UCQ
UNIVERSITY
CENTRE QUAYSIDE

Changes to Study Policy

Version: 2
Revision date: 13/10/2026
Document reviewer: Head of Policy & Governance
Due for review: 31/07/2028

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1. Purpose

1.1 University Centre Quayside (UCQ) is committed to supporting students to successfully commence, continue and complete their studies wherever reasonably practicable. UCQ recognises that students may experience circumstances which affect their ability to begin or continue their programme of study and is committed to responding fairly, consistently and compassionately whilst maintaining academic standards.

1.2 This Policy establishes the framework for the management of:

- Deferral of Entry;
- Interruption of Studies;
- Apprenticeship Breaks in Learning;
- Student-Initiated Withdrawal; and
- Institution-Initiated Withdrawal.

1.3 The purpose of this Policy is to:

- provide a clear and transparent framework for managing changes to a student's registration status; ensure decisions are made fairly, consistently and proportionately;
- support students to remain engaged with their studies wherever reasonably practicable;
- protect academic standards and the integrity of awards validated by The Open University;
- ensure compliance with consumer protection legislation and the Office for Students' regulatory framework;
- ensure students understand the academic, financial and personal implications of changing their registration status.

1.4 This Policy should be read alongside the relevant Student Terms and Conditions, the Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University (where applicable), the Tuition Fee Policy for non-apprenticeship higher education students, and the Employer Apprenticeship Training Agreement for apprentices.

1.5 Nothing within this Policy removes or limits any statutory rights available to students.

1.6 This Policy applies to both non-apprenticeship higher education students and apprentices. It recognises that different academic, contractual and funding requirements apply to these groups. Specific arrangements for apprenticeship breaks in learning are set out in Section 9 of this Policy, in accordance with applicable Department for Education (DfE) apprenticeship funding requirements.

2. Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to:

- applicants who have accepted an offer of admission but have not yet enrolled on a programme of study, where relevant;
- students enrolled on higher education programmes delivered by UCQ, including those leading to awards validated by The Open University;
- apprentices enrolled on apprenticeship programmes delivered by UCQ;
- students studying full-time, part-time or through flexible modes of delivery;
- UK and international students, unless alternative statutory or regulatory requirements apply.

2.2 This Policy establishes the arrangements for deferral of entry, interruption of studies, breaks in learning and withdrawal. Sections 5 and 6 apply to non-apprenticeship higher education students, while Section 9 sets out the specific arrangements for apprenticeship breaks in learning. Sections 7 and 8 apply to both groups, subject to the additional requirements for apprentices set out in Section 9.

2.3 This Policy does not replace the separate procedures governing academic or admission appeals, complaints or Fitness to Study, although outcomes under those procedures may result in an interruption of studies, break in learning or withdrawal under this Policy.

3. Definitions

3.1 For the purposes of this Policy:

Apprentice
An individual undertaking an apprenticeship programme delivered by UCQ under an approved apprenticeship arrangement involving the apprentice, employer and UCQ.

Break in Learning (BIL)
An agreed temporary pause in apprenticeship training and learning, during which the apprentice intends to return to the same apprenticeship at a later date. A Break in Learning is subject to applicable apprenticeship funding requirements and must be agreed between the apprentice, employer and UCQ.

Deferral of Entry
A postponement of the commencement of studies before a student has completed enrolment on their programme.

Effective Withdrawal Date
The date on which written notification of withdrawal is received by UCQ. For institution-initiated withdrawals, this will be the date on which UCQ determines that withdrawal has occurred following approved procedures.

Exit Award
An academic award conferred where a student has successfully achieved sufficient academic credit, in accordance with the Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University.

Interruption of Studies
A temporary suspension of studies following enrolment, during which a student remains registered with UCQ but is not actively participating in learning, teaching or assessment.

Return to Study
The approved resumption of studies following an authorised interruption of studies.

Student-Initiated Withdrawal
A permanent withdrawal requested by the student.

Institution-Initiated Withdrawal
A permanent withdrawal initiated by UCQ where continuation of studies is no longer appropriate.

Withdrawal
Permanent cessation of studies and termination of a student's registration on a programme.

4. Principles

4.1 UCQ recognises that changes to a student's registration status may arise for a variety of academic, personal, medical, financial or professional reasons.

4.2 Before approving an interruption of studies or break in learning, or confirming a withdrawal, UCQ will normally consider whether reasonable support or alternative arrangements could enable the student to continue their studies or apprenticeship successfully.

Such measures may include, but are not limited to:

- academic support;
- pastoral or wellbeing support;
- reasonable adjustments;
- extenuating circumstances;
- timetable flexibility where practicable;
- interruption of studies;
- programme transfer where appropriate;
- referral to specialist support services.

4.3 All decisions made under this Policy will be:

- fair;
- evidence-based;
- proportionate;
- documented;
- communicated in writing.

4.4 Students will normally be provided with appropriate information regarding the academic and financial implications of decisions made under this Policy before a final decision is confirmed.

4.5 Where a decision may significantly affect a student's continuation of study, UCQ will ensure that students are informed of:

- available support;
- alternative options;
- appeal rights;
- implications for tuition fees;
- implications for student funding where known.

4.6 Academic implications arising under this Policy for students enrolled on programmes validated by The Open University will be determined in accordance with the Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University. Apprenticeship-specific requirements will be considered in accordance with applicable apprenticeship funding rules.

4.7 For non-apprenticeship higher education students, tuition fee liability, refunds and payment arrangements arising under this Policy will be determined in accordance with the Tuition Fee Policy. For apprentices, financial and funding arrangements are governed by the Employer Apprenticeship Training Agreement and applicable apprenticeship funding requirements.

4.8 Where a student is studying under immigration permission, UCQ will comply with any applicable reporting requirements. Students remain responsible for obtaining independent immigration advice regarding the impact of any change to their registration status.

5. Deferral of Entry

5.1 Purpose

5.1.1 Applicants who have accepted an offer of admission to a non-apprenticeship higher education programme but have not yet enrolled may request a deferral of entry where circumstances prevent them from commencing their programme as originally planned.

5.2 Requesting a Deferral

5.2.1 Requests for deferral should normally be submitted in writing before the published programme start date.

5.2.2 Students should provide sufficient information to enable UCQ to consider the request and may be asked to provide supporting evidence where appropriate.

5.2.3 UCQ may request further information where necessary before reaching a decision.

5.3 Grounds for Deferral

Deferral requests may be approved where there are reasonable grounds, including but not limited to:

- illness or injury;
- mental health or wellbeing concerns;
- pregnancy, maternity, paternity or adoption;
- caring responsibilities;
- bereavement;
- military service;
- significant changes in employment;
- financial hardship;
- exceptional personal circumstances;
- other circumstances considered appropriate by UCQ.

5.4 Approval

5.4.1 Deferral requests will be considered by Academic Registry (or nominee) in consultation with relevant academic staff where appropriate.

5.4.2 Approval of a deferral is not automatic and will take account of:

- the reasons for the request;
- programme availability;
- professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements where applicable;
- validation requirements;
- operational considerations.

5.5 Duration

5.5.1 Deferrals will normally be approved until the next available intake.

5.5.2 Deferrals will not normally exceed twelve months unless exceptional circumstances exist.

5.5.3 Where a programme is no longer available, UCQ will discuss alternative options with the applicant where reasonably practicable.

5.6 Financial Implications

5.6.1 Tuition fee liability will not normally arise where a student defers prior to enrolment.

5.6.2 Applicants remain responsible for understanding the impact of a deferral on any funding arrangements and should seek independent advice from the relevant funding provider where appropriate.

5.7 Outcome

5.7.1 Applicants will normally be notified of the outcome of their request in writing.

5.7.2 Where a request is approved, UCQ will confirm:

- the revised start date;
- any conditions attached to the deferral;
- any action required before enrolment.

6. Interruption of Studies

6.1 Purpose

6.1.1 Students enrolled on non-apprenticeship higher education programmes may request an interruption of studies where circumstances temporarily prevent them from continuing their studies, but withdrawal is not considered appropriate. Apprenticeship breaks in learning are governed separately by Section 9 of this Policy.

6.2 Requesting an Interruption

6.2.1 The effective date of an interruption of studies will normally be the date on which written notification requesting an interruption is received by UCQ, unless an alternative date is approved by UCQ.

6.2.2 For institution-initiated interruptions of study, the date on which UCQ formally determines, in accordance with the approved procedures, that the interruption has occurred.

6.2.3 Students are encouraged to discuss their circumstances with an appropriate member of UCQ staff before submitting a request.

6.2.4 Supporting evidence may be requested where appropriate.

6.3 Grounds for Interruption

6.3.1 An interruption of studies may be approved for reasons including, but not limited to:

- physical ill health;
- mental health or wellbeing concerns;
- pregnancy or maternity;
- caring responsibilities;
- bereavement;
- financial hardship;
- significant personal circumstances;
- military commitments;
- jury service;
- other exceptional circumstances.

6.4 Institutional Interruption

6.4.1 UCQ may require a temporary interruption of studies where this is considered necessary in relation to:

- safeguarding concerns;
- Fitness to Study outcomes;
- serious welfare concerns;
- circumstances affecting the safety or wellbeing of the student or others;
- other exceptional circumstances.

6.5 Approval

6.5.1 Requests will normally be considered by Academic Registry in consultation with relevant academic staff.

6.5.2 Before approving an interruption, UCQ will normally consider:

- the student's academic progress;
- any support already provided;
- any available alternative arrangements;
- the likely impact upon programme completion.

6.6 Duration

6.6.1 Interruptions will normally be approved for a maximum period of twelve months.

6.6.2 Total periods of interruption will not normally exceed twenty-four months across the duration of a programme. Requests exceeding this period will be considered only in exceptional circumstances, taking into account the student's individual circumstances, academic viability, professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements (where applicable), and the maximum period of registration for the programme.

6.7 Academic Implications

6.7.1 Academic implications arising from an interruption of studies will be determined in accordance with the Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University.

6.8 Financial Implications

6.8.1 Tuition fee liability, payment arrangements and refunds are governed by the Tuition Fee Policy.

6.8.2 Students should seek independent advice from the relevant funding body regarding any effect on funding entitlement.

6.9 Return to Study

6.9.1 Students must normally confirm their intention to return by the date specified by UCQ.

6.9.2 UCQ may require a Return to Study meeting before studies resume.

6.9.3 Where programme requirements have changed during the interruption, UCQ will advise students of any transitional arrangements.

6.10 Failure to Return

6.10.1 Where a student fails to return following an approved interruption of studies, UCQ will normally:

- attempt to contact the student using their recorded contact details;
- issue written notice of the intention to withdraw;
- provide a reasonable opportunity for the student to respond;
- consider any further evidence submitted;
- determine whether withdrawal is appropriate under Section 7 of this Policy.

7. Withdrawal

7.1 General Principles

7.1.1 Withdrawal from a programme represents the permanent termination of a student's registration.

7.1.2 UCQ recognises that withdrawal may have significant academic, financial and personal implications. Students will therefore normally be encouraged to consider all available support and alternative options before withdrawal is confirmed.

7.1.3 Wherever reasonably practicable, UCQ will seek to ensure that students understand the implications of withdrawal before a final decision is made.

7.1.4 For apprentices, withdrawal from apprenticeship training may also have implications for employment-related training arrangements, apprenticeship funding and, where applicable, registration on an associated higher education programme. Additional requirements relating to apprenticeship withdrawal are set out in Section 9.

7.2 Student-Initiated Withdrawal

7.2.1 Students may request to withdraw from their programme at any time by submitting written notification to Academic Registry.

7.2.2 Before confirming withdrawal, students will normally be encouraged to discuss their circumstances with an appropriate member of UCQ staff. This may include advice from:

- Academic Staff;
- Academic Registry;
- Student Support Services;
- Professional Development Assessors (where applicable); or
- other appropriate members of staff.

7.2.3 Prior to confirming withdrawal, students will normally be advised to consider:

- available academic and pastoral support;
- interruption of studies as an alternative;
- academic progression implications;
- eligibility for any exit award;
- future study opportunities;
- tuition fee liability under the Tuition Fee Policy;
- implications for student finance or sponsorship;
- immigration or visa implications where applicable;
- any professional registration implications.

7.2.4 Where a student chooses to proceed, UCQ will confirm the withdrawal in writing. The confirmation will normally include:

- the effective withdrawal date;
- any exit award (where applicable);
- tuition fee information;
- appeal or review rights where appropriate;
- any further actions required.

7.3 Institution-Initiated Withdrawal

7.3.1 UCQ may initiate withdrawal where continuation of study is no longer considered appropriate and reasonable support measures have been explored or are no longer appropriate. Institution-initiated withdrawal will normally be regarded as a measure of last resort.

7.3.2 Institution-initiated withdrawal may arise where there is sufficient evidence of:

- persistent non-engagement or failure to meet attendance and engagement requirements;
- failure to satisfy academic progression requirements in accordance with the Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University;
- serious or repeated academic misconduct;
- serious or repeated non-academic misconduct;
- Fitness to Study outcomes indicating that continued study is not appropriate;
- failure to comply with the Regulations or applicable UCQ policies;
- failure to return following an approved interruption of studies;
- withdrawal or loss of funding where continuation is no longer possible;
- other exceptional circumstances where continuation would not be appropriate.

7.3.3 Before confirming withdrawal, UCQ will normally:

- review all relevant evidence;
- consider any support already provided;
- consider whether reasonable alternatives to withdrawal remain available;
- notify the student of the proposed withdrawal;

- explain the reasons for the proposed decision;
- provide the student with a reasonable opportunity to respond;
- consider any representations or additional evidence submitted.

7.3.4 Following consideration of all relevant information, UCQ will determine whether withdrawal is appropriate.

7.3.5 The decision will normally be communicated in writing and will include:

- the reasons for the decision;
- the effective withdrawal date;
- any exit award where applicable;
- financial implications;
- appeal rights.

7.3.6 In exceptional circumstances involving serious misconduct, serious safeguarding concerns or other matters presenting an immediate risk to individuals or the institution, UCQ may withdraw a student following the completion of the relevant disciplinary or institutional procedures.

8. Implications of Withdrawal

8.1 Academic Implications

8.1.1 Academic implications arising from withdrawal will be determined in accordance with the Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University.

8.1.2 Academic credit successfully awarded prior to, or as a consequence of, the withdrawal process will normally be retained in accordance with the Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University.

8.1.3 Where sufficient academic credit has been achieved, students may be considered for an appropriate exit award in accordance with the Regulations.

8.1.4 Where a student withdraws before completing a module, the academic outcome for that module will depend on the stage reached in the assessment process at the point of withdrawal and will be determined in accordance with the Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University. Where an assessment has not been submitted by the applicable deadline, subsequent withdrawal will not alter the academic consequences arising from that non-submission. Where an assessment has been submitted prior to withdrawal, it will normally continue through the assessment, moderation and Board of Examiners processes, with any resulting academic credit or award determined in accordance with the Regulations.

8.2 Financial Implications

8.2.1 For non-apprenticeship higher education students, tuition fee liability, refunds, payment arrangements and debt recovery are governed by the Tuition Fee Policy. For apprentices, financial and funding implications arising from withdrawal are governed by the Employer Apprenticeship Training Agreement and applicable apprenticeship funding requirements.

8.2.2 Students should seek independent advice from the relevant funding body regarding any impact on:

- tuition fee support;
- maintenance funding;
- future funding entitlement;
- repayment arrangements.

8.2.3 UCQ will notify relevant funding bodies where required by law or funding conditions.

8.3 Immigration and Visa Implications

8.3.1 Students studying under immigration permission should be aware that changes to their registration status may affect their immigration status.

8.3.2 UCQ will comply with all applicable reporting obligations. Students remain responsible for obtaining independent immigration advice where required.

8.4 Access to Services

8.4.1 Following withdrawal, access to teaching, learning resources, digital systems and student services will normally cease, subject to any arrangements required to conclude outstanding matters.

8.5 Student Records

8.5.1 UCQ will maintain accurate records relating to withdrawal in accordance with its records management and data protection requirements.

8.5.2 Student transcripts will accurately reflect academic credit achieved and any award conferred.

9. Apprenticeship Breaks in Learning

9.1 General Principles

9.1.1 UCQ recognises that apprentices may experience circumstances that temporarily prevent them from continuing their apprenticeship training. Where an apprentice intends to return to the same apprenticeship at a later date, a Break in Learning (BIL) may be appropriate.

9.1.2 A Break in Learning is a formal, agreed period during which apprenticeship training is temporarily paused. Breaks in Learning are managed in accordance with applicable apprenticeship funding rules.

9.1.3 The decision to take a Break in Learning, the reason for the break and its expected duration must be agreed between the apprentice, employer and UCQ.

9.1.4 Circumstances that may give rise to a Break in Learning include changes in working circumstances, medical treatment, unexpected leave, caring responsibilities or other personal circumstances.

9.2 Conditions for a Break in Learning

9.2.1 A Break in Learning may be appropriate where an apprentice is unable to participate in active learning for a period of four weeks or more, or where the apprentice requests a planned break with the intention of returning to the same apprenticeship at a later date.

9.2.2 Apprentices are normally expected to participate in active learning each calendar month, in accordance with applicable apprenticeship funding requirements.

9.2.3 A formal Break in Learning will normally be for a period of at least four weeks and should not exceed twelve months.

9.2.4 UCQ normally expects apprentices to take no more than one Break in Learning during their apprenticeship. However, additional or extended breaks may be considered on an individual basis, particularly where the apprentice remains committed to completing their apprenticeship and has demonstrated satisfactory progress.

9.2.5 All Breaks in Learning must comply with applicable apprenticeship funding requirements. Where these requirements differ from UCQ's normal expectations, the funding requirements will take precedence.

9.3 Requesting a Break in Learning

9.3.1 Apprentices considering a Break in Learning should discuss their circumstances with their Professional Development Assessor (PDA) in the first instance.

9.3.2 Before proceeding with a formal request, UCQ will consider whether alternative support or arrangements could enable the apprentice to continue their training without requiring a Break in Learning.

9.3.3 Where a Break in Learning is considered appropriate, the apprentice must complete the Application for Break in Learning form (QD APPS 018).

9.3.4 The application must be signed by the apprentice and employer, confirming their agreement to the proposed break and the intention to return to the apprenticeship.

9.3.5 Completed applications should be submitted to Academic Registry at registry@ucq.ac.uk for processing.

9.4 Approval and Decision-Making

9.4.1 Applications for a Break in Learning will be considered by UCQ, taking account of the apprentice's circumstances, employer agreement, anticipated duration, progress to date and applicable apprenticeship funding requirements.

9.4.2 Apprentices will normally receive a response to their application within three working days.

9.4.3 Where an application is approved, UCQ will confirm the agreed arrangements, including the expected duration of the break and anticipated return to learning.

9.4.4 Where an application is unsuccessful, the apprentice will be notified in writing, including the reasons for the decision.

9.4.5 Apprentices who are dissatisfied with the outcome may appeal the decision in accordance with UCQ's Appeals Procedure (AC-001), available on the UCQ website.

9.5 Monitoring During a Break in Learning

9.5.1 UCQ will maintain appropriate records of apprentices undertaking a Break in Learning and will monitor and report on these arrangements in accordance with institutional and apprenticeship funding requirements.

9.5.2 Where circumstances change during the agreed break, the apprentice should notify UCQ and their employer as soon as reasonably practicable.

9.5.3 Any proposed extension or change to the agreed arrangements will be considered on an individual basis, subject to employer agreement and applicable funding requirements.

9.6 Returning from a Break in Learning

9.6.1 UCQ will normally contact apprentices at least six weeks before their anticipated return date to discuss arrangements for resuming their apprenticeship.

9.6.2 Apprentices will normally return to an available cohort undertaking the next appropriate module or stage of training, subject to capacity and programme availability. The timetable or delivery day may differ from that of their original cohort.

9.6.3 Before returning, the apprentice's Professional Development Assessor will arrange a return-to-learning meeting to identify any additional support requirements and confirm arrangements for resuming training.

9.6.4 Return-to-learning arrangements will normally include:

- reviewing and updating the apprentice's Curriculum Plan;
- confirming the remaining training and assessment requirements;
- re-orientation to Ecordia, the student portal and relevant policies and procedures;
- identifying any academic or pastoral support requirements;
- confirming the revised training schedule and anticipated completion arrangements.

9.6.5 Appropriate restart documentation, including the Individual Training Plan and Apprenticeship Agreement, will be issued for signature by the apprentice and employer, as required.

9.6.6 UCQ will provide appropriate support to facilitate the apprentice's integration into their returning cohort. This may include introductions to fellow apprentices, access to relevant student communication groups and the allocation of a student buddy where appropriate.

9.7 Alternatives to a Break in Learning

9.7.1 Where appropriate, UCQ may consider alternative arrangements to enable an apprentice to continue their training without taking a formal Break in Learning.

9.7.2 Such arrangements may include additional academic support, reasonable adjustments, timetable flexibility or a transfer to another cohort where active learning can continue.

9.7.3 Cohort transfers will normally be considered only in exceptional circumstances and will be limited to two occasions during an apprenticeship.

9.7.4 A cohort transfer must not be used as an alternative to a formal Break in Learning where the apprentice is no longer actively participating in training or where a Break in Learning is required under applicable funding rules.

9.8 Apprenticeship Withdrawal

9.8.1 Where an apprentice does not intend to return to their apprenticeship, or continuation is no longer possible, withdrawal may be appropriate rather than a Break in Learning.

9.8.2 Apprentices considering withdrawal should discuss their circumstances with their Professional Development Assessor and employer, where reasonably practicable, before a final decision is made.

9.8.3 Withdrawal from apprenticeship training will be managed in accordance with the relevant provisions of Section 7 of this Policy and applicable apprenticeship funding requirements.

9.8.4 For apprentices enrolled on a higher education programme validated by The Open University, UCQ will consider whether withdrawal from apprenticeship training also requires withdrawal from the associated academic programme, or whether alternative arrangements for continuation of study are available.

9.8.5 UCQ will confirm the outcome of withdrawal arrangements in writing and complete any required notifications or updates to apprenticeship and academic records.

9.8.6 Apprentices will be required to complete a withdrawal form as part of the withdrawal process.

9.9 Financial and Funding Implications

9.9.1 Financial arrangements relating to apprenticeship training, including payment obligations, funding adjustments and liabilities arising from a Break in Learning or withdrawal, are governed by the Employer Apprenticeship Training Agreement and applicable apprenticeship funding requirements.

9.9.2 UCQ will undertake any required apprenticeship funding and reporting actions arising from an approved Break in Learning, return to training or withdrawal.

9.9.3 Apprentices will be informed of any relevant implications for their apprenticeship training and, where applicable, their associated higher education registration.

10. Document History

ISSUE NO.	DATE	PAGE	REVIEWER	DETAIL OF AMENDMENT
1	17/07/26	All	Tara Henderson	New policy for non-apprenticeship higher education students.
2	13/10/26	All	Tara Henderson	Policy revised to extend its scope to apprenticeship learners and incorporate the provisions of TLA-026 Apprenticeship Break in Learning Policy. New Section 9 introduced to address apprenticeship breaks in learning, return to training, withdrawal and associated funding arrangements. TLA-026 superseded and archived following approval of the revised policy.

11. Initial Equalities Impact Assessment

Department: All	**Completed by:** Tara Henderson, Head of Policy & Governance	**Date of initial assessment:** 13/10/2026
Area to be assessed:	TLA-030 – Deferral, Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Policy	
Existing or new policy/procedure:	New	

What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)

- Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Office for Students (OfS) regulatory framework, including requirements relating to equality of opportunity and consumer protection.
- Consumer Rights Act 2015 and Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance for higher education providers.
- The Open University Regulations for Validated Awards.
- UCQ Student Terms and Conditions.
- UCQ Tuition Fee Policy and associated student support policies.
- Sector good practice relating to student retention, interruption of studies and withdrawal.
- Operational experience and professional judgement regarding the circumstances commonly experienced by students requiring deferral, interruption or withdrawal.

1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the policy/procedure	This Policy provides a fair, transparent and consistent framework for managing requests for deferral of entry, interruption of studies, student-initiated withdrawal and institution-initiated withdrawal. It aims to support students experiencing changes in their personal, academic or professional circumstances while protecting academic standards, ensuring compliance with consumer protection legislation and the Office for Students regulatory framework, and enabling informed decisions regarding the academic and financial implications of changes to registration status.		
2. Which stakeholders/groups are intended to benefit from this policy/procedure?	• Applicants who have accepted an offer but have not yet enrolled. • Students and apprentices enrolled on UCQ higher education programmes validated by The Open University. • UCQ staff responsible for advising students and administering changes to registration. • UCQ through consistent, transparent and equitable decision-making.		
The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to:- (1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization (2) Advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) Foster good relations between different groups	**3. Could the policy/procedure have a disproportionately negative effect impact in terms of the aims set out in (1) to (3) of the Act on any of the protected characteristics?:-** **High** **Medium** **Low** **No effect**	**4. Briefly explain how the policy/procedure furthers or prevents the aims set out in (1) to (3).**	**5. If there is a disproportionately negative impact on any protected characteristics, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality or any other reason? If yes, please explain.**
Age	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable

	Disability	Low	The Policy supports reasonable adjustments and recognises disability-related circumstances, enabling students to request deferrals or interruptions where appropriate. Decisions are made on an individual basis with appropriate support considered.	Not applicable
	Gender	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Gender reassignment	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Pregnancy and Maternity	Low	Pregnancy, maternity and related caring responsibilities are explicitly recognised as valid grounds for deferral or interruption, promoting equality of opportunity.	Not applicable
	Race	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Religion or Belief	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Sexual Orientation	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable

6. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?	The Policy has been developed with reference to the Equality Act 2010, UCQ's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments, and the needs of a diverse student population. No adverse equality impacts have been identified that require targeted consultation at this stage.	
7. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any?	• Decisions will be made on an individual basis. • Reasonable adjustments and appropriate support will be considered before withdrawal is confirmed. Staff will apply the Policy consistently and fairly. • Equality impacts will continue to be monitored through policy review and operational implementation.	
8. Based on the information in sections 1 to 7, should this policy/procedure proceed to Full Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more 'High' under section 3)	The assessment has identified no high adverse impacts on any protected characteristic. The Policy contains provisions that positively support students experiencing protected or exceptional circumstances.	
Assessor signature:	**Approved by:** **Michelle Elliott**	**Date approved:** 17/07/2026