Learning and Teaching Board
Policy on Transfer between Campuses (Academic Matters): Taught Programmes

This policy focuses on academic matters related to student transfer between campuses of Heriot-Watt University, and applies only to students on taught programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate students) registered at one of the University’s campuses.

The policy does not apply to students studying at West London College, Approved Learning Partners or by independent distance learning. As a longer term objective, the policy aims include these students; for the short term, however, there is a need to demonstrate that the policy can support inter-campus transfers without impacting negatively on the quality of the student learning experience.

The Policy on Transfer between Campuses will be implemented in 2014/15 and replaces the former Policy on Transfer between Study Locations.

Background
The University has an increasing number of students who wish to transfer between campuses, an opportunity which has been highlighted in both the University's Strategic Plan and in the Learning and Teaching Strategy.

However, transfer is not always straightforward, particularly where there could be an unintended impact on the quality of the student learning experience at either the sending or receiving campus. Therefore, this policy has been devised to clarify aspects such as eligibility, limitations, the rights and reasonable expectations of students, and the responsibilities of staff.

Policy Statement
In view of the added difficulties of settling into a new environment while continuing to study, the University requires, as part of the application process, that students who wish to transfer must be able to demonstrate successful academic performance in earlier stages of the programme, and to have met the requirements for progression to the stage at which they plan to transfer.

There should be no academic barriers to transfer between study locations and, in cases where the learning outcomes are the same across different versions of a programme, students should be permitted to transfer, provided that they have satisfied the published progression criteria for their programme.

The following criteria underpin the application of this policy statement:

1. No additional academic requirements should be specified for students transferring onto the same programme in a different location: for example, the minimum academic requirement for transfer to the Edinburgh Campus cannot be higher than the progression requirements for students continuing to study at their original location.

2. Each Head of School and the Vice-Principal (Dubai)/Vice-Principal (Malaysia) will agree the maximum number of transfers permitted in each academic year on the basis that the number of transferring students should not have a negative impact on the quality of the student learning experience at the sending/receiving campus.

1 The administrative procedures and financial matters (such as tuition fees and eligibility for SAAS/SLC loans) related to transfer between campuses are provided in the “Transfers Procedure and Application Form” http://www.hw.ac.uk/committees/ltb/ltb-policies.htm#T
3. Where a maximum number of transfers has been specified, the Head of School will make a
decision on a student's eligibility to transfer on the basis of the student's application, including
the outline of the benefits he or she would derive from the opportunity of a campus transfer. All
offers of transfer will be subject to the student progressing to the next stage of study.

4. Since the decision to permit a transfer between campuses is a matter of academic judgement,
students will not have grounds for appeal if a transfer application is not approved. Students
may, however, lodge an appeal if they believe that there has been a shortcoming in the
process.

5. Only undergraduate students are eligible to transfer for a full academic year; postgraduate
taught students cannot transfer for a full year once they have accepted an offer of a
programme of study at a particular campus.

General Principles
There are four overarching principles which underpin, from an academic perspective, the
University's approach to transfers:

1. Students who transfer between campuses, either for a limited period (a semester or, in
the case of undergraduate students, a year) or permanently, benefit from a broader
learning (and more general) experience. The University, in accordance with its Learning
and Teaching Strategy, positively encourages these transfers. Therefore, the University
will take steps to minimise the barriers to transfer and will actively support students
wishing to transfer.

2. In cases where the learning outcomes are the same across the various versions of a
programme, there will be no academic barriers to transfer between campuses, provided
that: students have met the specified requirements for progression from one stage to
the next of their programme; the programme is offered at both campuses; and the
transfer is to the same programme.

3. In order to maximise the opportunities for transfer, programmes of study offered in
more than one location are normally structured to minimise potential obstacles to
transfer between campuses at the end of each academic year. For reasons of academic
coherency, transfer at the end of each semester is more difficult to manage and,
therefore, may not be available on all programmes.

4. The University has an obligation to ensure that students who transfer are as likely to be
successful in their new location as in their former location.

Approval of Transfers
As is the case with programme transfers, approval of campus transfers is a School-specific matter.
The accompanying Transfer between Campuses: Procedure and Application Form, includes the
process and deadline dates for applications, as well as the timescales within which Schools should
process transfers [http://www.hw.ac.uk/committees/ltb/ltb-policies.htm#T].

Financial Aspects of Transfers
The Fees Working Group has developed a procedure on the financial matters related to student
transfers, including: required tuition fees to be paid; information to be provided to student funding
organisations; eligibility for, and costs associated with, on-campus accommodation. Such
information is provided in the accompanying Transfer between Study Locations: Procedure and
Application Form [http://www.hw.ac.uk/committees/ltb/ltb-policies.htm#T].
Information for Students applying for Transfers

In addition to academic criteria, students should be made fully aware of other transfer-related requirements through handbooks, specific information sheets on transfers or other documentation as appropriate. Core information should include:

- Tuition fees (either Home/EU or Overseas)
- Eligibility for student loans
- Additional visa requirements
- Accommodation (including eligibility for on-campus accommodation, costs)
- Provision of learning and pastoral support
- Student responsibilities for managing their own learning
- Opportunities for returning to original location
- Routes available in the event of poor academic performance

Support for Transfer Students

Although students who transfer will have met the progression requirements, Schools should not assume that such students can easily make the transition without any additional support; therefore, transferring students should be provided with some help in adjusting to their new location. The School should provide a level of academic and pastoral support which is appropriate to facilitating a smooth, successful transfer. The School should recognise that where a student is transferring for a time-limited period (rather than a permanent arrangement), there will be a need for staff support in both the new location and the location to which the student will be returning. Schools should be prepared to help staff involved in supporting transfer students to gain the requisite skills and expertise.

Monitoring of Transfer Students

Schools monitor the academic performance of all students, but specific attention is paid to particular groups, which should include transfer students. Schools should comment on the performance of transfer students in the Annual Monitoring and Review Reports, noting, for example, particular problems experienced by students and by staff or trends in academic performance. Information on campus transfers will also be considered by the International Strategy Board.

Academic Registry

Approved: Senate, 10 October 2012; revised version approved by: University Executive, 26 September 2013; 30 January 2014