



## ARDEN UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA 66 – WITHDRAWAL POLICY

### 1. Introduction

**1.1.** Arden University is committed to providing the highest quality student experience. However, there are circumstances upon which students may decide to withdraw or where the University may need to withdraw students from their programme.

**1.2.** This policy sets out all types of withdrawals and the process that must be followed by staff and students in managing withdrawals:

- Student self-withdrawal
- Early withdrawal
- Attendance and engagement withdrawal
- Financial withdrawal
- Disciplinary withdrawal
- Academic withdrawal

**1.3** Where there are differences in this policy relating to withdrawals for different student types at Arden University, these have been specified by stating **Study Centre Student** which refers to students who attend one of the University's study centres for in person teaching, which could also refer to students studying via one of our partner institutions. **International Student** refers to students who have been sponsored by Arden University to enter the Country and attend in person teaching on a full-time course and who must meet additional requirements as part of the terms of their visa. **Distance Learning Student** refers to students who have enrolled to complete a course online and on a remote basis. Where there is no difference the term 'student' encompasses all the above.

### 2. Student self-withdrawal

**2.1.** Students will normally follow an agreed mode of attendance, however if a student's circumstances change and they are unable to continue attending for a period, they should consider taking a break in learning. A break in learning allows a student to take a break from their programme for up to 12 months. See Arden University [Break in Learning Policy](#).

**2.2.** If a break in learning is not a suitable option, and where a student has decided after being coached by either an Arden University staff member or a member of staff at a partner institution, that they can no longer continue their programme of study, they can complete a Student Withdrawal Form. Students should read the Arden University Terms and Conditions and the Arden University Refund Policy when completing the withdrawal form. The date of self-withdrawal will be 14 days from the date that a student submits their withdrawal form to Arden University, or on the date that the withdrawal is processed, whichever comes first. Any student may withdraw from their studies at the University at any point



in the year. However, a student may not voluntarily withdraw after the University has decided to exclude the student.

**2.3. An International Student** who is on a student visa route to study at Arden University, will need to meet with the Visa Compliance Team to ensure that they fully understand the impact of withdrawal on their visa.

**2.4.**A withdrawal will not normally be backdated. Should a student wish to request a backdated withdrawal, they will need to set out their reasons for not requesting the withdrawal sooner in the withdrawal form. Any decision to agree a backdated withdrawal must be agreed by the Academic Registrar.

**2.5.**The student will receive confirmation of their withdrawal in writing. The communication will contain the date from which the withdrawal applies as per 2.2 above. Any work submitted by the student prior to their date of withdrawal will be marked and considered at the next available Progression and Award Board. The student will be considered for any fall-back award due, and any credit accrued will be awarded. The student will be notified of the outcome of the Progression and Award Board and will have the right to appeal.

**2.6.**If the student wishes to re-join the University, whether studying on the same or a different programme, they will need to reapply. Where relevant, and in line with our Academic Regulations, recognition of any credit attained during their previous study may be taken into consideration. The decision to readmit will be made by the Admissions team, applying the relevant entry criteria for the course to which the student has applied.

**2.7.**If a withdrawal is approved, finance will assess a student's eligibility of a refund in line with our [refund policy](#)

### 3. Early withdrawal (all students)

**3.1.** Arden University reserves the right to withdraw a student during the first two weeks of enrolment if a student has not completed expected attendance and engagement expectations:

- Student is enrolled and registered.
- Student has completed online induction.
- Student has engaged online completing lessons, activities and participating in discussion forums and **Distance Learning Students** have released their first module.
- **Study Centre Students** including **International Students** and **Partnership Students** have attended on campus induction.
- Student has paid or has approved student finance in place for study.
- **Study Centre Students** including **International Students** and **Partnership students** attendance is at least 80%.



- 3.2. Student Support will contact the student to offer support and advise that failure to meet the above conditions in the first two weeks of the programme start, will result in withdrawal from the programme.
- 3.3. Where the student fails to engage with Student Support or Student Finance, or if the concern is not resolved within two weeks of the programme start date, a recommendation for withdrawal will be made.
- 3.4. Where extenuating circumstances are identified, the student will be advised to refer to [QA 41 – Extenuating Circumstances Affecting Student Assessment](#) and [Break in Learning Policy](#).
- 3.5. Student Services and/or Student Finance will prepare a list of students who have not met expected attendance, engagement expectations or financial obligations. The list will be considered by Director of Student Support or nominee, and the Head of Student Finance or nominee and the Head of Registry Services or nominee. Where a decision concerns an **International Student** on a student visa, the Head of International Student Compliance will also be consulted. If all parties agree, the student will be withdrawn as an 'early withdrawal'.
- 3.6. Students will be notified in writing that they have been withdrawn within five working days of the date of withdrawal.
- 3.7. Students who are withdrawn as an 'early withdrawal', have no formal right of appeal. However, if a student believes that they have been withdrawn in error, they may lodge a complaint following the [Students Complaint Procedure \(QA48\)](#).

#### 4. Attendance and engagement withdrawal

- 4.1. Arden University is committed to providing the highest quality student experience and a key component of this is promoting and encouraging student attendance and engagement with all aspects of the learner experience. Student attendance and engagement is monitored for the following reasons:
  - To aid student retention and progression, through the early identification of students at risk and allow timely academic and personal support interventions.
  - To enable notifications of withdrawals to be made on time ensuring all stakeholders are informed in a timely manner.
  - To meet any requirement to report absences to employers or other sponsors where they are funding/co-funding course fees.
  - To comply with the requirements of the Student Loan Company who require confirmation of attendance on a regular basis for those students who are in receipt of financial support.



- To comply with visa<sup>1</sup> authorisation and undertake any necessary reporting to local immigration authorities (where applicable).

**4.2.** Student attendance and engagement is monitored as per the [Attendance and Engagement Policy \(QA 88\)](#).

**4.3.** The following stages of formal intervention will be undertaken<sup>2</sup> before a recommendation for withdrawal is made to the Withdrawal Panel:

**4.3.1. Stage 1 - Initial Warning**

Where there is a concern that a student is not meeting the expected requirements for attendance, a member of Student Support will advise them of the concern in writing and set a deadline by which the matter must be resolved. This will be recorded as an initial stage 1 warning on the student record.

**4.3.2. Stage 2 – Formal Warning**

If after the initial warning, the concern is ongoing and agreed deadlines to improve attendance have not been met, a student will normally be invited to attend a meeting with a member of Student Support (online, telephone or in person) to discuss the matter and agree a deadline and any actions required for adequate resolution.

If a student fails to attend the meeting without prior notice, or if a meeting date cannot not be agreed within 10 working days, or if the student fails to meet the required actions set at the stage 2 meeting by the agreed deadline, a stage 2 Formal Warning will be issued and recorded on the student record.

**4.3.3. Stage 3 – Final Warning**

If the matter is not resolved following a stage 2 meeting and a Formal Warning, the student will be notified of the requirement to attend a final meeting (online, telephone or in person) with the Head of Centre and relevant Academic lead to discuss the matter and any actions required. A Stage 3 Final Written Warning will be issued to the student outlining that failure to resolve the matter by the given deadline will result in exclusion from the programme.

If the student fails to attend the meeting without prior notice, or if a meeting date cannot not be agreed within 10 working days, or if the student fails to meet the required actions set at the stage 3 meeting by the agreed deadline, the student will be put forward for withdrawal.

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<sup>1</sup> Where Visa is referred to throughout this document it applies to students on Student Route Visa (SRV) issued and regulated by UKVI and students in Berlin on a Student Visa issued and regulated by German Immigration Authority.

<sup>2</sup> The University reserves the right to not apply all stage warnings to a student record and move straight to withdrawal.



- 4.4.** If exceptional mitigating circumstances are identified during the above stages, the student will be advised to refer to [QA 41 – Extenuating Circumstances Affecting Student Assessment](#) and [Break in Learning Policy](#)
- 4.5.** Where a student has exhausted the above support stages, Student Support will prepare a recommendation of withdrawal to be put forward to the withdrawal panel. The withdrawal panel considers students for attendance, engagement, and financial withdrawals. See section 7 for Withdrawal Panel.

## 5. Success Coach Intervention

- 5.1.** Where there is a concern that students are not meeting the minimum requirements for both attendance and engagement students may be assigned a dedicated Success Coach. The role of the success coach is to work with the students to identify any barriers and provide any advice and guidance to support them getting back on track with their studies. Alternative equivalent support will be provided at Partner Institutions.
- 5.2.** The following stages of formal intervention with a Success Coach will be undertaken before a recommendation for withdrawal is made to the Withdrawal Panel:

### 5.2.1 Stage 1 - Initial Engagement Warning

If a Success Coach is assigned to a student and a student does not engage with them or their studies during the study block, they may be at-risk of withdrawal. Their assigned Success Coach will attempt contact during the first block to advise the student of engagement concerns and create a study plan of expected requirements for the student to follow.

### 5.2.2 Stage 2 – Email Warning

If after the initial warning, the concern is ongoing and engagement improvement goals have not been met, the student will be sent an email warning to inform them they are at risk of withdrawal if they do not engage with their studies in the first four to six weeks of their second block of studies.

If a student is non-responsive to contact made by their Success Coach, they will receive an email to explain they are at risk of withdrawal due to lack of engagement. The student will be informed that they are required to engage with their assigned coach within the first six weeks of their second block of studies, or they will be withdrawn.

### 5.2.3 Stage 3 – Final Contact

If a student does not engage with their studies following Coach contact and email warnings, they will be given a final contact attempt from their success coach. If this contact attempt is unsuccessful and the student has still not met



the requirements for engagement, an email will be sent to the student to inform them they will be put forward for withdrawal.

## 6. Financial Withdrawal

- 6.1** It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they have their finances in place and that they can meet the costs of their fees before enrolling as set out in the Course Fee Payment Policy.
- 6.2.** If any student has not met their financial responsibilities to Arden University as outlined in the Course Fee Payment Policy, Student Finance will prepare a recommendation of withdrawal to be put forward to the withdrawal panel. The withdrawal panel considers students for attendance, engagement, and financial withdrawals. See section 7 for Withdrawal Panel.

## 7. Disciplinary withdrawal

- 7.1.** If a Student Discipline Committee recommends that a student should be excluded, in accordance with the [Student Disciplinary Procedure \(QA60\)](#), the student will be presented to the Progression and Awards Board for withdrawal.
- 7.2.** Where a Committee of Enquiry confirms a case of Academic Misconduct and determines a penalty of exclusion, the student will be presented to the Progression and Awards Board for withdrawal.
- 7.3.** The Progression and Awards Board will consider any credit or award that a student has achieved and will decide if the student can be awarded credit or a fall-back award in line with the Committee of Enquiry recommendations.

## 8. Withdrawal Panel

- 8.1.** The Purpose of the withdrawal panel is to consider on behalf of the Progression and Awards Board the non-academic withdrawal of students who have not met their attendance and engagement requirements and/or their financial obligations to the University.
- 8.2.** The panel will consider the grounds presented for withdrawal and will either confirm a withdrawal or will refer for further information.
- 8.3.** Following a withdrawal panel meeting, relevant students will be written to by Registry to advise them of the decision to withdraw them and the reasons why.
- 8.4.** A student withdrawal will be processed 10 working days from the date of the notification to the student. An official notification of withdrawal will be issued to the student at this stage and the student will have the right to appeal in line with section 9 of this policy.



**8.5.** A list of all students withdrawn will be presented to the next Progression and Awards Board. The Progression and Awards Board will consider students for any fall-back award due, or any credit accrued.

## 9. Academic withdrawal

**9.1.** During a Progression and Awards Board students may be considered for academic withdrawal in line with Arden University's Regulatory Framework. In summary the grounds for Academic Withdrawal are:

**9.1.1.** Where a student has not achieved a pass mark following the maximum number of referrals or re-takes available and is not eligible for compensation. Such students will be withdrawn and awarded any exit award for which they are eligible.

**9.1.2.** Where a student has not demonstrated sufficient achievement or engagement to be offered a retake opportunity.

**9.1.3.** Where a student who has failed to re-register for two consecutive annual re-registration points or whose progress through the programme will not allow completion within the maximum study period for the programme.

## 10. Appeal

**10.1.** Any student who has been withdrawn based on financial, attendance and engagement or academic grounds, may submit an appeal against a withdrawal decision made by or on behalf of the Progression and Award Board.

**10.2.** Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving a result outcome from the Progression and Award Board

**10.3.** Any student wishing to submit an appeal, must do so in line with the [Academic Appeals Process \(QA24\)](#).

Policy Name:	Withdrawal Policy
Policy Reference:	QA66
Approval Authority:	Quality and Standards Committee
Last Approved:	September 2023
Responsible SMT Lead:	Academic Registrar
Responsible Department:	Academic Affairs
Policy Contact:	Rosella Brennan, Head of Registry Services ( <a href="mailto:rbrennan@arden.ac.uk">rbrennan@arden.ac.uk</a> )
Review Frequency:	3 years