

**Interruption, Withdrawal, and Internal Transfer Procedure**

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Approving Body	Academic Board
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**1 Overview**

**Introduction**

1.1. MetFilm School (the School) works to create an environment in which all students are challenged, supported, and encouraged to succeed. The School is committed to ensuring its students receive a high-quality experience which culminates in achieving the qualification for which they are enrolled. However, the School recognises that on occasion students may wish to transfer to another course or be affected by ill health or other difficult personal circumstances which impact on their ability to engage with their studies. In such circumstances an interruption, withdrawal or internal transfer may be sought.

1.2. This procedure articulates the expectations of MetFilm School relating to student-initiated interruption (voluntary academic suspension), transfer or withdrawal of studies by students on its accredited programmes. This procedure should be used in conjunction with the following regulations and policies:

- University of West London Academic Regulations
- MetFilm School Attendance Monitoring & Engagement Policy
- University of West London Mitigating Circumstances Policy
- MetFilm School Terms & Conditions
- Refund and Compensation Policy
- Admissions Policy
- MetFilm School Transfer Policy

1.3. In addition to these regulations and policies, the School may, in exceptional circumstances, have other grounds to suspend or withdraw a student from their studies. Please refer to the appropriate policies and regulations which include but are not limited to:

- Fitness to Study Policy
- MetFilm School Student Disciplinary Policy
- Student Disciplinary Procedure as set out in the MetFilm School Student Handbook
- University of West London Academic Misconduct Regulations

## Sources of Support

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1.4. All students are encouraged to contact their personal tutor and / or the Student Services team for support and guidance if they find themselves in times of personal difficulties.

1.5. There are several support services/mechanisms available to students. The table below lists them with their area of support and initial contact details:

Support Service	Area of Support	Contact details
MetFilm Futures	Careers and employability service from CV checking to interviews, applications, and career planning	London <a href="mailto:metfilmfutures@metfilm.co.uk">metfilmfutures@metfilm.co.uk</a> +44 (0) 20 8280 9112  Berlin <a href="mailto:futures@metfilmschool.de">futures@metfilmschool.de</a> +49 30 7673 33170
Counselling Service	Confidential free counselling service available to all students	<a href="mailto:counselling@metfilmschool.ac.uk">counselling@metfilmschool.ac.uk</a>
Big White Wall	Confidential 24hr support network available to all students	<a href="http://www.bigwhitewall.co.uk">www.bigwhitewall.co.uk</a>

	with a verified MetFilm School email address	
Course Leader	Contact for academic issues relating to the course	Course Leader information can be found on the relevant Programme Site on Moodle
Personal Tutor	Contact for academic issues relating to the course and pastoral support	Please contact the relevant Course Manager for this information
Student Services	Disability & learning support advice including reasonable adjustments for disclosed conditions	<a href="mailto:wellbeing@metfilmschool.ac.uk">wellbeing@metfilmschool.ac.uk</a>  +44 (0)20 8280 9113 Student Services B Block 9am – 5pm
Compliance and Administration	Contact for visa support and on programme monitoring of Tier 4 students.	<a href="mailto:admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk">admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk</a>
Finance team	Contact for information on tuition fees and payment plans	<a href="mailto:admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk">admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk</a>

## 2 Definitions

2.1. The definitions listed below will be used throughout this document and are the common understanding of these terms within MetFilm School.

**Withdrawal:** Student is formally leaving the course with no intention to return to studies at MetFilm School within the permitted registration period. N.B. a student leaving MetFilm School to join a course at another institution must formally withdraw prior to enrolment at their new institution.

**Interruption of Studies:** Student has requested, and has been granted, temporary leave from the course, with the intention of re-joining with a subsequent year group. This is sometimes also known as ‘deferral.’

**Internal Transfer:** Student has requested, and has been granted, a move to another programme within the institution. This would normally be completed at the beginning of a year and may require some additional credits/modules to be undertaken to meet the new programme requirements. This includes changes to study mode (i.e., part-time, or full-time).

**Enrolled student:** students who have been registered and started an accredited programme of study.

**Short Courses:** self-contained courses of six-month duration or less, not intended to result in a degree award.

### 3 Scope

- 3.1 This procedure applies to already enrolled students who wish to interrupt, withdraw, or transfer. The section on internal transfers also applies to applicants. Students wishing to defer entry to their programme of study should contact the relevant Admissions Manager and follow the deferred entry process under the MetFilm School Admissions Policy. This procedure does not apply to School Initiated Withdrawals.
- 3.2 Students holding Tier 4 visas, where MetFilm School have issued a CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies), cannot interrupt to gain work experience or to earn money towards their study fees. This is governed by Home Office rules. Tier 4 students who interrupt their studies may be required to leave the UK, even if they are interrupting because of personal or medical reasons. MetFilm School is required to notify the Home Office of interruptions of study for students sponsored under Tier 4 of the Points Based Immigration System where MetFilm have issued a CAS. Immigration rules are complex and dependent on individual circumstances. Any Tier 4 students wishing to withdraw, interrupt or transfer should take advice from Student Services in the first instance ([admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk](mailto:admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk)) and are also encouraged to consult UKVI and SFE directly.
- 3.3 The procedure applies to students on short courses, as well as students on all validated degree courses.

### 4 Interruption of Studies

#### Request to Interrupt Studies

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- 4.1 Enrolled students can request to interrupt their studies. An interruption can have a wide-ranging impact on all aspects of the student journey and the student experience. For this reason, all students requesting an interruption should contact their course leader or course manager to discuss the reasons for their request, the details of their situation and the options open to them before submitting a request.
- 4.2 This discussion should take the form of an informal meeting and should include discussions about any outstanding assessments to be taken, proposed return dates and other aspects such as potential fee or bursary implications. A member of staff from the Student Services team may be included in this discussion to provide advice and guidance. A written record of any decisions taken should be made.

- 4.3 Where an individual case is particularly complex, it may be necessary to invite further members of staff to the meeting to advise on other key factors such as visa status and financial implications.
- 4.4 Formal action to interrupt a student's studies will be initiated by completion of the Interruption of Studies Form which should be completed by the student and returned by the student to Student Services. A copy of the form and further details can be obtained by contacting Student Services ([admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk](mailto:admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk)).
- 4.5 The Interruption of Studies request will be considered by the course leader in consultation with a Deputy Director or nominee if appropriate and any other relevant members of staff. All requests will be carefully considered. Any decision will be based on individual circumstances and the potential impact of interruption on the student's learning experience.
- 4.6 The School will endeavour to aid students to continue and complete their studies as far as is reasonable, but the School is not obliged to grant an interruption of studies request. Students who have applied for an interruption should continue to engage with their course and attend all classes, until Student Services has communicated the outcome of their case to the student.
- 4.7 Student Services will notify the student of the decision in a timely manner, usually within **1 week** of receipt of the request.
- 4.8 An Interruption of Studies will not be approved where it would lead to a student exceeding the maximum period of registration for the course or breaching any professional, statutory, or regulatory body (PSRB) or legal requirements.
- 4.9 Students are advised that on their return to studies they will be governed by the curriculum and the rules and regulations in force at the time of their re-enrolment.
- 4.10 This may mean that a student will not be able to return to the same course, if the programme is no longer being offered, or it may have significantly changed. Please refer to point 4.18 to 4.20 in the 'Return to Study' section below.
- 4.11 When a student interrupts their studies, they will remain liable for any tuition fees in that fee period, which will normally equate to a term. Please see MetFilm School Terms and Conditions and the Refund and Compensation Policy for more information.

### **Duration of Interruption**

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- 4.12 In accordance with University of West London Academic Regulations, students may be permitted to interrupt their studies for a maximum of **two calendar years**, subject to the stipulations of the programme of study. The initial period will normally be for one calendar year. Should an extension to this period be required, an additional request must be submitted for approval.
- 4.13 If the period extends beyond the two years (or programme specific limit), the student will be withdrawn from the programme and an exit award issued (where sufficient credit had been achieved). Should a student wish to return to their studies at a later date, they must apply through the usual application channels. Credit for previously completed modules may be given, dependent on the course, length of time away from studies and any specific regulations relating to the programme and may be subject to ratification through the [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) and Credit Transfer processes in place at the University of West London \(UWL\)](#).
- 4.14 An interruption of studies cannot be 'backdated.' Requests to retrospectively apply an interruption of studies will not usually be granted except in the most extreme circumstances. The interruption of studies will be actioned from the date of submitting the request and should a student feel that their studies, and any assessments due to be undertaken, previous to this date have been affected by mitigating circumstances they should follow the process for submitting a claim to the mitigating circumstances panel. Please see the Mitigating Circumstances Policy for more information.

### **Assessments and access to resources during an interruption**

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- 4.15 Students who have interrupted their studies will not normally be permitted to submit any work for assessment or undertake an examination of any type for the duration of their interruption. The results for all assessments due to be undertaken prior to the point at which a student interrupts their studies, including any non-submissions, will stand on the student's return to study. In line with UWL Academic Regulations, the result for any module that has not been completed (for example where the student has submitted to Assessment 1 but not Assessment 2) will not be retained. The student shall re-register on that module on their return, however they will not be charged again for that module, and the assessments will not count as a retake, therefore will not be capped.
- 4.16 The School will provide a package of support for students who have interrupted their studies which will include access to the virtual learning environment, with restricted access rights, and some general access to School buildings.

## Return to Study

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- 4.17 Liaison will take place with a student prior to their return to the University to confirm return to study arrangements. This will include confirming the previously agreed date of return, module choices where appropriate, confirmation of any outstanding assessments, and the implications of any changes to the course or regulations during the period of interruption. Where possible, this should take the form of a face-to-face meeting between the student and the Course Leader under the advice and guidance of a member of Student Services staff, to facilitate and support the student's effective return to the programme.
- 4.18 A student due to return from an interruption of studies must complete re-enrolment by the appropriate deadline, as agreed by the student and School. Failure to re-enrol will normally result in the student being formally withdrawn.
- 4.19 The School may suspend a student from their studies under the policies and procedures listed in point 1.3 of the 'Overview' section above. Where this is the case, the processes required by those policies will be followed, including the appropriate Return to Study procedure.

## 5 Withdrawal from MetFilm School

### Request to Withdraw

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- 5.1 Students have the right to withdraw from their studies at any time. However, withdrawal is a permanent step which cannot be reversed. It is also a step with wide-ranging implications.
- 5.2 Any student wishing to initiate a withdrawal request should consult with their course leader and/or course manager to discuss the reasons for their request, the details of their situation and the options open to them before submitting a request.
- 5.3 It is considered good practice to hold a withdrawal meeting with the student which should include discussions of any potential impacts on the student, especially potential fee or funding implications, and immigration implications. This meeting should be a meeting between the course leader and the student. A member of staff from the Student Services team should be included in this discussion to provide advice and guidance. A written record of any decisions taken should be made. The aim of this meeting is to support students in coming to the right decision for them.
- 5.4 Formal action to withdraw will be initiated by completion of the Withdrawal Form. A copy of the form and further details can be obtained by contacting Student Services ([admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk](mailto:admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk)). The form should be returned to Student Services by the student as set out in the form.

5.5 Withdrawal requests will be processed in a timely manner, and usually within **1 week** of the receipt of the request.

### **Awards and Credit gained**

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5.6 When a student withdraws from the School, they will be awarded any credits accrued and therefore any exit award that they have earned, subject to the decision of an Assessment Board.

5.7 If the student is eligible for an exit award, this will be awarded as appropriate either at the point of withdrawal by Chair's Action if all marks have already been confirmed through University of West London awarding processes (for example if a student withdraws at the beginning of an academic year or stage) or at the next appropriate Assessment board if assessment has been undertaken for which marks are yet to be ratified.

5.8 In line with UWL Academic Regulations, for the purpose of the student record, the date of withdrawal will be the same as the date the request to withdraw is submitted, unless evidence is readily available to confirm an earlier date.

### **Funding and Access to Resources Following Withdrawal**

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5.9 Students will remain liable for any fees that are due for the study period, normally the year of study in which they withdraw, as per MetFilm School Terms & Conditions. They will also cease to have entitlement to bursaries or loans granted on the basis of enrolment. Students are advised to seek specific guidance on fees and funding directly from the funding organization (e.g., Student Finance England) and the Finance team at the School.

5.10 Students should be aware that, once a withdrawal has been finalised, the School will normally have an obligation to inform relevant funding bodies and government organisations (for example the Home Office, in relation to students with visa arrangements) of the change to the student's status. Once a withdrawal request has been actioned it cannot be rescinded.

5.11 Once withdrawn, the student will not be eligible to access MetFilm School or UWL property or their services, except where permitted to do so as a member of the public.

### **Resumption of studies following a withdrawal**

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5.12 Should a student, once withdrawn, decide that they wish to return to their studies, they must follow the normal application and admissions processes. Admissions decisions will be made in line with the MetFilm School Admissions policy. Readmission following withdrawal cannot be guaranteed.

5.13 In some cases, where a student is admitted to study at the School again, exemption from completing the full course due to credits already obtained may be granted. This should be discussed with the Admissions team at the point of

application and, dependant on the course, may be granted subject to ratification through the processes for RPL and Credit Transfer and subject to approval by the University of West London.

## 6 Internal Transfer

### Request for Internal Transfer

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- 6.1 When MetFilm School makes an offer to study, it is for the course specified in the offer communication. However, an enrolled student may request to transfer to a different course of study within the School.
- 6.2 As with interruptions and withdrawals, transfers can have wide-ranging implications for students, including on career choice, further study, funding, and immigration status. Any student considering an internal transfer should consult their course leader, course manager, and/or a member of Student Services staff, before proceeding. This is particularly important for Tier 4 students. See point 3.2 in the 'Scope' section above.
- 6.3 An informal meeting should normally be held between the current course leader, the student, and the receiving course leader. A member of staff from the Student Services team may be included in this discussion to provide advice and guidance. A written record of any decisions taken should be made.
- 6.4 Transfers between MetFilm courses will depend upon students meeting the entry requirements of the course, academic performance to date (if applicable) and the availability of places. For international students, consideration will also be given to their visa status and Tier 4 compliance.
- 6.5 The final decision on approving a transfer request rests with the receiving course leader. Any decision is likely to consider individual student circumstances and the potential impact of transfer on the student's learning experience. The School is not obliged to grant a transfer request and may not grant a transfer request if it has concerns regarding the impact of the change to the students learning experience, for example if the School receives multiple transfer requests from the same student.
- 6.6 For first year students, transfers between MetFilm courses within the current academic year will not normally be sanctioned after the end of the second week of the academic year. For students progressing to year two (or equivalent on the 2-year accelerated programmes) of their studies, transfers should normally take place before the next academic instance commences (and by exception, no later than the end of the first week of the instance).
- 6.7 Formal action to transfer will be initiated by completion of the Internal Transfer Request Form which should be returned by the receiving course leader to Student Services **within one week** of the request being made. The student must countersign the form to confirm their choice in writing before the transfer can go

ahead. A copy of the form and further details can be obtained by contacting Student Services ([admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk](mailto:admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk)).

6.8 Student Services will write to the student to notify them of the decision in a timely manner, usually within 1 week of receipt of the request. The formal notification will outline any adjustments to fee liability.

## 7 Students on Short Courses

### Request for Interruption

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7.1 Students on short courses who wish to interrupt should submit their interruption request in writing to the relevant course manager in the first instance.

7.2 Interruptions for students on short courses are considered on a case by case basis, by the relevant course leaders in consultation with relevant student services staff. Any decision will consider individual student circumstances and the potential impact of interruption on the student's learning experience. The School is not obliged to grant an interruption request if it has concerns regarding the impact of the change to the students learning experience.

7.3 Where possible a meeting should be held to discuss the reasons for the interruption and any potential impact on the student.

7.4 The duration of the interruption and a return date should be agreed with the student in writing.

7.5 Interruption requests will be processed in a timely manner, and usually within **1 week** of the receipt of the request.

### Request for Withdrawal

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7.6 Students on short courses can withdraw at any time but will not always be entitled to a refund. Students on short courses should refer to the MetFilm School Terms and Conditions and the Refund and Compensation Policy for detail of the potential financial impact of withdrawing from their course.

7.7 Students on short courses who wish to withdraw should submit their withdrawal request in writing to the relevant course manager in the first instance.

7.8 Where possible, a meeting should be held with the student to discuss the reasons for the withdrawal and any potential impact on the student, especially financial or visa impacts.

7.9 Withdrawals are permanent and cannot be rescinded. A student who has been withdrawn must reapply to study.

7.10 Withdrawal requests will be processed in a timely manner, and usually within **1 week** of the receipt of the request.

### **Request for Internal Transfer**

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7.11 Students on short courses who wish to transfer should submit their transfer request in writing to the relevant course manager in the first instance.

7.12 Transfers for students on short courses are considered on a case by case basis, by the relevant course leaders in consultation with relevant student services staff. Any decision will consider individual student circumstances and the potential impact of transfer on the student's learning experience.

7.13 Where possible a meeting should be held to discuss the reasons for the transfer and any potential impact on the student.

7.14 Transfer requests for students on short courses are considered on a case by case basis, by the relevant course leaders in consultation with the Deputy Director or nominee.

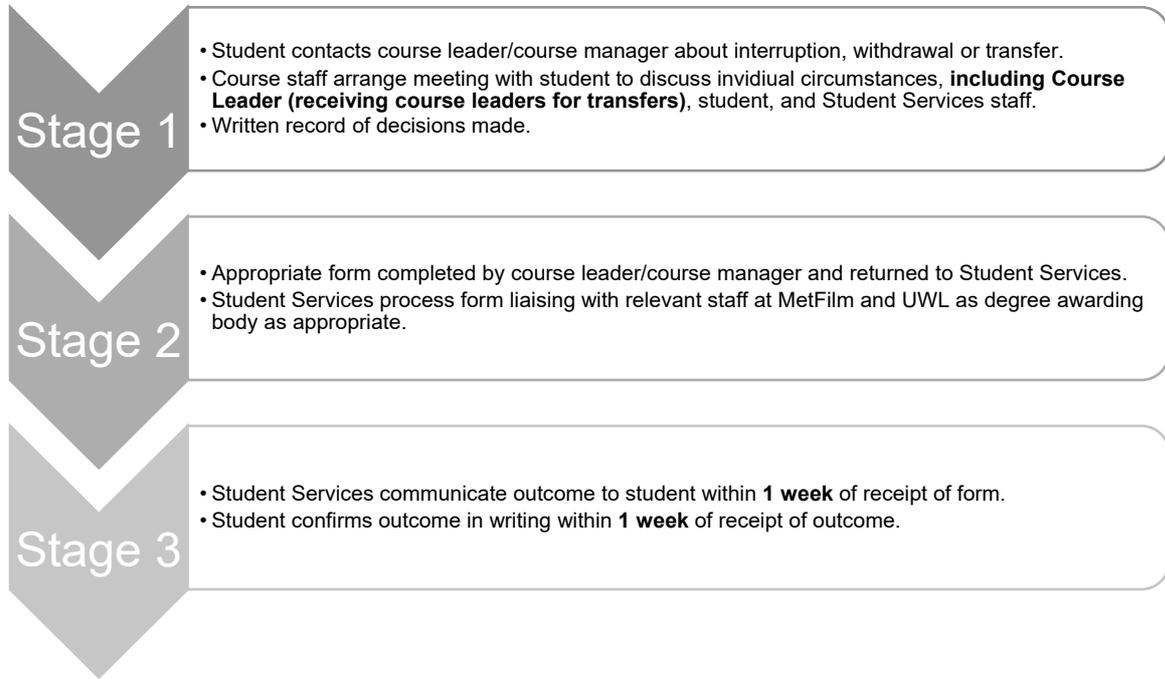
7.15 The School will not unreasonably reject a request to transfer. However, any decision will consider individual student circumstances and the potential impact of transfer on the student's learning experience. The School is not obliged to grant a transfer request and may not grant a transfer request if it has concerns regarding the impact of the change to the students learning experience, for example if the School receives multiple transfer requests (usually two or more) from the same student.

7.16 Transfer requests will be processed in a timely manner, and usually within **1 week** of the receipt of the request.

## 8 Appendix 1 – Quick Guide Flow Charts

### Accredited Courses

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### Short Courses

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