



Senate Handbook

Changes to Registration

(Including suspensions of study and early terminations of registration)

This Handbook supplements Regulations governed by Senate.

It includes policies, procedures, advice and/or guidance that staff and students are expected to follow in the proper conduct of University business.

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Changes since version 2.4 (August 2023):

- Change of reference from School to Faculty (throughout)
- Addition of statement on staff responsibilities (Introduction)
- Addition of statement defining working days (Introduction)
- Note added that some students require approval of employers for suspensions (5)
- Re-written list of reasons for Academic Registrar's termination to match Senate Regulations (6.2)
- Addition of section on tuition fee debt (6.2)
- Note added that students must be within their registration period to complete research or submit assignments (7.2)
- Note that a completion of procedures letter will be sent following an undisputed Stage 2 outcome (8.4)

1 Introduction

This Handbook describes the University's approach for managing requests (either from you, or from staff of the University) to change the nature or conditions of your registration. This includes:

- changes to your named programme of study (e.g. a transfer to a different course or final intended award);
- changes to your pattern of study (e.g. a change from full-time to part-time study or *vice versa*);
- changes to the length of time of study you need (e.g. requests for extensions of time for the period of study, with or without the payment of additional tuition fees);
- requests, for whatever reason, for either a temporary or permanent interruption to your period of study.

In most cases, requests are made by you, and such requests normally require the explicit support from either your Course Director (if you are on a taught course) or your Supervisor (if you are taking a research degree). Students studying as part of an apprenticeship will also normally require the approval of their employer.

In some circumstances, however, the University may require you to halt your studies, on either a temporary (suspension of study) or permanent (termination of registration) basis. This Handbook outlines circumstances where this might take place with or without your consent, and outlines the reasons why that might take place, and your right of appeal against such decision, if you choose to disagree with it.

The Handbook supplements Regulations 41-47 and applies to all students (undergraduate, postgraduate, apprentice and non-apprentice students). The Handbook is designed to provide you with helpful information if you are considering changes to your registration conditions and/or interrupting your study. This Handbook also outlines how the University will consider your concerns and the procedures it will follow to investigate them.

For undergraduate students the role of Course Director is performed by your Course Lead.

This Handbook assigns responsibilities for various processes and decisions to particular postholders in the University. Where required for the operation of the University, specific responsibilities may be given to other members of the University by agreement between the relevant University Officers, such arrangements to be recorded by the Secretary to Senate until such time as the Handbook is updated.

Throughout this Handbook timescales are referred to as measured in working days. Working days do not include any weekend days or days where the University is closed (public bank holidays or published University closure days).

2 Requests by you to change your registration

The University expects you, both at the point you originally register, and at the point at which you commit to a particular module of study, to honour that commitment.

When agreeing to a module or course, you are accepting that you are able to:

- meet the necessary time commitments for attending classes and other scheduled events,
- manage any private study commitments, and
- meet the stated dates of assessment (either examination dates or deadlines for the submission of work for assessment), as outlined in course documentation provided to you through a handbook, website or virtual learning environment.

You are expected to address proactively any concerns you have about meeting those time requirements, either through adjusting your personal commitments and/or through raising your concerns with your Course Director or Supervisor (and SAS Lead) and discussing appropriate options. Apprentices may also discuss options with the Apprenticeships Office and/or their Apprenticeship Tutor/Coach.

Where personal pressures result in you concluding that you cannot commit to the pattern of studies you have previously agreed to, you are expected to take responsibility for resolving these. Some of the options available to you are outlined in detail in later sections of this Handbook (e.g. suspensions of study) but you should also consider whether any of the following may help support your studies¹:

- switching from full-time to part-time registration; and/or
- deferring individual modules and/or assessments to future years of the course or programme;
- switching to an alternative award (e.g. changing from an intention to receive an MSc to a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma, or changing from a PhD registration to an MPhil or MSc by Research registration).

Any request to change your registration should be discussed with your Course Director or Supervisor, and then formally submitted in writing to them and your SAS Lead. The Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) will not consider any request from you to change your registration until there is:

- a) a clear and unambiguous indication of the requested changes, including clear alternative dates and/or plan of future study;
- b) a rationale for the requested changes, including supporting evidence;
- c) a clear understanding between you and your Course Director or Supervisor of the financial implications for your request (i.e. the payment of additional tuition fees or a fee rebate);
- d) clear support for the changes from your Course Director or Supervisor².

In addition, students on Apprenticeship courses should discuss any proposed changes to their registration with the Apprenticeships Office, who will be able to advise of any implications a change may have on your future study.

In very exceptional cases, the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) will consider requests directly from students where there is not support from the Course Director or Supervisor³. Such requests would be considered under the appeals procedure outlined in Section 5. You are, however, generally expected to continue to discuss your options with your Course Director or Supervisor until you can mutually agree a solution.

Any requests for changes to registration (including requests for additional 'writing up periods') that are made or occur after the current end date of registration may not be accepted. In addition,

¹ Some of these options may not be available to apprentice students.

² Not required for withdrawals.

³ Course Director or Supervisor support is not required for withdrawals.

requests for retrospective periods of suspension will not be granted⁴. Advice on specific cases which may have exceptional merit should be discussed with the Academic Registrar.

Further advice on your options can be discussed with independent staff as well, including:

- staff in Education Services (including the Academic Registrar and the Assistant Registrars);
- staff and students in the Cranfield Students' Association (CSA);
- Learning Support Officers and Staff in Student Wellbeing and Disability Support.

⁴ A retrospective application for suspension may be required and approved for reasons relating to apprenticeship funding.

3 Course Transfers

There are options available to students to transfer from their existing course to another course during their studies.⁵ Students may not transfer from a taught course to a research programme (and vice versa).

3.1 Transfer to a different taught course of study

Students are admitted only for the course they have applied for. Requests to consider transfer from one taught course to another will only be usually considered within a reasonable time period of the student's start date.

Transfers of a registered student from one course to another course require the agreement of the course directors for both the original and new courses.

The transfer of any completed/part completed modules or learning credits from a student's previous course to their new course requires the approval of the new course's Course Director, and can only be approved where:

- i. The module(s) are shared or borrowed modules used by both courses; or
- ii. It can be demonstrated that the student will have met the learning outcomes of other modules on their new course by completing the transferred modules on their old course.

The transfer from one course of study to another may require the payment of additional fees.

Students who are applying for a new course and wish to transfer some credits achieved on one award bearing course to a different course may apply to do so through the recognition of internal learning credits at the application stage, with their registration period being adjusted accordingly (see section 6 of the Senate Handbook on Admissions).

Where a student transfers onto another course with a different standard registration length, the student's registration for their new course should be adjusted taking into account their previous study period.

3.2 Lower exit awards (Taught Students)

A student who has failed to achieve their intended award will normally be conferred with a lower exit award (e.g. PgCert, PgDip), provided that they have achieved the required number of credits for that award.

This will be completed automatically by the University (there is no application required by the student), with their student record showing a fail for their intended award, with award of the completed exit award.

There is no additional fee charged to the student for the lower exit award.

3.3 Transfer to a different completed award

Where there is no lower exit award for the course that the student was originally registered on, students may apply to transfer their accrued credits to another lower award, provided that:

- i. They have achieved sufficient learning credits for the award that they are applying for, **and**
 - a. The achieved credits are from module(s) which are shared or borrowed modules used by both courses; or

⁵ Apprentice students may not transfer to a different course of study whilst remaining on their apprenticeship.

- b. It can be demonstrated that the student will have met the learning outcomes of other modules on their new course by completing the transferred modules on their old course.

3.4 Research student transfers

Research students may, during their studies, transfer to either a higher or lower award at their own request or be offered a lower exit award as an outcome of their formal thesis examination or progress review. Research students cannot transfer their studies to a taught programme.

3.4.1 Transfer to a higher award

Research Students may, following discussions with their supervisor(s) request to transfer to a higher award (e.g. MSc by Research to PhD).

A student wishing to transfer to a higher research award will need the agreement of their supervisor and the relevant Director of Research within their Faculty. It is expected that a research student transferring from a lower research award (level 7 qualification) to a higher research award (level 8 qualification) will undergo an interview for the higher award as part of the process of supervisor/Director of Research agreement. Students will be required to pay the additional fees due for the PhD, unless they have an internal/external sponsor willing to cover the additional cost.

3.4.2 Transfer to a lower award

Research students may request a transfer to a lower award, usually as a result of changes to their personal circumstances. A student wishing to transfer to a lower research award will need the agreement of their current supervisor (and any new supervisor) and the relevant Director of Research within their Faculty. Transferring to a lower award may reduce a student's fee liability.

3.4.3 Lower exit awards (Research Students)

There are several possible outcomes to the examination of a research thesis, which are explained more clearly in the Research Students' Handbook.

Examiners may award doctoral students with a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) award if they believe the student meets the required standard of study (as outlined in Appendix A of the Research Student Handbook) but that the work presented in the thesis does not meet doctoral standards (either in terms of absolute original output or in terms of volume of work). It is only used in circumstances where the examiners do not believe remedial work on the current research and thesis can result in a PhD being obtained.

Examiners may request that the candidate makes minor corrections to the existing thesis before awarding the Master of Philosophy degree.

A research student's review panel can recommend exiting with a lower award as an outcome of a progress review (most commonly an 'Additional Review'). In such cases the panel will make the recommendation on the review form to then be considered by the Supervisor and relevant Director of Research.

4 Change of mode of study⁶

Students may, for a variety of reasons find that they are unable to commit full-time to a course, or that they have more time for their study than they previously had, and therefore wish to transfer between part-time and full-time study.

Students can apply to transfer from one mode of study to the other, providing that;

- i. The alternative mode of study for the student's course has been approved as a unique course by the University's Education or Research Committee; **and**
- ii. The transfer has the approval of the Course Director or research Supervisor (for both modes of study where these are different).

Any student changing their mode of study will have their registration period adjusted accordingly, on a pro-rata basis, depending on the part-time registration period for that course. For example for a course with initial registration periods of 1-year (FT) and 2-years (PT), a change of mode of study would:

- For a full-time student with 5 months of their initial registration period remaining, who transfers to a part-time registration, result in their remaining registration period being adjusted to 10 months;
- For a part-time student with 10 months of their initial registration period remaining, who transfers to a full-time registration, result in their remaining registration period being adjusted to 5 months.

⁶ Apprentice students may not change their mode of study whilst remaining on their apprenticeship.

5 Suspension of study

There are a number of routes which may result in you having to suspend your study and spend time away from the University. These include:

- a) Where you choose to take a leave of absence owing to personal circumstances (voluntary suspension – see Section 5.1);
- b) Where the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) acts to remove you from the University temporarily for a specific reason (see Section 5.2)
- c) Where you have been involved in a disciplinary investigation of such a nature that it is felt appropriate or necessary to remove you from study, either while the matter is being investigated, or as a result of the investigation (see Section 5.3).

If you suspend your study, your period of registration (i.e. course end date) will usually be automatically extended to account for the period of suspension of study. No additional fees are charged for this adjustment. Access to the University and its facilities may be withdrawn during any period of suspension of study at the discretion of the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff), but this is not common: you should in most cases still be able to access your CCNT account, EVE, and library and IT resources.

If you have entered the UK on a visa specifically to study, you will be required leave the UK if your study is suspended.

Students who are suspended from their studies should not undertake any study whilst suspended, and may not submit any assessments during any period of suspension. In addition, access to EVE and the libraries will be withdrawn for the period of suspension.

If you are studying as part of an apprenticeship you will need to request both a suspension from your academic studies and a Break in Learning from your apprenticeship. Breaks in Learning follow the same processes set out for suspension of study, but with liaison with your employer through the Apprenticeship Office.

Part-time taught students

The standard registration for a part-time MSc student is three years. The University would normally expect all part-time students to complete their studies within that time period, however the University acknowledges changes in circumstance may mean a student needs to suspend their study for an appropriate period.

For those postgraduate students with a 5-year registration period, or for students who require additional approvals from their employers (including apprentices and students on an AP contract course), suspensions will only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

5.1 Voluntary suspension

The University recognises that sometimes life can change to such a degree that it is necessary to consider a temporary halt to your study. There may be a number of potential causes, including:

- Illness, either physical or mental (of yourself, or of close family and friends);
- Financial concerns, such that you can't afford to maintain your living expenses while studying;
- Personal relationships intruding upon your ability to study;
- Other personal circumstances (e.g. a change to your living arrangements).

Wherever possible, the University will act to support you continuing with your study, and there are a number of support mechanisms available to all students, including the Counselling Service, Learning Support Officers, Student Wellbeing and Disability Support and the Cranfield Students' Association.

If you find yourself in a position where you believe your study is being affected, you should discuss this as soon as possible with your Course Director or Supervisor. They will be able to outline to you the various possibilities that might be open to you to accommodate your personal circumstances. These are most commonly:

- Recognising “exceptional circumstances” and allowing you to submit work for assessment late;
- Reviewing your patterns of study with you to see if they can be adjusted, including the possibility of transferring from full-time to part-time study (or extending your period of part-time study);
- Discussing with you taking time out from active study, either through a formal period of suspension of study (where you would normally remove yourself from the course for a short period of time), or through recognising that you will make little or no academic progress for a defined period of time.

Students studying as part of an apprenticeship course should also discuss any suspension with the Apprenticeships Office and their employer.

Where you agree that it is sensible and appropriate to have a suspension from study, you will be asked to confirm this in writing to your SAS Lead, Course Director or Supervisor⁷. They will also discuss with you a defined period of suspension (for up to one year) and a “return to study plan”, so that you are both clear on what will be expected on your re-engagement with the University. The “return to study plan” should commence from the date of resumption, can be reviewed at any point, and further periods of suspension of study discussed. Unless a further suspension has been requested on or before the approved suspension end date, your registration will automatically resume the day after the approved suspension end date. Please note it is extremely rare for you to be allowed a suspension of study for more than three years in total.

It is worth noting that if you are following a taught Master’s course, PgDip or PgCert, and you are currently in the taught phase of the course, attending modules, that a suspension of study may well mean leaving the current course and returning in the next year. It is easier to accommodate short suspensions of study when you are engaged in your individual research project.

A request by the University for you to suspend your study

Occasionally, it may be the case that the prospect of having to suspend your study is raised with you by either your Course Director or Supervisor, or by other staff concerned with your welfare. This is often in cases where it is recognised that you may be at risk of failing the course, and a suspension of study may be helpful to allow you time to resolve any personal issues, in order to then focus more successfully on your study.

It is important to note that a suspension of study is not intended as a penalty or punishment, but an attempt to ensure that you can undertake and complete your study in the most effective and positive way possible.

The University cannot require you to suspend your study if you are failing to make academic progress, but it may highlight that if you continue your study and your progress continues to be insufficient, it may take steps to terminate your registration instead (see Section 6.3).

5.2 Suspensions authorised by the Academic Registrar

In certain circumstances, the Academic Registrar, or more usually a member of their staff, may authorise your suspension of study without your permission. The circumstances fall into four main categories:

- a) you have not been in contact with your course team or Supervisor; or

⁷ MOD funded students will also be required to submit appropriate evidence to support any request to suspend their studies.

- b) you have been prevented (possibly through no fault of your own) from attending the specified location of study for the course; or
- c) you are considered by your nature or by your actions, to represent a clear risk to the health and safety of yourself, or of other students or members of the University; or
- d) for apprentices, the Academic Registrar may authorise a suspension of study for apprenticeship students where Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rules dictate that such a suspension should be put in place (which may be retrospective).

Lack of contact with the course team

As part of your conditions of registration, you should attend any compulsory classes and sessions, as outlined by the course team. More generally, if you are unable to attend other scheduled classes, sessions or meetings, you are expected to maintain contact with the course team (usually the Course Director, Module Leaders and SAS Lead) or Supervisor so that the University can verify that you are making appropriate academic progress.

Where you find yourself unable to engage in study effectively (e.g. illness), you should inform the course team or Supervisor as soon as possible, so that they can consider how best to support your continuation of study. It is your responsibility to ensure they are aware of any circumstances that are affecting your ability to study.

Where there has been no contact from you, and where the course team or Supervisor has attempted unsuccessfully to contact you, the course team may request that the Academic Registrar (or a member of his or her staff) suspends your study for a period of up to two months⁸. During that time, they will try to re-establish contact with you through the contact details in EVE. It is therefore important you keep these up to date. If you do not respond to any approaches from Education Services, the University will take steps to terminate your registration, on the grounds that you have withdrawn from the course without giving the University formal notification.

Lack of attendance at classes, meetings and other teaching sessions

The University has a formal Student Attendance and Engagement Policy, which students are required to adhere to. Where a student's attendance falls below what is expected by the University the Academic Registrar (or a member of their team) may seek to suspend your status on these grounds. If you are studying as part of an apprenticeship you must provide evidence of your off the job engagement with you studies.

There are some circumstances, which may not be your fault, where you cannot attend the specified location of study for your course. (The most common examples of this are lack of an appropriate visa to study in the UK and lack of site security clearance for the Defence Academy site at Shrivenham.) In these circumstances, the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) will discuss the likelihood of those issues being resolved and the likely timescales. They may authorise a suspension of study, with or without your consent, based on your ability to attend classes or sessions in the foreseeable future. If it appears likely that you will not be able to attend on a long-term basis, the Academic Registrar (or the authorised member of their staff) may instead choose to terminate your registration on a permanent basis.

Risk of health and safety to yourself or to others

Cranfield University is committed fully to promoting a safe and harmonious environment.

The Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) may be required to act if they have received evidence to indicate that your current or potential future actions may represent a risk to the health and safety of yourself or others: this includes circumstances where you have committed an act of violence or damage or where it is suspected or confirmed you have a serious mental health illness

⁸ For apprentices, the Apprenticeship Office will also make contact with your employer and ask that they reach out to you on our behalf.

(as outlined in the Student Welfare Handbook). Wherever possible, they will discuss this possibility with you and explain the reasons and evidence for this decision. It must be noted, however, that health and safety concerns will take precedence over your personal wishes to continue your study.

Such circumstances may in addition lead to a formal disciplinary investigation into your behaviour.

Where such a suspension of study is authorised, the Academic Register will discuss with you, or otherwise outline, any conditions which may apply to you in order to return to study. This will be the result of a formal risk assessment of your potential return to study.

5.3 Suspensions authorised by the Head of Faculty

Suspensions of study authorised by a Head of Faculty are strictly limited to those associated with a formal disciplinary investigation. You should refer for more detail to the Student Handbook on Disciplinary Procedures.

Very rarely, suspensions may apply to you if it has been alleged that you have committed a serious offence, or if you are the alleged victim of an offence and it is seen as appropriate to remove you from the University so that the circumstances around the allegation are not exacerbated. Any suspension of study will normally be limited to either the duration of the disciplinary investigation or, if it is a penalty as a result of a disciplinary investigation, a period deemed appropriate by the Head of Faculty: if this is longer than twenty working days, there is a right of appeal (as outlined in the Student Handbook on Disciplinary Procedures).

5.4 Returning to study

When suspending your studies, a “return to study plan” must be agreed between you and your Course Director or Supervisor (and for apprentices, the Apprenticeship Office and your employer). This plan must be followed on your return to study. Depending on the circumstances leading to your suspension of study, this may include a health and safety risk assessment and a requirement to put in place adjustments (by the University or by you) to support such a return to study. The Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) retains the right to authorise a further suspension of study, or an early termination of registration, if such a plan cannot be devised and/or implemented in reasonable timescales.

A “return to study plan” may include:

- a list of courses or modules you should attend on your return;
- revised submission dates for any assessed work;
- preparatory reading or other work you should undertake before returning to the University;
- producing study or research plans for your Course Director or Supervisor;
- meeting with a Learning Support Officer to discuss your learning requirements;
- providing a medical report on your fitness to study, or having a meeting with a counsellor;
- for apprentices, a Tripartite Review.

In addition, all returning students should make contact with Education Services.

If you have entered the UK on a visa specifically to study, you will usually need a new visa and should request a Certificate of Acceptance of Studies from the Student Immigration team in Education Services.

6 Early termination of registration

There are a number of circumstances which may result in you having to leave the University before you have completed your study. These include:

- a) Where you choose to remove yourself from the course or programme owing to personal circumstances (voluntary withdrawal – see Section 6.1);
- b) Where the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) acts to remove you without your consent from the University permanently for a specific reason (see Section 6.2);
- c) Where, based on evidence provided to them, the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) has decided that you have failed to make satisfactory academic progress or failed to show due diligence in your study and decides to remove you from the course or programme (see Section 6.3).

In all cases, formal written notification of the decision will be sent to you by staff in Education Services to your contact address recorded in EVE.

If you have entered the UK on a visa specifically to study, you will be required leave the UK if your registration is terminated early.

6.1 Voluntary withdrawal

The University recognises that sometimes life can change to such a degree that it is necessary to consider giving up your study plans. There may be a number of potential causes, including:

- Illness, either physical or mental (of yourself, or of close family and friends);
- Financial concerns, such that you can't afford to maintain your living expenses while studying;
- Personal relationships intruding upon your ability to study;
- Other personal circumstances (e.g. a change to your living arrangements).

Wherever possible, the University will act to support you continuing with your study, and there are a number of support mechanisms available to all students, including the Counselling Service, Learning Support Officers, Student Wellbeing and Disability Support and the Cranfield Students' Association.

If you find yourself in a position where you believe your study is being affected, you should discuss this as soon as possible with your Course Director or Supervisor (and, for apprentices, your employer and the Apprenticeships Office) prior to submitting any request to withdraw from your studies. They will outline to you the various possibilities that might be open to you to accommodate your personal circumstances. These are commonly:

- Reviewing your patterns of study with you to see if they can be adjusted, including the possibility of transferring from full-time to part-time study (or extending your period of part-time study);
- Discussing with you taking time out from active study, either through a formal period of suspension of study (where you would normally remove yourself from the course for a short period of time), or through recognising that you will make little or no academic progress for a defined period of time (see Section 2);
- Recognising “exceptional circumstances” and allowing you to submit work for assessment late.

Although these options will be discussed with you, there are occasions where the circumstances are such that it is more appropriate to withdraw from the University on a permanent basis.

A request by the University for you to withdraw from the course or programme

Occasionally, it may be the case that the prospect of having to withdraw is raised with you by either your Course Director, your Supervisor, or by other staff concerned with your welfare. This is often in cases where it is recognised that you are at serious risk of failing the course, or reached a point in

the course where you will be unable to gain sufficient learning credits to pass the course. Your Course Director or Supervisor will outline to you where you are failing to make academic progress, and the likelihood of you failing the course or programme overall, and when they may take steps to recommend your removal from the course or programme.

In some circumstances, if you withdraw you may still be eligible to receive a lower award than that you intended to achieve (e.g. if you are studying for a taught Master's degree, passing some of the course may result in the award of a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate).

Where you are failing the course or programme, the course team or Supervisor will discuss this with you and set out your options, which may include suggesting that you withdraw. If you accept this, you will need to confirm in writing your formal decision to withdraw from the course or programme.

6.2 Early termination authorised by the Academic Registrar

In certain and very specific circumstances, the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) may authorise your early termination. This may be with or without your permission as set out in Senate Regulation 46.

Circumstances where your registration may be terminated by the Academic Registrar with your permission are:

- a) if you advise the Academic Registrar in writing that you wish to withdraw from your programme of study;
- b) if you have received confirmation of an academic distinction of the University relating to your registered programme of study, or confirmation of failure to achieve such an academic distinction of the University;

Circumstances where your registration may be terminated by the Academic Registrar without your permission are:

- c) if your registration was accepted only on a temporary basis, and the Academic Registrar has reasons to conclude that registration on this basis is no longer acceptable;
- d) where you are in debt to the University regarding your tuition fees, and have been warned that non-payment will result in your registration being terminated;
- e) where you are found to have provided false or incomplete information during the application and admission processes, such that the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) has concluded your admission to the University was obtained under false pretences, including instances where you are co-registered on more than one course or programme of the University without the permission of the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff);
- f) if the Academic Registrar has received evidence that supports the view that you are absent from the University (including circumstances where a third party has prevented you from attending the specified location(s) for the programme of study), or where you have taken steps to exclude yourself from your programme of study on a permanent basis without formal confirmation from you, providing that the University has taken reasonable steps to contact you through your registered contact details;
- g) if you are considered, by your nature or by your actions, to represent a clear risk to the health and safety of yourself, or of other students or members of the University;
- h) where a disciplinary procedure has ruled that you be permanently excluded from the University, providing that you have been allowed to exercise your right of appeal (see the Student Handbook on Disciplinary Procedures);
- i) if the Academic Registrar has received evidence that supports the view that you should be permanently excluded on the grounds of failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress or failure to show due diligence in your study;
- j) for apprentice students, where ESFA funding rules dictate that you are no longer eligible to participate in the Apprenticeship programme.

Some of these circumstances are expanded on below.

Tuition fee debt – 6.2.d

Where you have not paid your tuition fees by the expected date the Academic Registrar may take action to terminate your registration. Where your registration has been terminated due to non-payment of fees, any application for your registration to be reinstated will be considered only if payment in full of all tuition fees owing is received within twenty working days of the notification of your termination.

Co-registration of courses – 6.2.e

Where you are registered on a full-time basis, it is expected that the majority of your time will be spent on your study. Cranfield courses are intense and you are expected to work at a level of structured and private study of between 40-50 hours every week – about the same as a full-time employed job.

Where you are registered on a part-time basis, this is usually on the understanding that you are employed in other activities outside of the University.

In both cases therefore, it is deemed to be inappropriate for students to be registered concurrently on two different courses leading to different awards of the University at the same time, and this is considered to be a breach of your terms and conditions of registration.

There is a small subset of exceptions to this, approved by the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff). These are limited to:

- “PhD with Integrated Studies” – students apply for a single combined programme including a PhD registration with taught course modules leading to either a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate. This joint registration is recognised at the outset by an extended period of study.
- Studying short courses for learning credits: the University permits a student to register for an award (a “registered student”) alongside studying short CPD modules for learning credits (as an “associate student”).
- Staff candidates – staff candidates may be co-registered for a PhD as well as attending courses in preparation for the submission of a Professional Postgraduate Certificate.
- Students who have completed another Cranfield course but remain registered on that course whilst awaiting the results of that course. Such students would normally be registered for the new course on a temporary basis and ‘at risk’ should they fail or have to re-sit the earlier award.

Lack of contact with the Academic Registrar about your registration – 6.2.f

As part of your conditions of registration, you are expected to maintain communications with the University, especially where the University contacts you through the contact details you register in EVE, and through your @cranfield.ac.uk email address. You are also expected to keep your Course Director or Supervisor aware of any personal circumstances which may require an absence from the University.

Failure to do so will result in Education Services being informed of an unauthorised absence from the University (and for apprentices, share with your employer). The Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) will take steps to contact you to determine whether you have left the University on a temporary or permanent basis. If they are unable to reach you, or if you do not reply to their communications, the Academic Registrar (or the authorised member of their staff) will terminate your registration, on the grounds that you have withdrawn from the University without notice. You will normally be given between ten and twenty working days to respond to communications before such action is taken.

Lack of attendance at classes, meetings and other teaching sessions – 6.2.f

There are some circumstances, which may not be your fault, where you simply cannot attend the specified location of study for your course. (The most common examples of this are lack of an

appropriate visa to study in the UK and lack of site security clearance for the Defence Academy site at Shrivenham). In these circumstances, the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) will discuss the likelihood of those issues being resolved and the likely timescales. If it appears likely that you will not be able to attend on a long-term basis, they will terminate your registration on a permanent basis, whether or not you agree with this decision.

For apprentices, there is an Absence Request Form which can be used to give advance notice of absence with employer support and provide assurance the apprentice will complete study missed within working hours.

Risk of health and safety to yourself or to others – 6.2.g

Cranfield University is committed fully to promoting a safe and harmonious environment.

The Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) may be required to act if they have received evidence to indicate that your current or potential future actions, or your physical or mental health, may represent a risk to the health and safety of yourself or others: this includes circumstances where you have committed an act of violence or damage or where it is suspected or confirmed you have a serious physical or mental health illness (as outlined in the Student Welfare Handbook). Wherever possible, they will discuss this possibility with you and explain the reasons and evidence for this decision. It must be noted, however, that the health and safety concerns will take precedence over your personal wishes to continue your study.

Early termination due to a lack of academic progress – 6.2.i

Wherever possible, the University prefers students to withdraw from study, rather than take action to remove them from a course or programme without their consent. On the recommendation of relevant staff in the Faculty (e.g. Course Director, or members of a research student supervisory team), however, the University reserves the right to permanently exclude you if it receives sufficient evidence that you have failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress or failed to show due diligence in your study.

Before any termination of registration is acted upon by the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff), the relevant staff in the Faculty are required to demonstrate that you had been given adequate warning of the likelihood of your exclusion and that you have been given adequate opportunity to make amends and to present any exceptional circumstances to them.

If your Course Director or Supervisor wishes to remove you from the course or programme, you will be informed of that intention (usually through your SAS Lead). If you disagree with that recommendation, it is very important that you discuss this with your Course Director or Supervisor at this stage, outlining your reasons why. Failure to do so may undermine any right of appeal (see Section 8). You are strongly recommended to outline your concerns in writing to them, either before, during or after any such discussions.

The circumstances you may choose to discuss may include:

- whether you had been made aware that you were failing to make academic progress;
- whether you understood that your current results or progress had been insufficient at this stage in the course or programme;
- whether you had been given clear advice on how to improve on your academic progress.

At this (or any stage) you are able to make a complaint about the quality of your teaching, supervision or learning support if you feel this is appropriate. Please refer to the Student Handbook on Complaints if you wish to consider this option.

Even if you disagree with the recommendation to withdraw you from the course, the Course Director or Supervisor (or SAS Lead on their behalf) may make such a request to the Academic Registrar (or

a member of their staff), along with evidence to demonstrate your academic progress to date, and the reasons for coming to this decision.

On receipt of a request to terminate your registration early, the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) may choose to:

- a) uphold the request. (If this is the case, you will have twenty working days from the date of formal acknowledgement by the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) to appeal the decision – see Section 8);
- b) defer any decision on the basis of seeking further clarification, which may include making further enquiries to the person making the request, or seeking your views on the request; or
- c) reject the request of the Course Director or Supervisor, but may provide you with appropriate warnings or further opportunities to take forward your study.

7 Extensions

7.1 Research Students

Research students may require an extension to their registration or thesis submission date.

Students should submit their thesis by the end of their registration period. However, if further time is needed then a request for extension should be discussed with their supervisor and/or SAS Lead. An extension is not an automatic right, students will have to provide sufficient reasoning as to why an extension is needed and provide evidence to support this which meets the University's definition of exceptional circumstances (see section 10 of the Research Students' Handbook).

There are two types of extensions that can be requested:

1. Extension to Registration – This extension is for those who have further research work other than just writing up to complete, e.g. field work, experimental analysis. This type of extension does incur a fee (pro-rata based on your tuition fee and length of requested extension).
2. Extension to Thesis Submission (Writing-up period) – This extension is for those who have completed their research and are only writing up. There is no requirement for students to be present on site during such an extension.

Please note that retrospective requests for changes to registration (i.e. after the current registration end date) may not be accepted.

Where a student has an extension to thesis submission and subsequently needs to conduct research or continued conducting research beyond their registration end date, they must apply for an extension to registration to cover the period from their original registration end date to the conclusion of the further research.

Where an extension to the thesis submission date is required (of no more than 3 months and occurring immediately after the end date of registration)⁹, the student should seek the permission of the Supervisor(s) for this. The Supervisor(s) should confirm agreement in writing to the student (and inform Registry), prior to the submission date (or otherwise discuss other alternatives, including an extension to registration). If the date of submission is longer than three months after the end date of registration, the Supervisor(s) should seek formal permission using the Extension to Thesis Submission process through the Student Casework Team.

7.2 Taught Students

Taught Assessments

Extensions to the submission date of individual pieces of work, including theses are covered in full in the Senate Handbooks on Assessment Rules (Postgraduate Taught Courses) and on Undergraduate Awards.

Requests for extensions to the submission deadline of pieces of assessment (other than theses) must be supported by the presentation of exceptional circumstances which meet the University's definition of exceptional circumstances (see section 12 of the Assessment Rules Handbook, section 20 of the Undergraduate Awards Handbook), and requested through the relevant Exceptional Circumstances form (available on the intranet or through your SAS Lead).

⁹ Such extensions are extensions to submission date (i.e. an extension to the writing-up period) not to a student's registration period.

Apprentices should ensure that they are fully aware of any implications of any extension request on their apprenticeship, and discuss these with their SAS Lead and/or the Apprenticeship Office.

Postgraduate Theses

Requests for extensions to the submission thesis date must be supported by the presentation of exceptional circumstances which meet the University's definition of exceptional circumstances (see section 12 of the Assessment Rules Handbook). Students must be within their registration period to undertake any research and submit their thesis or other assessments.

Course Directors may approve requests to extend the deadline for thesis submission, provided that:

- The extension is for **two weeks or less and occurs immediately after your original submission date**
- The request is supported by your supervisor
- The request was submitted to your supervisor **two weeks, or more, prior to your submission date**, using the correct Exceptional Circumstances form
- The grounds for the request meet the University's definition of exceptional circumstances as detailed in section 12 of the Assessment Rules Handbook. Evidence must be provided to support any exceptional circumstances requests.

The Student Casework Team will consider extension requests in all other circumstances, namely:

- The extension is for more than two weeks, and / or
- The request was submitted to your supervisor less than two weeks prior to your original submission date

In all cases, you must provide the rationale for the request, with supporting evidence.

8 Appealing against a decision about a change to your registration

This Section describes the University's approved procedures for the management of appeals against changes to your registration made without your consent, and rejections of a request from you to change your registration details. It supplements Regulation 47 of the University's regulations and outlines the details of the procedures that you may follow to raise an appeal.

You are advised to read this Section of the Handbook carefully and thoroughly, so that you understand how the appeal process will be undertaken.

Further advice and support within the University is available from:

- staff in Education Services (including the Academic Registrar and the Assistant Registrars);
- staff in Student Wellbeing and Disability Support;
- staff and students in the Cranfield Students' Association (CSA).

Please note that the University will process any changes to registration with immediate effect, with the exception of early termination of registration related to academic progress (as outlined in Section 6.3), which is put in force twenty working days after confirmation of the decision, specifically to allow consideration of any appeal.

For apprentices, your employer would usually be involved in any appeal against a registration change decision.

Extensions to Thesis Submission

Appeals against decisions related to extensions to thesis submission dates should follow the exceptional circumstances appeals process in the relevant Senate Handbook.

- Postgraduate taught students – Section 14.2 of the Assessment Rules for Postgraduate Taught Courses Handbook
- Research students – Section 10.4 of the Research Student's Handbook

8.1 Broad outline of the stages of an investigation

All investigations are managed in the following way:

STAGE 1 <i>informal investigation</i> - you submit an appeal to the Academic Registrar, who refers the appeal to the person who originally made the decision, taking into consideration any new information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- you are required to demonstrate how your appeal meets the published grounds for appeal- this Stage is intended to highlight and resolve quickly any genuine oversight or mistakes that may have been made- outcomes may be dismissal of the appeal, or the appeal is upheld, with a new decision being made



You have the right to appeal any decision made at Stage 1 under certain circumstances – see Stage 2.

STAGE 2 <i>formal investigation</i> - detailed enquiries and a full and documented investigation is undertaken by staff not involved in the initial decision
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- you will normally be expected to comment on the Stage 1 outcome- outcomes may be dismissal of the appeal, or the appeal is upheld, with a new decision being made



You have the right to request a review of any decision made at Stage 2 under certain circumstances – see Stage 3.

STAGE 3 <i>review</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the Academic Registrar can either dismiss your review (if it is not appropriate) or will appoint one or more independent people to review how the Stage 2 investigation was conducted- your review will either be dismissed by them, or the matter referred back to the Academic Registrar with a recommendation to come to a new decision



If at this stage you believe you have been treated unfairly, you can complain to a body outside of the University

Please note that where the Academic Registrar has been directly involved in the original decision, they will allocate the management of the case to another officer of the University.

8.2 Your rights

The following rights apply to all internal stages of an investigation (i.e. Stages 1, 2 and 3).

Transparency

During the course of any investigation, you will be informed and kept up to date of:

- the names of the people who have been appointed to investigate the appeal;
- the projected timescales for the completion of any investigation and, if there are unexpected delays or deferrals, any revised timescales;
- all evidence received or collected by the investigators;
- the final decision(s) of the investigators, in the form of a written report for a Stage 2 or Stage 3 investigation.

You will also be entitled to receive on request copies of any evidence or key documents that influence the final decision of the investigators, and the right to rebut or dispute the honesty or accuracy of that evidence.

Right to a fair hearing

The University takes any investigation very seriously and is committed to ensuring that it appoints investigators who are not prejudiced or biased against any person involved in the investigation.

If you believe, however, that an appointed investigator may be aware of your personal or educational circumstances, to the extent where they may have made pre-informed decisions about the case, or has been substantially involved in supporting you throughout your study at any time, you may raise this with the Academic Registrar (or if the investigator is the Academic Registrar, with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education or Research). They will then consider whether those circumstances represent a “conflict of interest” in them serving as an investigator and will either appoint a different investigator(s) or explain to you why this is not appropriate or necessary.

Supporting the investigation

You are required to meet reasonable requests of the investigators, including attending informal meetings with them and/or with others. You have the right to refuse to meet the investigators or provide evidence, but on the understanding that any right to appeal (Stage 3) against the final decision on the grounds of incomplete evidence may then be deemed invalid by the Academic Registrar.

You have the right to be accompanied in any meeting you may have by any person you choose. This person shall be referred to as your “friend” in any meeting or formal report. If you wish to bring a friend to a meeting, you are required to notify the investigators in advance. Your friend is entitled to discuss any matter with you during the course of the meeting (including requesting a private discussion) but is not entitled to represent you or your views on your behalf.

During the course of any investigation, you have the right to ask for a reasonable deferral of any meeting with the investigator, or any deadline of request for information, but only on the grounds that you need further time to prepare for the requested meeting or information. The investigators reserve the right to continue their investigations in the meantime, and to reach a decision if they deem your deferrals to be unreasonable.

Continuation of study and registration

In cases where a student has not made appropriate academic progress (Section 4.3), any action to terminate their registration will be halted while any appeal at Stages 1 to 3 is being investigated. Your status with the University will be one of a registered student in a period of suspension of study.

You will not therefore be permitted to continue with the course but, in the event of your appeal being upheld, will not be prejudiced in any return to study thereafter.

In all other cases, the changes to registration will remain in effect.

8.3 Stage 1 – Informal investigation

You must register an intention to appeal against any decision concerning your registration, including termination of your registration or rejection of a change of registration request within twenty working days of the notification being sent to the addresses registered by you in EVE. If you register an appeal, a termination of registration will be deferred pending the outcome of any Stage 1, 2 or 3 investigation.

There are limited grounds for appeal against a decision to change your registration, and in any appeal submission you will be asked to state clearly which of the following grounds apply:

- A. that the evidence considered by the person who recommended or made the decision was inaccurate or incomplete, to the extent where the changes to registration would have been different;
- B. that there were administrative errors in the Academic Registrar's processes, to the extent where the changes to registration would have been different;
- C. that there was prejudice or bias against the candidate by the person who recommended or made the decision.

You will also be asked to provide evidence to support those grounds.

Except in cases which cite grounds C, a Stage 1 investigation is limited to the person who made the original decision undertaking an informal review of that decision, to verify to themselves that the decision was made in full knowledge of the facts. This may either be a member of staff in Education Services or, in cases where a request has been rejected by your Course Director or Supervisor, by that person.

Where you wish to use grounds C above, the appeal will automatically proceed to Stage 2, where the investigation will be conducted by people independent of the initial decision.

Please note that the Academic Registrar may summarily dismiss an appeal if:

- (a) they do not believe that the student has provided sufficient evidence to merit an Investigation; or
- (b) it is not based on one of the permitted grounds of review; or
- (c) it was submitted out of time.

The outcomes of a Stage 1 investigation are either to:

- dismiss your appeal, noting that the original decision was the correct one and/or you have not provided appropriate supporting evidence to support the grounds on which the appeal was submitted; or to
- uphold your appeal in the light of the new evidence, with a different decision being made and your registration details being changed by the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff).

If you believe that the result of any informal investigation (Stage 1) has been unfair, then you may appeal in writing to the Academic Registrar (through appeals@cranfield.ac.uk). A request for an appeal will only be accepted if it is made within twenty working days of the notification of the Stage 1 investigation decision. Either the Academic Registrar or a member of their staff will contact you to discuss your circumstances and advise you on possible next steps.

8.4 Stage 2 – Formal investigation

If you believe that the result of any informal investigation (Stage 1) has been unfair, then you may appeal in writing to the Academic Registrar (through appeals@cranfield.ac.uk). A request for a Stage 2 appeal will only be accepted if it is made within twenty working days of the notification of the Stage 1 investigation decision. Either the Academic Registrar or a member of their staff will contact you to discuss your circumstances and advise you on possible next steps.

The grounds for appeal are the same as those outlined in Section 8.3. Your appeal at Stage 2, however, will be investigated by people not involved in the initial decision.

In order to submit a Stage 2 appeal you need to include:

- a) a re-statement of the grounds under which you are appealing;
- b) a commentary or statement on the Stage 1 report/statement provided to you by the Academic Registrar, including any inaccuracies you believe are in it.

You may also want to include additional evidence (over and above what you provided at Stage 1). You are entitled to do this, but any additional evidence must be accompanied by a statement to explain why this was not presented at Stage 1. (The most common reason for this is that you were not aware it was relevant or important to the examiners.)

Please note that the Academic Registrar may dismiss summarily your appeal if:

- (a) they do not believe that you have provided sufficient evidence to support your stated grounds of appeal, or you have not provided a commentary on the Stage 1 statement; or
- (b) it no longer conforms to the permitted grounds of appeal; or
- (c) it was submitted out of time.

They can only do this after consulting either the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) or Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the circumstances, and only with their agreement. The Academic Registrar will confirm with you in writing if your appeal is dismissed.

If the appeal is accepted, the Academic Registrar will then, within ten working days of this receipt, transmit your appeal to the relevant person to investigate. The Academic Registrar will usually only appoint one person to undertake the Stage 2 investigation, but may appoint more than one person if the case is particularly complex.

If you have any concerns that an appointed investigator is too familiar with your case, please raise this as soon as possible with the Academic Registrar, who will consider whether an alternative investigator should be appointed.

The assigned investigator(s) will review the Stage 1 investigation and your additional information/evidence. They will usually arrange to discuss your appeal with you, either in a face-to-face interview, or over the telephone. The purpose of the interview is to clarify your concerns and ensure that all elements have been understood by them as part of the investigation. You may bring a friend to this meeting and make notes of your own, and you may also ask to see the notes made by the investigators, to check for accuracy.

The investigator(s) will normally consider your appeal within twenty working days and provide a full report to the Academic Registrar. The report will include a decision to either dismiss your appeal (thereby confirming that they still believe the original decision and the Stage 1 outcome will be upheld), or otherwise uphold your appeal (either in full or in part) and refer the matter back to the Academic Registrar, with or without a recommendation for a new or alternative decision.

The full report of the Stage 2 investigation will be provided to you by the Academic Registrar (and will be considered to be the end of the Stage 2 procedure).

If you believe that the result of the formal investigation (Stage 2) has been unfair or inappropriate, then you may appeal in writing to the Academic Registrar (preferably through appeals@cranfield.ac.uk). A request for an appeal will only be accepted if it is made within twenty working days of the notification of the Stage 2 investigation decision. Either the Academic Registrar, or a member of their staff, will contact you to discuss your circumstances and advise you on possible next steps. If, after the twenty working days has elapsed, no request for a review has been received you will be sent a completion of procedures letter by the Student Casework Team.

8.5 Stage 3 – Review

The University takes allegations and their investigations extremely seriously, and acts in an appropriate manner to ensure that fairness for all parties is maintained throughout. It will likely assert that decisions arising from an investigation have been the result of a fair and thorough investigation, and are based on evidence provided by the parties concerned.

You have the right to request to the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) a review of any decision arising from an investigation, but only under specific circumstances. These are limited to:

- A. that the evidence provided to the assigned investigator(s), was incomplete or inaccurate, to the extent where it is reasonable to conclude that the outcome may have been substantially different;
- B. that the assigned investigator(s) had summarily dismissed significant pieces of evidence in coming to their decision;
- C. that the assigned investigators were prejudiced or biased against you, including any undisclosed conflicts of interest.

You may not request a review if you do not like the outcome, or if you believe the investigators have not understood the evidence from your perspective. (You retain, however, the right to complain about the University to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education – see Section 8.6 – External Complaint).

Any request must:

- (a) be submitted in writing to the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) (through appeals@cranfield.ac.uk) within twenty working days of the notification of the Stage 2 investigation decision;
- (b) state clearly which of the grounds A, B and/or C above are relevant to the request;
- (c) provide a clear statement of the foundation for the request, and evidence to support this statement;
- (d) outline a preferred outcome or solution for any review investigator to consider.

Please note that the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) may dismiss summarily your request if:

- (a) they do not believe that you have provided sufficient evidence to support your stated grounds of review; or
- (b) it does not conform to the permitted grounds for a review; or
- (c) it is submitted out of time.

They can only do this after consulting the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) or Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) of the circumstances, and only with their agreement. The Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) will confirm with you in writing if your review request is dismissed.

If your request is accepted, the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) will confirm this to you. They will then, within ten working days of this receipt, appoint two senior members of the

University to investigate your review, usually from a Faculty other than the one in which you are registered or from a Professional Service Unit. The investigators will contact you to confirm they have been appointed and outline to you the timescales they believe will be needed to review your case and come to a decision.

The investigators shall not review the matter themselves, but instead focus on the process of the previous investigation, in line with the stated grounds of appeal. On completion of their investigation into your case, you will be provided with a report, including a decision and the reasons for it, as well as a “a completion of procedures letter”. The investigators may decide:

- (a) to dismiss your review; or
- (b) to fully or partially uphold your review, and refer the matter back to the Academic Registrar, with a recommendation of a new decision.

8.6 External complaint

At the completion of Stage 3, the University will consider any decision it has made to be final and complete, with no further right of appeal. This is equally true if any appeal or review you have made is dismissed summarily by the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff), or if you have no grounds for review.

If you, however, remain dissatisfied with the outcome or with how the University has managed the case and its subsequent investigations, you have the right to submit a complaint against the University to the external regulator for the UK higher education sector, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

More information about the OIA can be found at www.oiahe.org.uk

In order for you to use the OIA, the University must agree that you have exhausted the internal procedures. This is managed by the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) issuing a “completion of procedures letter” to you. A “completion of procedures letter” is provided to you on request at the conclusion of any Stage 3 review (whether it is not accepted, summarily dismissed or fully investigated).

You may also request from the Academic Registrar (or a member of their staff) a “completion of procedures letter” at any point in the process if you do not believe the University is capable of following its own procedures fairly, and you do not wish to engage further with the University on this matter.

Please note that the OIA will not consider any complaint from you unless a “completion of procedures letter” has been provided to you. Any complaint to the OIA must be registered within twelve months of the University issuing a “completion of procedures letter”.

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