

# Student Suspension of Studies Regulations

UPR SA17 version 05.0

## Policies superseded by this document

This document replaces version 04.0 of UPR SA17, with effect from 1 September 2025.

## Summary of significant changes to the previous version

This document has been updated to reflect the requirements of the OfS Regulatory Advice on freedom of speech (section 1.2).

## Glossary

A glossary of approved University terminology can be found in [UPR GV08](#).

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 These regulations relate to taught programmes only. Any attendance requirements relating to research-based provision will be set out in UPR AS10<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 *The University is committed to protecting and promoting freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law. The University’s Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech (UPR FS01) sets out the rights and obligations inherent in supporting the principles of freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law, the University’s values relating to freedom of speech and the procedure to be followed by students and staff in connection with the organisation of events and meetings which fall under the Code of Practice. A copy of the University’s Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech (UPR FS01) can be found here [\[FS01-Freedom of Speech\]](#) on the University’s Policies and Regulations webpage. In the event of any uncertainty about the University’s approach to freedom of speech, the University’s definitive and up-to-date statement of its approach is set out in the Code of Practice.*

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<sup>1</sup> UPR AS10 ‘Research Degrees - Generic Institutional Regulations’

## 2 Voluntary suspension

- 2.1 Suspension is taking a break from studies. Students may request a period of suspension at any time during their studies. Approval will only be given for suspension of a student's studies for up to one academic year. In exceptional circumstances such as major life changing events or sudden loss of family members, this may be extended further, but this is at the sole discretion of the Dean of Students through the Support to Study Policy EQ11<sup>2</sup>. The University reserves the right to withdraw any students who do not return to their studies within the agreed period, which is normally after one year.
- 2.2 Suspension is expected to be applied for in advance or at the start of any issues affecting a student's studies.
- 2.3 Students may request a period of suspension for a number of reasons including but not limited to:
- Maternity or paternity
  - Illness
  - Family issues
  - Financial issues
  - Standing as a Sabbatical Officer for the Hertfordshire Student Union
  - Visa issues
- 2.4 The rationale as to why the suspension is required should be clearly detailed, as this is used by the University to inform statistical returns.
- 2.5 Students should discuss their wish to suspend their studies with their Programme Leader, as soon as possible, in advance of making a formal request.
- 2.6 Students must apply in writing, using the 'Request for Voluntary Suspension of Studies' form which can be accessed via 'Ask Herts' <https://ask.herts.ac.uk/request-for-voluntary-suspension-from-your-studies>. Approval for the request will be given by the Programme Leader (or nominee).
- 2.7 Documentary evidence of the reason for the request should be supplied and the form must be signed by the Programme Leader (or nominee). Once signed, the student is responsible for passing the form to an Ask Herts Hub.
- 2.8 There are specific issues in relation to international students and suspension, which may cause visa and immigration problems for the student. For this reason, all international students must contact the Student Immigration Team before submitting their suspension form to their Programme Leader. Suspension may result in the withdrawal of Student Route/Tier 4 sponsorship which will result in withdrawal as a student.
- 2.9 There may be specific implications in relation to student fees & funding and suspension, and all students are advised to seek advice from Student Finance in an Ask Herts Hub before submitting their suspension form to their Programme Leader.

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<sup>2</sup> UPR EQ11 Support to Study

- 2.10 The official start date of the student’s suspension period for funding purposes and for informing external agencies will be the student’s confirmed decision to take a period of voluntary suspension as recorded on the ‘Request for Voluntary Suspension of Studies’ form.
- 2.11 All students who have suspended their studies are contacted by the Student Administration Service prior to their return to study, to clarify their intention to return.

### **3 Compulsory suspension**

There are also circumstances in which the University may suspend students from their programmes of study (see Appendix III, UPR SA13<sup>3</sup>).

### **4 Academic issues regarding voluntary suspension**

- 4.1 Students who suspend their studies are defined as taking a break from studies, as such they are not entitled to receive any tuition, supervision or financial support.
- 4.2 Students who suspend their studies with assessments outstanding will normally be granted a deferral by the Module Board.
- 4.3 Students who normally have alternative arrangements for their assessments, may have those arrangements affected by the suspension of their studies, particularly, if those arrangements rely on the availability of DSA funding. Students in this position must discuss this with Student Wellbeing: Disability Services and their Programme Leader before suspending their studies.

### **5 Status of suspended students**

- 5.1 In all circumstances, students are encouraged to seek advice from either their Programme Leader, the Ask Herts Hubs or the Office of the Dean of Students as appropriate, prior to suspending their studies.
- 5.2 Once a student has suspended their studies formally, access to University services may be restricted. This includes but is not limited to completing or submitting assessments, accommodation, learning resources, the Student’s Union and Student Wellbeing Services.
- 5.3 Whilst on a period of suspension, students retain access to the virtual learning environment and their student ID cards. In certain circumstances such as, but not limited to, academic and non-academic misconduct, this access may be removed.

### **6 Apprentices - Break in Learning**

- 6.1 Any student that is also completing an apprenticeship will be subject to the additional requirements set out in Appendix I, UPR AS17<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Appendix III, UPR SA13 ‘Student Academic Misconduct Panel and Review of a Student Academic Misconduct Panel Decision’

<sup>4</sup> Appendix I, UPR AS17 ‘Apprenticeship policy: quality assurance and guidance for apprenticeship programmes’

Signed: Date: **1 August 2025**

Sharon Harrison-Barker

Secretary and Registrar

**Alternative format**

If you need this document in an alternative format, please email us at [governanceservices@herts.ac.uk](mailto:governanceservices@herts.ac.uk) or telephone us on +44 (0)1707 28 6006.