

LFS Deferment Policy

1. Introduction

Circumstances may arise where a student may wish to apply to defer their studies. This allows students to temporarily halt their studies for one or more terms, and re-join their programme of study at a later date. Applications for deferment are normally only considered at the end of a term and requests must be submitted in writing by the stipulated deadline.

2. Scope

This policy applies to both the MA Filmmaking and MA Screenwriting programme.

3. General Stipulations

- 3.1. It is important to note that applications for a deferral are not automatically approved.
- 3.2. A deferral will only be approved by the School for serious and pressing circumstances, such as serious personal problems, financial problems or illness of the student or a family member.
- 3.3. In order to apply for a deferral, students must complete the deferral application form providing evidence of their circumstances. The form is available from Moodle and Academic Registry.
- 3.4. Deferments are not normally permitted once a student has reached Term 6.
- 3.5. Deferments may have financial implications and students who wish to defer are strongly advised to discuss their deferment and the implications, especially with regard to tuition fees with the Finance Department.
- 3.6. Students may only apply to defer for one term, and will be required to re-apply each term if the problem persists and they wish to defer for additional further terms. If a student fails to re-apply for the next term and does not proceed with the course, the School will consider that student has withdrawn from the course and does not intend to return.
- 3.7. Students may not normally defer their place on the course for more than one year (i.e. three consecutive deferment requests as per paragraph 3.6).
- 3.8. Students with outstanding (incomplete) coursework, including reassessments from previous terms, would normally be expected to submit their work prior to deferring their studies. Where this is not possible, appropriate arrangements need to be made with and agreed to by the Director of Studies.
- 3.9. Students can defer their studies if they have outstanding fees, but may not be allowed to return until any debt is paid.
- 3.10. Deferments affect a student's status in the UK as an international student. International students who defer for any reason will have their visa cancelled and have to reapply through the Home Office.

- 3.11. Each course also has a maximum registration period within which it must be completed, including any agreed deferral time. For MA courses, this is normally six years.
- 3.12. Students should note that once a deferment request has been received and approved, they will no longer have student status or normal student rights and entitlements until they re-join their programme of study.
- 3.13. Students who leave the course without applying for a deferral will be deemed to have withdrawn from the course and will not be allowed to recommence the course at a later date.

4. Deferment Process

- 4.1. For new students the deferment form must be completed in full, signed and returned to Academic Registry no later than 5pm on Thursday of week 2 of the term they wish to defer from. New students become liable for the term's fees if in attendance after the end of week 2.
- 4.2. For continuing students in terms 2+ the deferment form must be completed in full, signed and returned to Academic Registry by 5pm on the first day of term. Continuing students become liable for the term's fees if in attendance after the first day of term.
- 4.3. Final decisions about deferral applications are the responsibility of the Director of Studies.
- 4.4. Academic Registry will inform the student about the decision in writing. Relevant members of staff, including the Personal Tutor and Term Tutor, will also be informed.
- 4.5. Final confirmation is subject to confirmation from Heads of Departments, the library and other relevant parties that all School property and equipment has been returned, and that there are no pending claims or other matters that need to be resolved before a student can defer their studies.
- 4.6. The School will inform the partner university about all students who deferred their studies at the earliest opportunity, normally the next Assessment Board.

5. Returning to the Programme of Study

- 5.1. Any student returning to their programme of study after a deferral must recommence their studies from the point in the programme at which they deferred.
- 5.2. In some instances, the Director of Studies may require students to recommence their studies from an earlier point. In such cases, students will be given sufficient notice to make arrangements and the School will ensure that students are fully aware of any implications this may have.
- 5.3. Students should note that they will be joining a different cohort and will not be able to join their original cohort which will be further along in the programme of study.

5.4. Students should further note that whilst the School endeavours to enable students to return to the cohort of their choice, this may not always be possible due to limitations to class sizes. In such cases, the School will extend the student's permission to defer until a place becomes available.

6. Version Control

Version Number	Changes	Author, Title	Date
0.1	-	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	26/06/2015
0.2	Comments of Academic Board, Summer 2015 added; references to specific partner university removed	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	19/01/2016
0.3	Comments of Academic Board, Spring 2016 added	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	29/02/2016
1.0	Approved by Chair's Action	Dr Jane Roscoe, Chair, Academic Board	08/03/2016
1.1	Minor correction; Paragraph 3.7 added	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	10/02/2017
1.2	Approved by Academic Board	-	13/03/2017
1.3	Tuition fees become liable from first day of attendance in continuing terms	Michele Maher, Academic Registrar	30/05/2023