# Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies

## Purpose of Procedure

The Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies applies to circumstances where a student voluntarily wishes to leave the University permanently, and also circumstances where a student is required to leave the University permanently.

## Scope: Mandatory Procedure

The procedure applies to all students who are withdrawn or excluded from the University and to University staff managing this procedure.

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## Document control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Curriculum and Student Progression Committee on behalf of Senatus</td>
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| Equality impact assessment: 13.11.14 | Amendments: 29.10.12, 30.06.14, 20.11.14, 09.01.15, 16.02.15, 18.08.16 | Next Review: 2017/2018 |

| Approving authority | Curriculum and Student Progression Committee on behalf of Senatus |
| Consultation undertaken | Curriculum and Student Progression Committee |
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| Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations | Assessment regulations, principles and guidelines  
[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment) |
| UK Quality Code | n/a |
| Procedures superseded by this procedure | Revises the University’s Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies (April 2011) |
| Alternative format | If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138. |
| Keywords | Withdrawal, exclusion, permanent withdrawal, voluntary withdrawal |
1. This document is the University’s Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies. It provides a comprehensive and clear statement of the responsibilities of both the University and students.

2. In particular, the procedure has been updated to:

   (i) take into account the latest requirements of UK immigration legislation;

   (ii) clearly state the obligations on both the University and its students within the process;

   (iii) provide clear guidance on how students are withdrawn on health grounds;

   (iv) provide clear guidance on the process to be followed when a student has failed to satisfy the criteria for progression.

3. The following terminology is used:

   (i) withdrawal from studies - this is a voluntary decision by the student.

   (ii) exclusion from studies - this is where a student is required to leave the University. This may be for academic or other reasons (see 9-29 below).

4. This procedure makes reference to the College and to the Head of College. It is for Colleges and their Heads to determine local arrangements for the delegation of his/her authority.

5. There are separate procedures for interruption of studies (which is a temporary suspension of studies and hence a different process from permanent withdrawal or exclusion).

**Withdrawal from studies**

6. Any student may withdraw permanently from the University at any point in the year. However, a student may not voluntarily withdraw after a Head of College (or delegated authorising officer) has decided to exclude the student.

7. Before applying to withdraw, the student is strongly advised to consult beforehand his/her Personal Tutor/ Programme Director/ Supervisor in order to consider the implications of withdrawal. These include matters such as: access to the University’s facilities; financial issues (scholarships, fees, other University debts, external financial issues relating to the Student Loans Company/Student Awards Agency for Scotland etc.); Tier 4 visas; exit awards; readmission.

8. Students wishing to withdraw must signal their intention by completing a standard University form (Withdrawal Form – Student) available at www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/student-forms
Exclusion from studies

Exclusion for unsatisfactory academic progress

9. The criteria for progression on a programme of study can depend on the nature of the programme and/or year of study. These will be contained in the University’s assessment and degree regulations (see the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study at http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/ and there may be additional information within College or School guidance, or in course and programme handbooks. This policy should be read in conjunction with those documents.

10. The Taught Assessment Regulation on ‘Publication of Results’ sets out responsibilities for ensuring that, where a student has failed their programme of study at the final stage, the student is informed in a timely and personal manner. If appropriate, an offer of a private consultation may be made. - http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf

11. Colleges should publicise procedures for considering the cases of students who have not met the criteria for progression. The Head of College (or delegated authorising officer) will normally invite for interview any student who has not met the criteria for progression. The interview provides an opportunity for the student to make a case for continuation.

12. The interview may be carried out electronically (e.g. by video, web-camera, etc.). The outcome of that interview will be one of the following:

   (i) The student is permitted to progress to the next year of study;
   (ii) The student cannot progress to the next year of study on his/her current programme but is permitted to continue his/her studies under other options permitted in the University regulations;
   (iii) The student may voluntarily withdraw permanently from studies. This option will not be available if the student has already been notified in writing of exclusion from studies;
   (iv) The student may be excluded from the University. In such cases, the student’s eligibility for a Certificate, Diploma, Ordinary Degree or other exit qualification will be explored.

13. Students should recognise that the full range of options does not apply in every case, as it may depend on the year and nature of the programme and the status of the student. Exclusion from studies will only be invoked after other available options have been considered and may only be authorised by the Head of College (or delegated authorising officer).

14. The Head of College (or delegated authorising officer) will inform the student in writing (via the student’s university email account) of the decision as soon as possible after the interview. The communication should set out clearly the decision reached and any terms attached.
15. A copy of the communication will be sent to the Personal Tutor/Programme Director/Supervisor. The College / School must advise Student Systems of any changes to the student’s programme, mode of study or exclusion via the online student programme change form in EUCLID.

16. For students on PhD, MPhil, Masters by Research or professional doctorates, see guidance on student progress contained within the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students.

Exclusion for non-attendance

17. Students are liable for exclusion if they do not attend the University at key points during the academic session. The decision and procedure for exclusion follows that outlined in the previous section ‘Exclusion for unsatisfactory academic progress’.

18. Students are required to undergo assessments, attend scheduled meetings with their Personal Tutor/Programme Director/Supervisor, and participate in other events depending on their programme of study. Students will be informed of these events by the School.

Students holding Tier 4 visas:

19. Under the terms of its sponsorship of international students on Tier 4 visas, the University has additional statutory obligations to monitor and report attendance to the Home Office at key points during the session, including census points arranged by Student Administration.

20. Where the student is excluded or withdraws from the University for whatever reason, the Compliance Manager (Student Administration) will report the student and end the sponsorship of their visa.

21. The Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy sets out the University’s responsibilities as a sponsor of international students within the UK immigration system which includes the requirement to evidence Tier 4 student attendance and engagement. The policy ensures that the University has relevant guidance for staff and mitigates risk related to the University’s sponsor licence by ensuring that we have robust student attendance and engagement procedures in place. - http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/tier_4_student_engagement_and_attendance_policy_august_2015_approved.pdf

Exclusion for non-matriculation

New students:

22. Matriculation consists of three components: (i) registration; (ii) confirmation of attendance; (iii) full admission (i.e. adhering to other related admissions requirements).
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In order to matriculate, a new student must:

(i) within two weeks of his/her start date, be "registered" or have "attendance confirmed";

(ii) within five weeks of his/her start date, have completed both of these matriculation activities.

Any student failing to meet these requirements will be deemed not to have commenced his/her studies, and will be excluded from the University and have his/her record cancelled.

A new student will not be fully matriculated until he/she provides the appropriate documentation at the start of his/her studies, including immigration documentation where required.

Continuing students:

If a continuing student fails to have his/her attendance confirmed within five weeks of the anniversary of his/her start date he/she is deemed not to have commenced his/her studies and is excluded and his/her record cancelled.

Further details on matriculation are available from Student Systems:

www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/student/matriculation/index.htm

Exclusion for lapse of time

A student who is past the maximum end-date of his/her studies will be excluded by the University. Before such an exclusion is enforced, the University will seek to make contact with the student to inform them of the exclusion timetable.

Research postgraduate students must submit their thesis within 12 months of their prescribed period of study (excluding any periods of interruption of studies). Students who fail to submit a thesis by the deadline specified by the regulations will be excluded.

A research postgraduate who has been examined but not carried out the required corrections or re-submission within one month of the maximum timescale stipulated by the relevant exam committee will be excluded.

Exclusion for disciplinary offence

In extreme cases the University’s Student Discipline Committee may impose permanent exclusion of a student from the University. The Code of Student Conduct sets out expectations for student behaviour and the procedures the University uses to resolve matters when students’ behaviour is unacceptable.
Exclusion for debt

32. Exclusion can also result from non-payment of any debt to the University as detailed in the Policy on Collection of Student Fees and Related Charges.

Appeals

33. All individuals who have been excluded, irrespective of the reason for exclusion, may lodge an appeal against the exclusion through the normal University appeal procedure. The individual should be given details of the grounds on which an appeal against a decision may be lodged and specifically be informed that the College is regarded as the judge of the academic grounds for exclusion. Appeals should be sent directly to Academic Services at the email address academic.appeals@ed.ac.uk.

34. Details of the academic appeal procedure can be found at:

For undergraduate/postgraduate taught students:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/students/undergraduate/academic-appeals

For postgraduate research students
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/students/postgraduate-research/academic-appeals

For individuals who are excluded for disciplinary reasons, details of the discipline procedures, including the appeal procedures can be found at:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline

Readmission

35. After withdrawal or exclusion an individual is no longer a student of the University and loses student status and access to University facilities. After withdrawal or exclusion, a former student wishing to be considered for return to study at the University must go through the normal application procedures.

35. A former PhD student who has been excluded through lapse of time is entitled to ask the College to reinstate his/her registration at a later date to permit examination of a completed thesis. A decision as to whether or not a candidate should be reinstated will be taken by the College, and factors such as the passage of time and its implications for the topic of study will be taken into account. Approval of such a reinstatement is exceptional and attracts a fee.

16 February 2015
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