

# Compulsory Withdrawal Procedures: Unsatisfactory Attendance



#### **HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY**

#### PROCEDURES TO SUPPORT STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICYCONTENT

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Policy on Student Attendance availableat: <u>https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/doc/studentattendancepolicy.pdf</u>

It is the responsibility of each School to put processes in place to monitor student attendance at all Heriot-Watt University campuses and on all undergraduate, postgraduate taught and research programmes where attendance is expected. It is also the responsibility of each School to ensure attendance requirements are clearly communicated to students.

#### Procedures for Overseas Campuses

These procedures are based on the current Heriot-Watt University academic year structure (as shown in *Learning and Teaching Briefing Paper 3, Structure of the Academic Year*). For programmes at overseas campuses which have intakes at different points in the academic year, the timeframes provided within these Procedures still apply, i.e. week 1 is the first week of teaching.

#### Possible consequences of non-attendance

The Attendance and Performance section of Regulation A2 (and repeated in the relevant regulations specific to courses/programmes of study) state that students shall attend regularly, perform satisfactorily and take all assessments for their particular course of study. If a student does not meet these requirements the following steps may be taken<sup>1</sup>:

- A. Compulsory withdrawal from the course assessment
- B. Compulsory withdrawal from the programme of study, and therefore the University.

#### A. Compulsory Withdrawal from Course Assessment

In cases of absence without good reason, where a student's attendance fails to meet the minimum required to achieve the learning outcomes of the course as published in the course descriptor, the student may be excluded from the assessment and be graded IA (*ineligible for assessment due to unsatisfactory attendance/participation; further opportunity may be permitted*) in the course. If an IA grade is awarded, the student may have the opportunity of repeating the course with attendance, with permission from the Head of School, and paying the full course fee, without further grade penalty.

#### B. Compulsory Withdrawal from the programme of study, and therefore the University

In cases of continued absence without good reason, where attempts to address the problems have been unsuccessful, a student may be prevented from continuing with his/her programme of study and compulsorily withdrawn from the University. This would normally occur where there has been a prolonged period of absence or absences equating to at least 50% of the courses in the current stage of study. This can be measured in time period or credit equivalent and relates to the requirements for attendance as determined by and notified to students in the appropriate School.

#### 2. PROCEDURES FOR COMPULSORY WITHDRAWAL FOR UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE

#### A. Compulsory Withdrawal from Course Assessment Procedure

 Notification of the recommendation for withdrawal will have been preceded by an initial letter from the Head of School sent no later than the end of Week 5 (see Appendix B and C), notifying the student of unsatisfactory attendance, providing advice on available support and informing the student of possible consequences of continued non-attendance (withdrawal from the course assessment or withdrawal from the University) if the student does

not improve attendance or respond by the deadline date.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>Note that for international students, more stringent attendance requirements must be applied in accordance with local government regulations, e.g. students with Tier 4 visas.

Prior to a recommendation for withdrawal from course assessment being made within the School, the student will be informed, in writing, no later than Week 9 (*see Appendix D*), that such a recommendation is being considered and will be given an opportunity to make a case to the School. The student will be given 5 working days in which to respond in writing/email from the date on the letter detailing the recommendation for withdrawal and will provide details of any mitigating circumstances.

- 2. Recommendations for withdrawal from the course assessment should be made on the 'Compulsory withdrawal from a course' form (see Appendix E) by the Programme Director in conjunction with the student's Course Co-ordinator, mentor and the Head of School offering the course) and should be submitted for approval to the Head of the student's home School. The form should include the rationale and be accompanied by such evidence as is available (including details of unsatisfactory attendance) and any statements made by the student detailing mitigating circumstances.
- 3. <u>If the Head of School does not approve withdrawal from course assessment</u>, the form and associated paperwork will be placed on record in the student's file with confirmation of the rationale for not approving the withdrawal. The student will be informed of the outcome by the School.

If the Head of School approves withdrawal from course assessment, the School isresponsible for:

- processing the recommendation for withdrawal in accordance with agreedprocedures
- placing the original and associated paperwork on the student's file
- entering the grade of IA and updating further opportunities in the student records system(SAS)
- informing the student, in writing, of his/her ineligibility for assessment and any subsequent opportunities for assessment, including details of appeals procedures (http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/complaints/student-appeals.htm)
- providing a list of all students withdrawn from course assessments by the end of week 9 to the Examinations Officer.

On behalf of the Academic Registrar, the **Examinations Officer** is responsible for:

- removing from examination timetables and examination seating plans the namesof students withdrawn from course assessments
- providing invigilators with the names and HWU person numbers of students withdrawnfrom course assessments
- adding a note on the examination attendance lists confirming students who have been withdrawn.

The **Invigilator**, on behalf of the Examinations Officer, and in cases where the excludedstudents' names and HWU person numbers have been brought to his/her attention, is responsible for:

- inviting students who have been withdrawn from the course assessment, but have turned up to take the examination, to leave the examination room prior to the start of the examination, and, once they have left, recording this information on the Examination Report form
- in the case of withdrawn students who refuse to leave the examination room, recording details of the refusal to leave on both the student's examination paper and the Examination Report form
- 4. The student must be provided with opportunities to defend his/her case at appropriate stages

and must be informed of their entitlement to appeal against the IA grade in accordance with procedures detailed in Regulation 36: Student Appeals, see http://www.hw.ac.uk/ordinances/.

#### B. <u>Compulsory Withdrawal from a Programme of Study</u>, and therefore the University

Cases of Compulsory withdrawal from a programme must be approved by the Compulsory Withdrawal Committee (CWC), a sub-group of the University Committee for Quality and Standards and notified to the Senate for information. A Calendar of Relevant Dates for communications is provided at Appendix A.

 Notification of the recommendation for withdrawal must be preceded by an initial letter from the Head of School, or his / her nominee, normally sent no later than the end of Week 5 (see Appendix B and C), notifying the student of unsatisfactory attendance, providing advice on available support and informing the student of possible consequences of continued non-attendance. A further letter will have been sent in Week 9 (see Appendix D), informing the student that he or she has been recommended for withdrawal from the programme of study/ University.

Prior to a recommendation for withdrawal from a programme being made within the School, the student will be informed in writing that such a recommendation is being considered and will be given an opportunity to make a case to the School. The student will be given 7 working days in which to respond in writing/email from of the date on the letter detailing the recommendation for withdrawal and will provide details of any mitigating circumstances.

- 2. A 'permanent voluntary withdrawal' form should be included in any correspondence with the student (form at <u>https://search.hw.ac.uk/s/redirect?collection=heriot-watt~sp-uk&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hw.ac.uk%2Fuk%2Fstudents%2Fdoc%2Funiversitywithdrawal.docx&au th=%2BP3AllCd1h%2F7k1OHl8zZOQ&profile=uk&rank=1&query=withdrawal+form ), in cases where the student has opted to leave the University and has simply not informed the relevant parties. In such instances, if the student returns the 'voluntary withdrawal' form, normal procedures for 'voluntary withdrawal' will apply and a recommendation for compulsory withdrawal from a programme need not be progressed.</u>
- 3. Recommendations for withdrawal from a programme should be made on the 'Compulsory Withdrawal from a Programme' form (*see Appendix F*) submitted by the Programme Director (following consultation with the Course Co-ordinator and the student's mentor) to the Head of School for consideration. The form should include a proposed date of withdrawal, the rationale, and be accompanied by such evidence as is available (including details of unsatisfactory attendance) and any statements made by the student detailing mitigating circumstances. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure the involvement of the appropriate Programme Director.
- 4. If the Head of School does not consider that the student should be compulsorily withdrawn from a programme, the form and associated paperwork, including the Head of School decision and rationale for that decision, will be placed on record in the student's file. The student will be informed of the outcome by the School.

#### Application for Compulsory Withdrawal from a Programme

- 1. If the Head of School considers that the student should be compulsorily withdrawn from a programme and the University, a recommendation for the withdrawal, including rationale and supporting evidence, should be submitted on the appropriate form (see Appendix F) to the SC for consideration.
- 2. In all cases of withdrawal, whether approved or not, the School is responsible for:
  - processing the recommendation for exclusion in accordance with agreed procedures
  - submitting the appropriate form, plus accompanying paperwork, to the SC

- placing the originals of all documentation on the student's file
- providing the student with the opportunity to defend his/her case at appropriate stages
- informing the student, in writing, of the School's intention to submit a recommendation for compulsory withdrawal, including details of the process and course of action available to the student
- 3. The **Clerk of the CWC** will inform the student in writing of the date on which the Committee is due to consider the recommendation for withdrawal and will invite the student tomake a statement regarding the case. The student will be given 7 working days in which to respond in writing/email from the date on the letter from the Committee Clerk and will provide details of any mitigating circumstances.
- 4. If the CWC determines that the application for withdrawal should not be approved, the Head of School and the student will be notified in writing by the Clerk of the Committee's decision within 10 working days of the meeting. The Head of School will ensure that the student is provided with advice and support in continuing his or her programme of study.
- 5. If the CWC approves the recommendation for withdrawal, the **Clerk of the Committee** will be responsible for:
  - Informing the Student Records Officer of any such withdrawals
  - notifying the Head of School, in writing, of the Committee's decision
  - informing the student, in writing, of the Committee's decision regarding withdrawal within 10 working days of the meeting
  - notifying the student of the appeals procedures http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/complaints/student-appeals.htm)
  - in all of the above, the date from which the withdrawal is effective will be specified

On behalf of the Academic Registrar, the **Student Records Officer** will be responsible for:

- recording the decision of 'compulsory withdrawal' on the student's record, including date of withdrawal
- notifying, with date of withdrawal, appropriate funding authorities as required, and the Home Office, if appropriate
- 6. The student will be entitled to appeal against a decision of exclusion from continued study in accordance with procedures detailed in Regulation 36: Student Appeals, see <a href="https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/about/profile/governance/ordinances-regulations.htm">https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/about/profile/governance/ordinances-regulations.htm</a>

#### 3. FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE

Schools – School Offices, Personal Tutors, Course/Year Co-Ordinators/Programme Directors Academic Registry – Lord Balerno Building, 0044 (0)131 451 3727 or registry@hw.ac.uk Student Support - Hugh Nisbet Building, 0044 (0)131 451 3386 or studentsupport@hw.ac.uk Student Union Advice Hub - Hugh Nisbet Building, 0044 (0)131 451 4535 or advice.hub@hw.ac.uk Dubai Campus – Academic Administration Office, 00 971 4 435 8631 or dubaiaao@hw.ac.uk Malaysia Campus – Student Service Centre, +603 8894 3610or MYstudentcentre@hw.ac.uk

#### **APPENDIX A: Calendar of Relevant Dates**

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> PGR students may enter at different points in the Academic Year. For non-standard intakes, i.e. HWUM FoundationProgramme or Dubai Degree Entry Programme, week 1 is the 1<sup>st</sup> week of teaching.

\*\*\*Edinburgh and Orkney Students\*\*\*

### APPENDIX B: To be sent by the Head of School in the event of poor course attendance being noted by week 5.

Dear [student]

#### Concerns about your Attendance and Non-Engagement on [Course Code and Title]

Your lecturers are concerned that you are not attending the above course as expected. The University would like to give you an opportunity to resolve any difficulties that may be preventing you from engaging fully in your studies. Other sources of advice and support are also available to you. You may wish to contact:

Induction and Enrolment: <a href="mailto:student-services-uk@hw.ac.uk">student-services-uk@hw.ac.uk</a>

Please note that a range of support is available to you and details can be found at <a href="https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/studies/examinations/reassessment/what-should-i-do-if-i-fail.htm">https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/studies/examinations/reassessment/what-should-i-do-if-i-fail.htm</a>

Attendance and participation in lectures and tutorials, as well as completing the required course assessments, are an essential part of learning and of success in degree level study. The University therefore wishes to ensure that you receive the appropriate support to facilitate this.

You should also be aware that under University Regulations you may be excluded from taking course assessments if you do not meet the attendance requirements for any course. This in turn may mean that you might not be able to continue with your studies on this programme. See <u>https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/studies/leaving/withdrawing-from-university.htm</u> for more

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

[insert HoS details and signature]

#### \*\*\*Dubai Students\*\*\*

### APPENDIX B: To be sent by the Head of School in the event of poor course attendancebeing noted by week 5.

Dear [student]

#### Concerns about your Attendance and Non-Engagement on [Course Code and Title] Your lecturers

are concerned that you are not attending the above course as expected. The University would like to give you an opportunity to resolve any difficulties that may be preventingyou from engaging fully in your studies. Other sources of advice and support are available. You may wish to contact:

• Laetitia Grobbelaar, Student Advisor <u>l.grobbelaar@hw.ac.uk</u> +971 4 4358796.

Please note that a range of support is available to students and details can be foundat <u>www.hw.ac.uk/students</u>.

Attendance and participation in lectures and tutorials, as well as completing the required course assessments, are an essential part of learning and of success in degree level study. The University therefore wishes to ensure that you receive the appropriate support to facilitate this.

You should be aware that under University Regulations you may be excluded from taking course assessments if you do not meet the attendance requirements for any course. This inturn may mean that you might not be able to continue with your studies on this programme. See <a href="http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/doc/withdrawalprocedures.pdf">http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/doc/withdrawalprocedures.pdf</a> for more details.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

[insert HoS details]

#### \*\*\*Malaysia Students\*\*\*

APPENDIX B: To be sent by the Head of School in the event of poor course attendancebeing noted by week 5.

Dear [student]

#### Concerns about your Attendance and Engagement on [Course Code and Title]

Your lecturers are concerned that you are not attending the above course as expected. The University would like to give you an opportunity to resolve any difficulties that may be preventingyou from engaging fully in your studies.

Please note that a range of support is available to students and details can be foundat <u>www.hw.ac.uk/students</u>.

Attendance and participation in lectures and tutorials, as well as completing the required course assessments, are an essential part of learning and of success in degree level study. The University therefore wishes to ensure that you receive the appropriate support to facilitate this.

You should be aware that under University Regulations you may be excluded from taking course assessments if you do not meet the attendance requirements for any course. This inturn may mean that you might not be able to continue with your studies on this programme. See <a href="http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/doc/withdrawalprocedures.pdf">http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/doc/withdrawalprocedures.pdf</a> for more details.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

[insert HoS details]

#### \*\*\*Scottish Borders Campus\*\*\*

### APPENDIX B: To be sent by the Head of School in the event of poor course attendance being noted by week 5.

Dear [student]

#### Concerns about your Attendance and Engagement on [Course Code and Title]

Your lecturers are concerned that you are not attending the above course as expected. The University would like to give you an opportunity to resolve any difficulties that may be preventing you from engaging fully in your studies. Other sources of advice and support are available. You may wish to contact:

• Gillian McLaughlin, Student Advisor, <u>g.mclaughlin@hw.ac.uk</u> 01896 89 2178, Room 101 in the High Mill.

Please note that a range of support is available to students and details can be found at <u>www.hw.ac.uk/students</u>.

Attendance and participation in lectures and tutorials, as well as completing the required course assessments, are an essential part of learning and of success in degree level study. The University therefore wishes to ensure that you receive the appropriate support to facilitate this.

You should be aware that under University Regulations you may be excluded from taking course assessments if you do not meet the attendance requirements for any course. This in turn may mean that you might not be able to continue with your studies on this programme. See <a href="http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/doc/withdrawalprocedures.pdf">http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/doc/withdrawalprocedures.pdf</a> for more details.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

[insert HoS details]

APPENDIX C: Sent to student with letter in Appendix B (OPTIONAL).

Issues Affecting Your Attendance and Performance

It has been noted that you are not attending regularly or performing satisfactorily. The enclosed letter provides further details. If you are experiencing difficulties with the course(s) listed or your studies in general, or if there are other reasons, please complete this form and return to your School Office within 5 working days.

Name:	Person ID:	
School/Institute:		
Programme:	Year of Study:	

Course(s) Affected:	
(Please list Course	
Code and Title)	

The University is keen to give support and help to enable students to succeed in their studies. By completing this form and returning it promptly, you will help us to help you to address any problems you are having which could impair your ability to reach your full potential. Please tick the boxes that are relevant:

Programme/course change	Issue/problem with course(s)	Illness
Accommodation difficulties *	Employment difficulties	Other cause(s) for non- attendance
Family/personal problems *	Financial problems *	

Where applicable, please explain further the issue(s)/problem(s) you are experiencing which is/are affecting your attendance/performance on the course(s) noted above:

\* The Student Support and Accommodation office provides a counselling service covering personal matters. For students with special needs and disabilities, a team of special needs advisers is available for advice and support. **Student Loans** and the **Hardship Funds** are also administered from this office. For contact details please go to <u>www.hw.ac.uk/support</u>. Information and support is also available from the Student Union Advice Hub. If you are a student at the Dubai or Malaysia campuses, please contact either the Academic Administration Office (Dubai) or Student Service Centre (Malaysia) for advice.

Signature:	Date:	
Contact Details:		

Please return form to your School Office, Heriot-Watt University.

The University holds all personal information subject to the provisions of the UK Data Protection Act (1998). Your

personal details will be kept strictly private and confidential and no part of your university record will be released without your permission.



**APPENDIX D:** Used by Head of School to inform student that poor course attendance has been noted by week 9, and will be excluded from course examination.

Dear

### Compulsory Withdrawal from Course(s): Unsatisfactory Attendance for Academic Year

I am writing in connection with my letter dated [*state appropriate date*], regarding your attendance and/or performance in the following course(s).

#### Course Code and Title: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

I have been informed by the Course Co-Ordinator that you are still not attending regularly or performing satisfactorily. Therefore, in accordance with Regulation 1, paragraph 6, I regret to inform you that you will not be allowed to be assessed or examined in this course at the next diet of examinations or at any subsequent diet.

If this course forms a mandatory part of your degree programme, you may not be able to continue with your studies on this programme. As a consequence, where relevant it may be necessary for the University to:

- (i) inform your Awarding Authority or sponsor
- (ii) inform the Home Office if you are a Tier 4 visa holder
- (iii) inform the relevant authority if you are a student at the Dubai or Malaysia campuses

Failure to comply with these instructions may result in disciplinary action being taken.

If you have any queries regarding this matter please contact your Programme Director.

If you wish to appeal against this decision, please refer to Regulation 36 (Student Appeals), available on the University web site (<u>www.hw.ac.uk/ordinances/regulations</u>).

You may also wish to discuss your situation with staff in the Student Support and Accommodation office (you can find contact details at http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing.htmor

If you are a student at the Dubai or Malaysia campuses you may wish to contact the Academic Administration Office (Dubai) or Student Service Centre (Malaysia).

Yours sincerely



**APPENDIX E:** Should be used by School for internal records.

#### Compulsory Withdrawal from a Course(s) due to Unsatisfactory Attendance/Participation

If in the opinion of the Programme Director<sup>3</sup> and in conjunction with the student's Course Co-ordinator and Mentor, a candidate fails to satisfy the minimum attendance required to achieve the learning outcomes of a course, the student, after due warning, may be excluded from participating in the next available assessment opportunity.

Please complete this form and forward to the student's Head of School and the Head of School offering the course (if different) for authorisation.

Student Name:	Person ID:	
School/Institute:		
Programme:	Year of Study:	

Course code(s):	Course title(s):	
(please ensure separate forms are used for each School)		

#### **Declaration**

In accordance with the appropriate Regulations and procedures, I hereby recommend that the student named above should be ineligible for assessment in the affected course due to unsatisfactory attendance/participationand I declare:

- (i) that the student was informed, in writing at the appropriate time that such a recommendation would be considered, was given an opportunity to make a case to the appropriate School, and received details of the appeals procedures.
- (ii) that, where appropriate, I have attached any evidence as was available and any statements made by the student detailing mitigating circumstances. Evidence attached – Y / N (*please circle*)

Please give rationale below including any subsequent opportunities for assessment and timing of such opportunities - *continue on a separate sheet if necessary* 

Signature of Programme Director/:		Date:		
Signature of Head of School (or nominee) offering course:		Date:		
Signature of Student's Head of School (or nominee) (where different):	Date:		Approved? Y / N	



**APPENDIX F**: Used by School for CWC to compulsory withdraw student after continued poor attendance.

## Compulsory Withdrawal from a Programme due to Unsatisfactory Attendance/Participation

If in the opinion of the Programme Director, following discussion with the Course Co-ordinator and the student's Mentor, a candidate fails to satisfy the minimum attendance requirements, the student, after duewarning, may be excluded from continuation on his/her programme of study and compulsorily withdrawn from the University.

Please complete this form and forward to the Clerk, Compulsory Withdrawals Committee, for consideration.

Student Name:	Person ID:	
School/Institute:		
Programme:	Year of Study:	
Effective Date of Withdrawal:		

#### **Declaration**

In accordance with the appropriate Regulations and procedures, I hereby recommend that the studentnamed above should be excluded from continued study and withdrawn from the University and I declare:

- (i) that the student was informed, in writing at the appropriate time that such a recommendation would be considered, was given an opportunity to make a case to the appropriate School, and received details of the appeals procedures.
- (*ii*) that, where appropriate, I have attached any evidence as was available and any statements made by the student detailing mitigating circumstances. Evidence attached Y / N (*please circle*)

Please give rationale below - continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Signature of Programme Director	Date:	
Signature of Head of School:	Date:	
Chair of CWC:	Date:	

CWC Approval?	YES	NO

Please tick, to indicate that the letters below have been sent to the student mentioned above.

۶	Withdrawal from a Course – Warning letter (week 5)	
	Withdrawal from a Course – Warning letter (week 9)	



**APPENDIX G:** Used by the Clerk to CWC to inform student that they recommended for compulsory withdrawal for continued poor attendance.

Subject: Exclusion from Continued Study due to Unsatisfactory Attendance/Participation

I am writing to inform you that in accordance with the University's Regulations a recommendation has been received by the Compulsory Withdrawal Committee requesting that, in view of your unsatisfactory performance and/or progress, you should withdraw from the University.

In advance of compulsory withdrawal being considered by the Compulsory Withdrawal Committee, I invite you to provide a statement in support of your case for the Committee's consideration. The statement should give details of any circumstances which may have prevented you from attending or may have adversely affected your performance. Any supporting evidence should also be provided where possible.

The Compulsory Withdrawal Committee will meet shortly to consider this request. Could you please ensure that you respond in writing by letter or by email from your university email account to  $\frac{xxxx}{xxx}$  within seven working days of the date of this letter.

If you do not wish to pursue your case further, you may wish to voluntarily withdraw from your studies. The relevant form is available on our website at <u>Withdrawing from the University</u>.

For your information you may wish to refer to the *Procedures for Compulsory Withdrawal*.

Yours Sincerely,

Clerk to the Compulsory Withdrawal Committee



**APPENDIX H:** Used by the Clerk to CWC to inform student that they have been compulsory withdrawn for continued poor attendance.

Subject: Exclusion from Continued Study due to Unsatisfactory Attendance/Participation

Further to my letter dated,xxx, I am writing to inform you that, in accordance with the University's Regulations, the Compulsory Withdrawal Committee has approved the request to compulsorily withdraw you from the University with effect from xxxx.

For your information I refer you to the *Guidelines on Student Academic Appeals Procedures* available at <u>https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/studies/student-appeals.htm</u>

I wish you every success in your future career and if at any time the University can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Clerk to the Compulsory Withdrawal Committee