

University Committee for Learning & Teaching Policy on Inter-Campus Transfers (Academic Matters): Undergraduate Taught Programmes

This policy focuses on academic matters related to student transfer between campuses of Heriot-Watt University, and applies **only** to students on undergraduate taught programmes registered as studying at one of the University's campuses.

The policy does not apply to students studying at Approved Learning Partners or by independent distance learning. It does not apply to students studying Postgraduate Taught Programmes or Postgraduate Research Programmes.

The *Policy on Inter-Campus Transfers (Academic Matters)* will be implemented in the Academic Year 2018/19 and replaces the former *Policy on Transfer between Campuses*.

Background and Criteria

The University has seen a significant increase in the number of students who wish to transfer between campuses. This presents an opportunity which has been highlighted in both the University's Strategic Plan and in the Learning and Teaching Strategy to further enhance in the coming years.

Transfer between campuses is straightforward for students on undergraduate programmes being taught at multiple campus locations, provided that three basic criteria can be met:

- 1) The programme is available at the Campus to which the student wishes to transfer at the time they wish to transfer;
- 2) The student has met the requirements for progression by July of the year of transfer (if transferring during or from Semester 1);
- 3) The student has no financial debt to the University (e.g. outstanding tuition fees, outstanding accommodation fees, etc).

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 are able to demonstrate successful academic performance in earlier stages of the programme, and have met the requirements for progression to the stage at which they plan to transfer.

There should be not be any academic barriers to transfer between study locations and, in cases where the learning outcomes are the same across all programmes, students should be permitted to transfer, provided that they have satisfied the published progression criteria for their programme.

The following underpin 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. Since the decision to permit a transfer between campuses is based on the three criteria specified above, 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.
3. Students can transfer for a single semester, a full academic year, or permanently, and can do so from semester 1 or 2.
4. As part of the Planning Round process, each School may agree a 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.

Policy on Transfer between Campuses (Academic Matters): approved by the Senate, 10 October 2012; revised policy approved, University Executive, 26 September 2013 and 30 January 2014.

Further revision endorsed by the Student Learning Experience Committee on 1 May 2018 and Senate on 6 June 2018

If an opportunity is available for students to change programmes temporarily in order to enable a temporary Campus Transfer, the University will ensure students are aware of this option.

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, 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 has taken 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 all programmes, 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.
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.
4. The University has an obligation to ensure that students who transfer are provided with an equal opportunity to be successful in their new location as in their former location.

Approval of Transfers

A semi-automated application and approval process has been made available to students. If the three basic criteria (as set out above in Background and Criteria section) have been met, students will receive an automated email to let them know that their application has been approved.

Staff interaction is required with applications for students who:

- 1) Have a financial impediment to transfer;
- 2) Wish to change programmes: this may be temporarily to facilitate the transfer, or permanently to facilitate the transfer, or for other academic reasons;
- 3) Have a resit, or who fail to achieve a positive progression decision (in which case they may have the option to defer their application by one semester, or longer).

Financial Aspects of Transfers

The Fees Working Group has developed a procedure on 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 on the relevant section of the Go Global website at <https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/goglobal/inter-campus-transfer.htm>

Information for Students Applying for Transfers

In addition to academic criteria, students should be made fully aware of other transfer-related requirements through information events, web resources and FAQs on the Global Student Portal (*AskHWU*). Core information should include:

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

Support for Transfer Students

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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 support 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.

Reporting

The University Committee for Learning and Teaching will also receive an annual report on usage, issues and potential enhancements to this policy and process.