Procedures
 - Academic Malpractice Procedures
 - Assessment Board Regulations
 - Research Degree Regulations

Separate procedures apply in these cases and a list of the policies and procedures is provided in the 'Key Documents' section.

- 7.4 All requests to appeal must be submitted on the withdrawal appeal form obtained from Academic Registry and should:
- indicate which of the grounds set out in 7.2 the request is based on
 - indicate expected outcome (last date of engagement to be amended or/and reinstatement on course)

- include clearly stated facts that support the appeal
 - provide sufficient evidence to support the case being made
 - be submitted by the stipulated deadline
- 7.5 The University only accepts withdrawal appeals directly from a student and not from someone else on their behalf. In cases where there are compelling mitigating circumstances, the Head of Academic Registry may agree to make an exception.
- 7.6 All withdrawal appeals must be received by Academic Registry, in full, within 10 working days from the date of the withdrawal notification. To comply with UKVI Sponsor Licence requirements, Student Visa holders must submit their appeal form within five working days of receiving the withdrawal notification.
- 7.7 Upon receiving a withdrawal appeal, Academic Registry will consider whether an appeal meets the criteria and assess if the application is coherent, timely and complete.
- 7.8 In exceptional circumstances, if a student cannot meet the specified deadline, they must contact the Assistant Registrar (Academic Records) or Senior Registrar (Records, Assessment & Awards) in advance of the appeal deadline providing a detailed reason for the delay. The Assistant and Senior Registrar's reserve the right to extend the appeal submission deadline or negotiate a new deadline with the student.
- 7.9 If the appeal is admissible Academic Registry will progress the appeal to 'stage one' and the process described under section 7.15 will be followed.
- 7.10 If the appeal does not meet the criteria stated under section 7.4 the appeal will not be progressed to stage one and the case will be dismissed. Within 10 working days of receipt Academic Registry will inform the student of the reasons for this decision.
- 7.11 If the student is dissatisfied with this decision the student may request a review by the Head of Academic Registry. Such a request must:
- be made in writing to the Head of Academic Registry
 - be submitted in 10 working days of receiving notification that the appeal is not admissible
 - set out the full reasons why they believe the decision of the Assistant Registrar is incorrect

- 7.12 The Head of Academic Registry will review the decision and the student will be informed of the outcome and reasons for it, within 10 working days.
- 7.13 If the Head of Academic Registry upholds the decision the student will be informed that the University's internal appeals procedures have now been completed. A completion of procedures letter will then be issued which informs the student of their right to refer their case to the Office of Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for review if they remain dissatisfied.
- 7.14 If the Head of Academic Registry overturns the decision the student will be advised that the appeal has progressed to stage one.
- 7.15 Students are responsible for ensuring they raise all relevant issues and provide supporting documentation and evidence with their appeal. Appeals are made in two stages:

Stage One Appeal

- i) the appeal is considered by the head of department, or nominee who determines whether the appeal should be approved
- ii) the student may be asked to meet with their head of department as part of this process. In making the decision, a number of factors are taken into account. Academic judgement will also be used to decide whether the student has a reasonable chance of success in completing the year
- iii) if the appeal is approved, they will either be reinstated or have their last date of engagement amended. The head of department may specify reinstatement conditions, recommend a return date or other University procedures
- iv) if the appeal is not approved, they will receive written notification from Academic Registry and a summary explaining the decision
- v) the student is informed of the outcome of their first stage appeal investigation by email or letter within 10 working days
- vi) students who are not satisfied with the first stage appeal decision can request for it to be reviewed at second stage. The request must be submitted in writing to the Head of Academic Registry within 10 working days from the date of the letter or email notifying them of the outcome of the first stage appeal. Students may submit additional information, not considered at their first stage appeal with this request.

Stage Two Review

- i) the review is considered by a faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean, or nominee, not previously involved the case. They will determine whether the decision of the stage one appeal is reasonable, noting the grounds for appeal listed in 7.2. In addition, and where appropriate, they will consider any additional information provided by the student. For students registered on a Graduate School course the decision is made in conjunction with the Dean of the Graduate School, or nominee
- ii) the outcome will be either approved or not approved. If the appeal is approved, the student will be re-instated or their last date of engagement will be amended
- iii) the decision of the second stage review is final
- iv) the student is notified of the outcome of the second stage review in writing within 10 working days. A completion of procedures notification is issued with the decision letter advising that the University's procedures are complete. This letter also informs the student of their right to refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for review if they remain dissatisfied

8. Post-Withdrawal

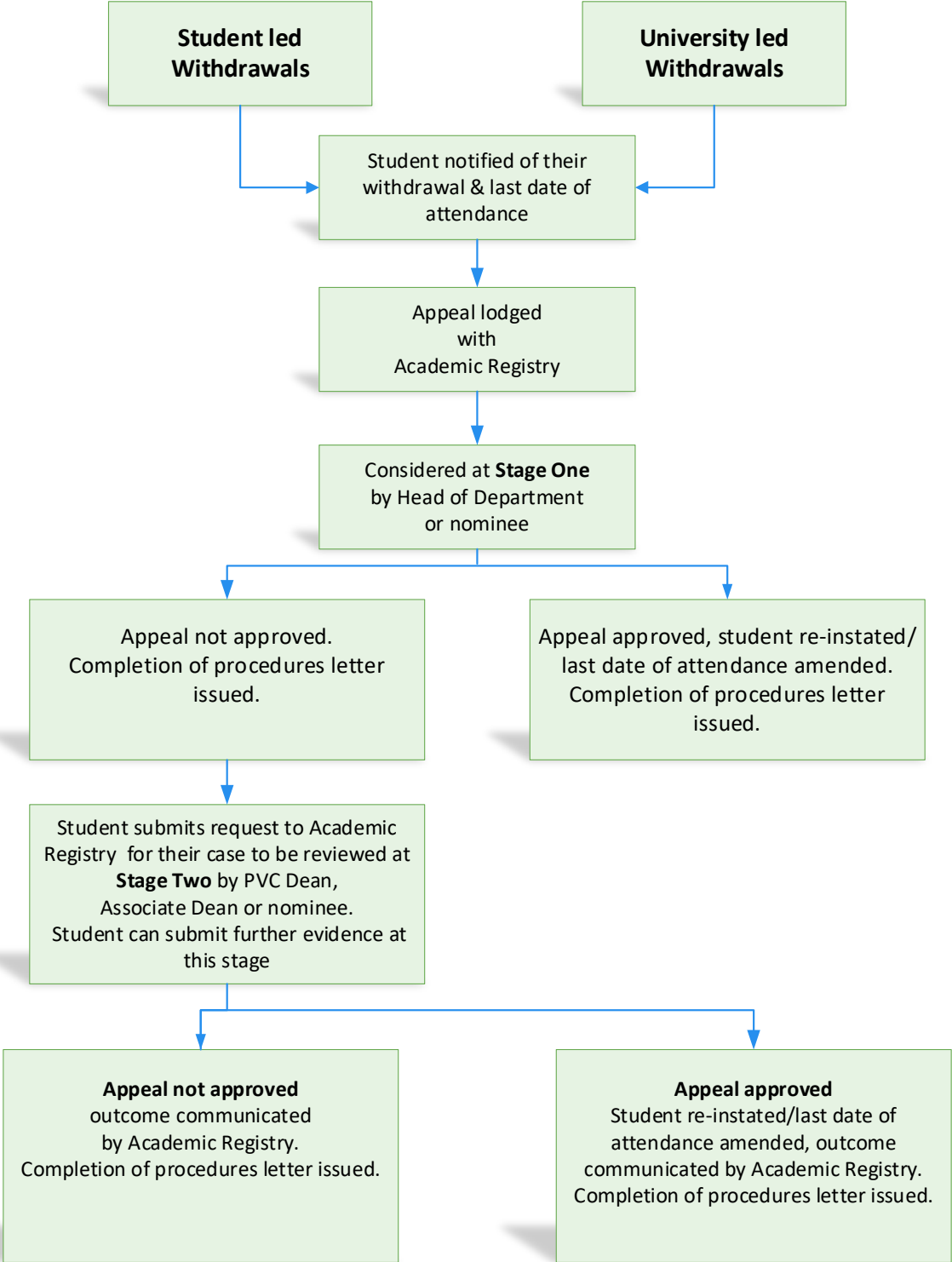
- 8.1 Students who are withdrawn must return any University property including books and equipment, uniforms, name badges and their Unicard.
- 8.2 Once a student has been formally withdrawn, they are no longer able to access the opportunities and facilities made available to registered students. This means that these former students are not:
 - i. permitted to attend teaching sessions or submit assessments
 - ii. able to access their EHU email address
 - iii. able to access the University network and personal storage space
 - iv. able to access the library and Learning Edge account
 - v. eligible for university accommodation
 - vi. entitled to Student Finance loan payments and/or bursary support (for the course concerned) and will be required to repay any overpayments
 - vii. permitted an active 'Unicard'
 - viii. able to claim student benefits for the programme concerned i.e. Student bank account and Council Tax exemption

- 8.3 For any assessment completed before withdrawal and already considered by an assessment board, the University will issue an academic transcript comprising final results and a certificated exit award, where appropriate.

9. Readmission

- 9.1 Where a student has withdrawn from the University and wishes to return at a later date, they must reapply via the standard application procedures. There is no guarantee of readmission.
- 9.2 Where a student has followed the Student or University-led withdrawal process and then applies to return to study, their return may be subject to an interview. This will establish whether they are able to resume their studies and complete their course.

**The Academic Regulations 2023/24
Appendices
Appendix 26 – Student Withdrawal Procedures Chart**



Key to Relevant Documents

This policy refers to the following document, which you may find useful.

<https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/collection/academic-regulations/>

- The Academic Regulations Appendix 8 - Procedures relating to Malpractice
- The Academic Regulations Appendix 9 - Interruption Policy
- The Academic Regulations Appendix 10 - Repeat Year Policy
- The Academic Regulations Appendix 17 - Fitness to Practice
- The Academic Regulations Appendix 16 - Support to Study
- The Academic Regulations Appendix 22 - Academic Appeals Procedures

[Academic Programme Engagement Framework](#)

[Research Degree Regulations](#)

[Student Disciplinary Regulations](#)

Annexes

Academic Registry <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/departments/support/registry/>

Student Services <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/departments/support/student-services/>

Student Support team <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/students/student-support-team/>

Students' Union
Student Advice and
Representation
Centre <https://www.edgehillsu.org.uk/advice>

End matter

Title	Appendix 26: Withdrawal Procedures
Policy Owner	Head of Academic Registry
Policy Manager	Assistant Registrar – Academic Records
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