

# Temporary Suspension and Deferral of Studies Procedure

## Section 1 - Introduction

### Purpose and Parent Policy

(1) This procedure sets out the steps for temporarily suspending a student's place on their programme, either through a deferral or a transfer of the student under the [Temporary Suspension of Studies and Deferral Policy](#).

### Responsibilities

#### Student responsibilities

(2) The student is responsible for communicating with the College about their progress on the programme and for requesting to defer their place, should they wish to do so.

(3) The student is responsible for supplying verifiable and relevant evidence in support of their application.

(4) The student must continue to engage fully with their programme until a decision regarding their application is communicated to them. They must also adhere to all of their obligations to remain in good academic and financial standing with the College.

#### Staff responsibilities

(5) The Registrar, or their nominee, is responsible, with the advice of the Programme Director or their nominee, for temporarily suspending a student's place on the programme or for transferring the student.

(6) The Assessment and Awards Office (AAO) has responsibility for contacting the student with the outcome of the deferral application.

(7) Programme Administration has responsibility for providing the AAO and the Finance Department with information to support the process as appropriate, and vice versa

(8) The Student Support Officer is responsible for guiding and supporting a student who expresses interest in deferring as per the grounds for deferral contained within [Temporary Suspension of Studies and Deferral Policy](#).

(9) The Student Support Officer contacts the student to advise of the date of return to studies

#### Faculty Responsibilities

(10) The Programme Director, no nominee, is responsible for advising the Registrar if a student should be allowed to defer or if a student should be transferred.

### Definitions

(11) Deferral - A deferral is a temporary suspension of studies granted to a registered student following consideration of a request by the student. It may only be granted to a student after the end of the cooling-off period.

(12) Return to Studies – A return to studies is when the student re-engages with their programme of study at the conclusion of their period of suspension or deferral.

(13) Transfer - A transfer is where the student moves from one live cohort to another live cohort following recommendation by the College and where, in transferring, all academic and financial history remain associated with the student. There is no intent to pause or suspend studies when a transfer occurs. However, due to the flow of a programme's structure, a student may need to wait to undertake the next element of the programme for which they are eligible. This occurs where no other means of a student successfully completing the programme exists.

## Section 2 - Procedure

(14) The definitions section of the [Temporary Suspension of Studies and Deferral Policy](#) sets out the various ways in which a student's studies may be temporarily suspended.

### Part A - Procedure for Postponement

(15) The procedure for postponement is outlined within the [Admission Offers Procedure](#).

### Part B - Procedure for Deferrals

#### Application

(16) A student applies for deferral by completing and submitting the relevant form by email to AAO, ([aao@hiberniacollege.net](mailto:aao@hiberniacollege.net)) Department of the Registrar.

(17) The completed form must be accompanied by verifiable evidence of the circumstances that supports the request for deferral.

#### Evaluation of Application

(18) The Registrar, or their nominee, evaluates the application for completeness and any accompanying evidence for validity and authenticity.

(19) Where evidence supporting the application is not available, the student is asked to make the evidence available as soon as possible. Any delay in submitting evidence can result in a delay in the processing of a deferral, or a rejection of the application.

(20) Students should not assume that their deferral is granted. They should continue with their studies and assessments as per their current programme schedule.

#### Consideration of the Application

(21) AAO forwards the application to the Programme Director, or their nominee, for evaluation and consideration of the following factors:

- a. The student's circumstances leading to the request and supporting evidence
- b. The best academic interest of the student
- c. The academic achievements of the student to date
- d. The stage the student is at in the programme and the scheduled timetable
- e. The remaining requirements for completion of the programme
- f. The validation requirements for the programme (if there are any salient programme rules affecting the

student's progress)

- g. The best academic interest of the student
- h. Previous College agreements, i.e. conditions previously imposed by the Academic Board or any of its subcommittees on the programme
- i. The financial standing of the student is considered as part of the overall process

(22) The Programme Director, or nominee, consults with the Programme Team as well as Student Affairs, and the Department of the Registrar, and the Finance Department where appropriate.

(23) The Programme Director or nominee decides whether to recommend to the Registrar either:

- a. a. Deferral granted and the Programme Director indicates the next steps
- b. b. Deferral not granted and the Programme Director indicates the rationale for this recommendation

### **Outcome: Deferral Granted**

(24) After the recommendation to grant a deferral has been made by the Programme Director, a deferral tracker meeting is held between representatives of AAO, Student Support, Programme Administration and any other relevant parties, to decide upon a return date and any implications which need to be addressed at this point

(25) The student is notified in writing of the decision and associated implications, which include:

- a. Requirements for progression on the programme at the point the student returns to studies
- b. Recognition of completed modules that the student carries with them
- c. Modules that the student will have to complete upon returning to studies
- d. An indicative return to studies date which is convenient for both the student and the College
- e. Any Programme specific requirements including but not limited to Garda vetting implications, where applicable
- f. Any fee implications, including any projected increase in fees

(26) Where a student has obtained a visa for the purposes of study, it is their responsibility to ensure compliance with any conditions of same and to note that any change to student status, such as how a suspension of study may affect immigration status. In such cases, the College is required to report any changes in status to the Immigration Services. Similarly, where a change in visa status occurs a student's must inform the College.

(27) The Department of the Registrar updates the student record and notifies any relevant College departments.

(28) The College has the right to amend the student's indicative return to studies date where it is impacted by timetabling requirements. In these instances, the student will be informed of the revised date.

(29) The student will be advised of any significant changes made to programme- or College-level requirements while the student is deferred. The student may be required to complete additional work before recommencing studies in line with these changes.

(30) Students who are granted a deferral and subsequently do not recommence their studies are not entitled to a refund of fees paid.

### **Outcome: Deferral Not Granted**

(31) Where the deferral is not granted, AAO notifies the student in writing.

(32) The student is advised that they are required to continue with their programme or they can opt to voluntarily withdraw. Students who opt to voluntarily withdraw are not entitled to a fee refund as per the College [Withdrawal from](#)

(33) An outcome of deferral not granted does not impact upon the right of a student to apply for a future deferral.

## **Part C - Procedure for Transfer**

(34) A transfer may not be applied for by a student, but the transfer of a student may be necessitated for reasons such as, but not limited to, a suspension or deferral of studies.

### **Notification to the Registrar**

(35) Where a student can only continue on their programme by being transferred to another cohort, the Programme Director or nominee recommends a transfer to the Registrar noting any implications for the student including:

- a. Requirements for progression on the programme at the point the student returns to studies
- b. Recognition of completed modules that the student carries with them
- c. Modules that the student will have to complete upon returning to studies
- d. Any Programme specific requirements, including but not limited to Garda vetting implications
- e. Any fee implications, including any projected increase in fees

### **Transfer**

(36) AAO, consulting with the Programme Director or nominee and relevant College departments, notifies the student of the transfer in writing along with any and all implications of the transfer.

### **Response to notification of a Transfer**

(37) The student must respond in writing to AAO upon receipt of notification of intended transfer either indicating their acceptance of the transfer, and any fee implications, or intention to appeal.

## **Part D - Right of Appeal**

(38) Students have the right to appeal any decision made under this procedure under the [Appeals Policy](#). An appeal must be made in writing within five working days of the issue of a decision.

(39) A student who does not appeal the decision to transfer them or not to grant a deferral deems themselves to have accepted the decision of the College after the closure of the appeal window.

## Status and Details

|                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Status</b>             | Current             |
| <b>Effective Date</b>     | 2nd November 2020   |
| <b>Review Date</b>        | 2nd November 2023   |
| <b>Approval Authority</b> | Academic Board      |
| <b>Approval Date</b>      | 23rd September 2020 |
| <b>Expiry Date</b>        | Not Applicable      |
| <b>Enquiries Contact</b>  | Quality Assurance   |

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Deferral"** - A deferral is a temporary suspension of studies granted to a registered student following consideration of a request by the student. It may only be granted to a student after the end of the cooling-off period.

**"Programme"** - A programme of education and training refers to any process by which learners may acquire knowledge, skill or competence. It includes courses of study or instruction, apprenticeships, training and employment. A programme offers learners the learning opportunities by which they may attain educational goals (expressed as the intended programme learning outcome) by learning activities in a learning environment. A programme is normally comprised of modules. A programme leading to a major award will normally require a 'cohesion generating' process which integrates constituent modules so that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes are supported. The cohesion generating process should establish the epistemological and cultural identity of the programme. It should also coordinate alignment of activities with the minimum intended programme learning outcomes and introduce learners to the broader community of practice to which they aspire. (QQI (2013) Assessment and Standards Revised)

**"Transfer"** - A transfer is where the student moves from one live cohort to another live cohort following recommendation by the College and where, in transferring, all academic and financial history remain associated with the student. There is no intent to pause or suspend studies when a transfer occurs. However, due to the flow of a programme's structure, a student may need to wait to undertake the next element of the programme for which they are eligible. This occurs where no other means of a student successfully completing the programme exists.