

University Withdrawal Procedures

This is the University procedure and guidance for staff and students on withdrawal procedures, relevant dates, and academic and financial implications. Unless otherwise specifically stated, each section of the procedure applies to all university students on taught courses (undergraduate and postgraduate).

What is a withdrawal?

Permanent Withdrawal

A permanent withdrawal is when a student chooses to leave their programme, and not return or transfer to another programme. When a student has withdrawn, they will no longer be considered a student and if they decide they would like to study at the university again, they will need to complete the admissions process again.

Suspension

A suspension is when a student chooses to take a specific time out from their studies, student will be returning, but currently is not an active student. Suspension means that a student pauses **all** of their studies. Students cannot continue with some modules / units and not others.

Transfer

A transfer is when a student is moving:

- a) Between programmes of study within the institution (transfers to another HEI or to FE level of study are considered a withdrawal),
- b) Between academic partners (normally an AP move would be between semesters or academic sessions)
- c) Changing mode of attendance (could be either full time to part time or the reverse, this would normally be between semesters or academic sessions)

Drop/add of modules or units

Drop/add is when a student changes their module/unit choice(s) after the semester has begun.

Who can initiate a withdrawal?

Students, for whatever reason, can also **initiate** a withdrawal however they **cannot** complete a withdrawal form. They should in the first instance contact their PAT and can do so if they wish, by completing the section '*I wish to withdraw/suspend/transfer*' on UHI Records. An email will be sent to their PAT so they can discuss circumstances and options and for the PAT to process the withdrawal form if appropriate. **Withdrawal forms can only be completed by a member of staff** and processed by SRO who update records and inform SAAS/SLC if applicable.

The current university academic regulations state, "It is the responsibility of students to attend scheduled classes and prescribed activities for the modules/units on which they are enrolled. Where a student fails to engage with their studies as required (in line with the student withdrawal procedure or as otherwise set out in specific module descriptor / programme regulations) the university-led withdrawal process shall be initiated."

Where a student has failed to engage as required with their studies for a period of three weeks (or as otherwise set out in specific module/programme handbooks), a member of staff (usually the relevant PAT or programme leader) should complete the withdrawal/suspension and transfer form.

International students

Students requiring a student visa must be aware that withdrawal (permanent or temporary) may affect their immigration status. The university is legally bound to report withdrawing (permanent or

temporary) Tier 4 students to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). Students' student visas could be cut short. International students must return to their home country during a suspension. When they want to resume their course, they will have to apply for a new visa.

Staff are therefore asked to pay particular attention to the obligations on the university with respect to international students sponsored under the UKVI processes. Where a sponsored student fails to meet the programme requirements in terms of attendance or requests to withdraw/is deemed to have withdrawn from study, this must be managed and reported to EO admissions within 5 days (admissions@uhi.ac.uk), in accordance with the monitoring requirements set out by the university.

When can a withdrawal take place?

Any student who commences academic study with the University will be deemed as having withdrawn. Only students who have not commenced academic study will be deemed as 'did not start' (DNS).

Until the end of Week 10 of each semester, permanent withdrawal and suspension is permitted from all taught programmes, undergraduate and postgraduate. Student records will be coded as appropriate. Suspensions will have an intended return date recorded.

After the end of Week 10 of each semester, suspensions will **not** be processed for that Semester. Students who are unable to complete the semester may submit a mitigating circumstances claim in relation to outstanding assessments, and/or may apply for suspension for the subsequent semester/semesters.

Date of suspension/withdrawal

Where a student withdraws, whether permanent or temporarily, the last date of attendance to be recorded should be one of the following:

- the last day of academic activity or where this is unknown;
- the date of the 1st communication from UHI requesting an explanation of absence (in the case of a University initiated withdrawal); or
- the last day of the semester (where a student withdraws at the end of a given semester)

Results for degree module registrations after withdrawal

Degree students who suspend their studies are not resulted on any modules, as it is expected that upon their return to active status they will commence study on modules at the point as they left.

Degree students (undergraduate and postgraduate) who permanently withdraw will have marks entered for the modules they were taking in that semester, including SC modules. Students will be marked as 0 – W if they withdraw up to and including week 5 (week 10 for SC / year long modules). After week 5 (10 for SC modules), they will be marked as having failed (0 - F) the modules on which they were registered. Results of 0 - F will be confirmed at the relevant tier one exam board.

Should a withdrawn undergraduate degree student choose to return to study any module(s) they failed previously, through poor achievement or late withdrawal, they will have their result capped at 40 and be on attempt 2 if they withdrew before attempting a re-sit. If they withdrew from the module(s) at attempt 2 (after week 5 (or 10 for SC modules) and were resulted as 0 – F), they will have failed that module and should they wish to undertake it may do so as a repeat module.

Postgraduate taught students who choose to return to study any module(s) they failed previously, through poor achievement or late withdrawal, will have their result capped at 50. If they withdrew at attempt 2, they will have failed that module.

Resulting and SQA registrations after withdrawal

Students who have permanently withdrawn from an SQA programme should be resulted appropriately and withdrawn from the group award. This will ensure they gain a transcript of units taken. This is the responsibility of the relevant HAP.

SQA students temporarily withdrawing are not resulted on any units, as it is expected that upon their return to active status they will take the units they were on when they left off. When a student on an SQA programme suspends study, the relevant academic partner should take consideration of their expected return to study date and ensure SQA completion dates are adjusted accordingly

SQA students who permanently withdraw after the end of Week 1 will have results entered for any units they had started by the date of withdrawal. Students will be marked as Withdrawn if they withdraw in Weeks 2 - 5. After Week 5, they will be marked as Fail for the units they had started, including SC units. Results of Fail will be confirmed at the relevant Progression board.

Students who wish to drop a unit after the end of Week 2, but remain a student, will have marks entered for the unit(s) they drop. They will be marked as withdrawn they drop the unit(s) before the end of Week 5. After Week 5, they will be marked as Fail in the unit(s) they dropped.

Should a withdrawn HNC/HND student choose to return to study any unit(s) they failed previously, through poor achievement or late withdrawal, the unit(s) will have to be re-registered with SQA, with a new completion date.

Suspension time limits

UHI Student Records Office will ask students approaching the end of a period of suspension to confirm their intentions regarding return to study. Their options are:

- to re-enter their original programme (if still available) at an appropriate point;
- to re-engage with study at UHI but negotiate entry to an alternative programme of study;
- to request a further period of suspension;
- to request permanent withdrawal.

If a student does not respond to confirm their intention to return to study, they will be permanently withdrawn by the Student Record Office and informed of the change in their status.

Suspension is normally for a minimum of one full semester and a maximum of two semesters. Students must return to study at the beginning of a semester. A student could, exceptionally, apply for a third semester of suspension, which will have to be approved by the relevant programme leader and PAT. The maximum time allowed for approved suspension of study is four successive semesters. Time spent on suspension does **not** count towards the maximum period of registration to complete programmes as laid out in the university regulations.

Access to university resources during suspension

Students who have suspended do not have access to UHI email, VLE, library, or any other university resources. They cannot sit examinations or submit any other assessments during the suspension period.

When a student requests suspension, their password for all UHI resources is changed automatically 30 days after their SITS status is changed to "S" or "SC". Students are advised to go into their UHI email account and forward it to an alternative email before their access is stopped. This allows staff to continue to use the student's UHI email address and ensures the students do not miss any UHI emails during their suspension period.

Financial implications

All changes in status and registration load have potential financial implications. As much as possible, the university strives to ensure students are not disadvantaged when they withdraw. However, all guidelines from the Scottish Funding Council and SAAS/SLC must be adhered to, and students who have not taken responsibility for their academic career may well find themselves unnecessarily financially penalised.

Scottish/EU students

If the Students Award Agency Scotland (SAAS) funds a student's studies, they are entitled to a maintenance loan (if eligible) for their expenses based on the time they were considered an attending student. This is the length of time from the start date of the academic year until the date of permanent or suspension from the university. For both permanent and suspensions after 01 December, SAAS will also pay the university for full time students' tuition fees or part time fees grants. These payments are not returned to SAAS if a student leaves after the deadline, will count as a year of funding for the student, and may have implications for additional funding in later study.

RUK students

If the Student Loans Company (SLC) funds the student, the amount of fees to be paid depends on when the date of withdrawal for both permanent and suspensions. Details of this can be found in the university's fee policy.

International or self-funding students

The amount of potential tuition fees refunds is detailed in the university fee's policy. This can be found at <https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/policies/>

Dropping or adding degree modules

Drop/add is when a student changes their module choice(s) after the semester has begun – students cannot withdraw or temporarily withdraw from individual units/modules. They must drop them, to the time scales as listed below.

Degree module registrations

Degree students normally select their modules before the start of the academic session. Students may change their selection after the semester has begun, as long as this is done before the end of week 2. Any late additions to modules in week 3 are subject to PAT approval. Students may have access to the VLE and appear on other learning platforms without being fully registered in the student records system (SITS). It is the student's responsibility to ensure they are properly registered only on those modules that they wish to take.

Students are not normally allowed to add a new module after the end of week 2 each semester. Exceptionally, they can add a module in week 3 with permission from the module leader and relevant faculty dean. From week 3 onwards, module selection is fixed and students are expected to continue with their selected modules.

Late drop results

Students who wish to drop a module after the of the allowed drop/add period (week 2 or 3 with approval), but remain a student, will have marks entered for the module(s) they drop. They will be marked as 0 – W if they drop the module(s) before the end of week 5. After week 5, they will be marked as fail (0 - F) in the module(s) they dropped.

Procedure to drop/add

Degree students who wish to change their module choices should discuss their situation with their PAT, and then contact the Study Selections team, using the UHI Service Desk, detailing which

modules they wish to add and/or drop. All requests will be confirmed with the PAT before any changes are made.

Listed below are web links to additional information

University policies (including fees policy) <https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/policies/>

Academic regulations <https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/regulations/>

UHI Records <https://www.studentjourney.uhi.ac.uk>