Laigh Year Regulations

Purpose of Policy
The document sets out the regulations under which student sabbatical officers may be granted a Laigh Year.

Overview
The Laigh Year Regulations are University Regulations which allow student sabbatical officers in the Edinburgh University Students’ Association and the Edinburgh University Sports Union to matriculate as students of the University without (during the academic year concerned) having to fulfil the normal academic requirement of their programme of study.

Scope: Mandatory Policy
The regulations apply to all students intending to apply for a Laigh Year.

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Laigh Year Regulations

1. **Definition and Conditions**

1.1 The Laws of the Students' Association and of the Sports Union require that all office-bearers must be matriculated students throughout their year of office. The Senatus Academicus has agreed that certain of these office-bearers may be granted Laigh Years, i.e. the office-bearer may matriculate as a student of the University without (during the session concerned) having to fulfil the normal academic requirements of his or her programme of study.

1.2 The Senatus and Court will from time to time, and after considering recommendations from the Students' Association or the Sports Union as appropriate, determine the offices whose holders are eligible to apply for a Laigh Year (the “approved offices”).

1.3 In order to be eligible for the award of a Laigh Year a student must, in addition to having been elected to an approved office, be in good academic standing, that is either:

   (a) the student must be a matriculated student in attendance of the final year of a programme of study, and satisfactorily complete the requirements for the award of a degree or diploma of the University, during the session\(^1\) in which the application for the Laigh Year is made; or

   (b) the student's academic standing must be such that the student would be allowed to continue with their programme of study in the following session if no Laigh Year were awarded.

1.4 The academic concessions associated with the Laigh Year relate strictly to the academic year beginning on 1 August following the assumption of office. No student may be granted more than two Laigh Years under these regulations.

1.5 A Laigh Year office-bearer must remain the holder of an approved office throughout the period of the Laigh Year.

2. **Application**

2.1 An application for each Laigh Year must be made to the University Secretary, in writing, by the student concerned not later than 3 June following election to an approved office, and must be accompanied by a report from the Personal Tutor or Supervisor on the student’s academic standing.

2.2 The Personal Tutor or Supervisor may be unable to confirm whether or not the student is in good academic standing by 3 June, for example because confirmation is dependent on the successful completion of assessments, including resit assessments, in August. In that event a further report from the Personal Tutor or Supervisor shall be lodged by the student with the University Secretary by 13 September or as soon as possible thereafter.

2.3 Where a student applies for a second Laigh Year which involves a continuation of the interruption of their programme of study, the application must also demonstrate that a break of that length would be compatible with successful reintegration into the programme, and that no professional body rules or impediments will apply. In that event, a report from the Personal Tutor or Supervisor shall be lodged on whether a further break

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\(^1\) The session is considered to be the academic year in question and its associated resit examination diet.
from study will be appropriate. Students are advised to seek this confirmation from their Personal Tutor or Supervisor before putting themselves forward for re-election for a second term.

2.4 The award of a Laigh Year may be approved firmly or provisionally. The award will be firmly approved when the holder of an approved office is confirmed to be in good academic standing. The award will be provisionally approved if a student is not able to meet the academic requirements for the award of a Laigh Year by 3 June following election but may still be able to meet these requirements by 13 September following election.

2.5 When the University Secretary, on behalf of the Court, formally approves an application (firmly or provisionally), they will notify the student by letter (with a copy to the Chief Executive of the Students’ Association or the Senior Treasurer of the Sports Union as appropriate). They will also provide a copy to Student Administration and Student Administration will matriculate the student for the next academic session on this basis.

3. Payments to Laigh Year Office-Bearers

3.1 Laigh Year office-bearers are paid a stipend monthly from University funds made available to the Students’ Association or the Sports Union. The annual rate of the Laigh Year payments shall be £24,678 in 2020/21 and thereafter will be increased annually by the percentage increase in the UKRI National Minimum Doctoral Stipend.

3.2 Should a Laigh Year office-bearer be in receipt of an award for Disabled students allowance from the SAAS, or would be eligible for such an award if domiciled in Scotland, then an equivalent payment may be made upon agreement between the Students’ Association/EUSU as applicable and the Secretary to the University Court.

3.3 The Laigh Year payments commence from the date on which the student takes up office. Where the Laigh Year has been firmly approved, the payments will end on 30 June following, or when the student demits office, whichever is earlier. Where the Laigh Year has been approved only provisionally, the payments will cease on 30 September or when the student demits office, whichever is earlier, unless the Laigh Year is subsequently approved firmly.

3.4 No Laigh Year payment may be made to an office bearer until they receive notification from the University Secretary that the Laigh Year has been approved.

4. Obligations of the Students’ Association and the Sports Union

4.1 The Chief Executive of the Students’ Association or the Senior Treasurer of the Sports Union as appropriate shall provide a copy of these regulations to each student who accepts nomination for election to one of the approved Laigh Year offices immediately after the nomination papers are lodged.

4.2 The Chief Executive of the Students’ Association or the Senior Treasurer of the Sports Union as appropriate shall provide a further copy of these regulations to those elected to approved Laigh Year offices within 3 days of their election.

4.3 No payments shall be made to the holder of an approved office other than those provided for in these regulations.
Laigh Year Regulations

Approved by University Court, 4 December 2017
Approved by Senate Academicus, 7 February 2018
Minor clerical amendment to 3.1 to update the annual stipend level and update associated terminology, 25 March 2020