

# Termination of Studies Procedure

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PRIFYSGOL  
**BANGOR**  
UNIVERSITY

<b>Date</b>	<b>Supersedes</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>
1 February 2021	2018 Version 2.2	Minor changes to job titles.
1 February 2021	2018 Version 2.1	Minor changes to timescales.
1 November 2019	2018 Version 02	Minor changes to wording.
1 October 2018	2015 Version	General update.

<b>Document Owner</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Review Frequency</b>
Head of Governance Services.	Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee.	20 January 2021.	Every three years.

Note: In exceptional circumstances, and subject to approval by the Chair of the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee, responsibilities assigned to Schools, Heads, of School, School Officers or School Committees in these Regulations may be assumed by the College, Head of College, College Officers or College Committees respectively, as appropriate.

# Termination of Studies Procedure



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## Introduction

1. This procedure applies to students on undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes and to postgraduate research students. This procedure does not apply to:
  - Disciplinary or academic misconduct cases. Such cases must be considered under the University's Disciplinary Procedure or Academic Integrity Procedure.
  - Students who are in debt. Such cases must be considered under the University's Fees Policy.
  - Students whose studies may be terminated by Examination Boards according to the University's regulations and procedures.
  - Students whose studies may be suspended or terminated because of ill health.
  - Students whose studies may be terminated by specific procedures approved as part of the approval/validation process for their course, including conditions imposed by professional bodies or sponsors.
2. Whenever possible and relevant, a student must be given the opportunity to suspend their studies, or to withdraw voluntarily before instigating the procedures contained in this Procedure.

## Grounds for terminating studies

3. Grounds for terminating the studies of a student include the following:
  - Failure to attend formally scheduled activities over a substantial period (as deemed appropriate by the relevant school for the programme of study) and in the absence of any submitted special circumstances or of prior approval to be absent from such activities.
  - Failure to submit substantial (as deemed appropriate by the relevant school for the programme of study) components of course work or to attend tests and/or examinations.
  - In the case of postgraduate research students, failure to complete, within a defined timescale, an agreed programme of work to the satisfaction of the Supervisory Committee.
  - Failure to meet the expected standards in **some** or **all** professional placements. The required standards may be defined by the University or may

be external standards applied to students on programmes leading to professional qualifications.

- Evidence of insufficient commitment to University study, for example, repeated unwillingness to participate in group activities, seminars, tutorials or presentations.
  - Evidence that work submitted for assessment is consistently below the threshold standard to the extent that the student will be unable to redeem failure by reassessment.
  - Failure to meet specific requirements defined for a particular programme of study by the University or Partner Institution and made known to students prior to admission.
4. Schools must have documented procedures in place for identifying those students whose progress is causing concern and for referring such students to relevant central and school support services. Schools must also ensure that students are provided with an opportunity to discuss their progress with a personal tutor (or equivalent) before their progress is formally considered as defined in paragraph 5.
  5. A student's progress must be considered in the first instance by appropriate committees, or sub-committees, within the school(s) responsible for the student's programme of study. Such committees must carefully consider all special circumstances, including any written evidence submitted by the student, and any measures that may be taken to assist or advise the student. The Head of School (or nominee) must inform the students in writing that their progress is considered to be unsatisfactory and the students must be given an opportunity to improve their academic performance. Students must be given a defined period of time to improve, at the end of which progress will be reassessed. The period of time between a written warning and reappraisal of performance will be determined by the school, taking into account the scheduling of activities and assessments and the nature of the matters that led to concerns about a student's progress.
  6. Where a student's unsatisfactory progress affects the ability to complete a professional placement (including research work undertaken at a location outside the University), the school may remove the student from the placement location pending consideration of the recommendation to terminate the student's studies.
  7. A recommendation to terminate a student's studies must only be made when:
    - All attempts by the school(s) to remedy the situation have failed.
    - The student has ignored advice to consider suspension of studies or withdrawal.
    - The student has failed to comply with mutually agreed conditions to try to rectify the problems.
  8. A recommendation to terminate a student's studies must be presented in writing, with supporting evidence, by the Head of School to the Head of Governance Services.

9. The Head of Governance Services must consider, in discussion with the Head of School where required, whether a prima facie case under these Procedures exists for terminating a student's studies.
10. If a prima facie case cannot be established, the student will be allowed to continue with studies.
11. If a prima facie case is established, the Head of Governance Services must:
  - Write to inform the student that a recommendation to terminate studies has been received and that a Panel of Enquiry will be convened to consider the recommendation. In the meantime, the student will be advised to continue with studies for the remainder of the term or semester, whichever is sooner.
  - Advise the student to continue with any other elements of assessment or research work for the remainder of the term or semester, whichever is sooner where a student has been removed from a placement, as specified in paragraph 6.
  - Arrange a meeting of the Panel. The date of the Panel should normally be set for no later than 20 working days, where practicably possible, after the case has been referred to the Head of Governance Services (or nominee).
  - Notify the student of the date of the Panel, ensuring that the student is given a minimum of 10 working days' notice, where practicably possible, of the date of the Panel meeting, unless, by agreement with the student, an earlier date can be arranged.
  - Panels must be convened and must not consider the case based only on electronic communication.

### **Panel of Enquiry**

12. The Panel of Enquiry must be chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) or nominee. Members of the Panel will also include:
  - An external member to be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience).
  - Two academic members of staff, at least one of whom must be a member of the Senate and neither of whom are from the school responsible for the student's programme of study.
  - A representative from the Students' Union
  - The Head of Governance Services (or nominee) as Secretary to the Panel.
13. The Head of Governance Services (or nominee) will be responsible for collating and summarising evidence for the Panel members. The student must receive a copy of the documents presented to Panel members and must be informed of the right to be accompanied at the Panel of Enquiry as described in paragraph 15.
14. The case for terminating a student's studies must be presented to the Panel of Enquiry by the Head of School (or nominee) responsible for the student's programme of study.

15. The student may be accompanied at the Panel of Enquiry by a person of their choosing, for example a friend, personal tutor, a representative of the Students' Union, or any employee of the University. Students must inform the Head of Governance Services within a full 5 working days of receiving notice of the date of the meeting if they wish to be accompanied by a legal representative.
16. The Panel of Enquiry must normally be conducted as follows, unless deemed otherwise for specific reasons and with the agreement of all participants.

**In a closed session**

- Panel members will review the main elements of the case as summarised by the Secretary.
- The Chair will agree the format of the Panel hearing.

**In an open session with all participants**

- The Chair will explain the remit of the Panel, the format of the hearing and the decisions it is empowered to reach.
- The Head of School will present the case in favour of terminating the student's studies and may call upon witnesses as necessary.
- The student (or their representative) will be given an opportunity to contest any statements or facts in the Head of School's presentation.
- The student (or their representative) will be given an opportunity to present any information in relation to the case and may call witnesses.
- The Panel members will be given an opportunity to question the student, the Head of School, and any witnesses.
- The Head of School will be given an opportunity to present any additional comments and/or concluding remarks.
- The student (or their representative) will be given an opportunity to present any additional comments and/or concluding remarks.
- The student will be told that the Panel's decision will be conveyed in writing by the Secretary.

**In a closed session**

- The Panel will review the case and will approve one of the following decisions:
  - (i) That the student's studies/research will not be terminated and that the student be allowed to proceed with the programme/research project, subject to such conditions agreed with the student and set out in the Panel's decision. Where a student has been removed from a placement or site where research was conducted, as specified in paragraph 6, the Panel must consider whether alternative placements, locations to conduct research, or alternative assessments are available before approving this decision.
  - (ii) That the student be given an opportunity to pursue the option of suspending studies according to the University's procedures for

suspension of studies. This decision is only appropriate in cases where there are extenuating circumstances that have affected the student's attendance and/or performance. This decision is also appropriate in cases where the Panel believes that the student was not given sufficient opportunity, prior to the Panel of Enquiry, to pursue the option of suspending studies.

- (iii) That the student's studies will be terminated by the Panel (who may empower the Chair to act executively) at an agreed point in the future, if progress remains unsatisfactory based on the results of all modules completed within that timescale. The Panel must also be confident that there will be sufficient evidence from such modules for the Chair to be able to judge whether progress remains unsatisfactory.
- (iv) That the student's studies will be terminated at the end of the current term or semester, whichever is sooner.
- (v) That the student's studies will be terminated immediately.

17. In cases where the Panel approves decisions ii, iv, or v (as defined in paragraph 16), the Panel's decision must be executed in accordance with the University's procedures for suspension or termination of studies and as described in paragraph 18.

18. The Panel's decision must be conveyed in writing to the student by the Panel's secretary. The letter sent to the student will also include statements appropriate to the Panel's decision as follows:

- (i) In cases where the Panel approves decisions i, ii or iii (as defined in paragraph 16), a statement will explain that the Panel's decision does not in any way guarantee that the student will be successful in future assessments, and that any future decisions on progression and/or degree classification will be subject to a decision by an appropriately convened examination board or committee as defined in the Code of Practice for the assessment of Students for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Courses.
- (ii) In cases where the Panel approves decision ii, there will be both a statement as defined in paragraph 18i and a statement that the decision will be enforced according to the University's procedures for suspension of studies. In accordance with these procedures, the student must be advised to contact, within 10 working days, where practicably possible, of receiving the Panel's decision, a named officer in Student Administration to formally pursue the option of suspension of studies. If the student does not contact the named officer within 10 working days, or if the student disengages with the process at any time thereafter, then the matter will be referred to the Chair of the Panel to approve the immediate termination of the student's studies.
- (iii) In cases where the Panel approves decision iv or v, there will be a statement that the decision will be enforced according to the University's procedures for suspension of studies. In accordance with these procedures, the student will be advised to contact, within 10

working days, where practicably possible, of receiving the Panel's decision, a named officer in Student Administration to formally terminate their studies. If the student does not contact the named officer within 10 working days, then the named officer will take executive action to terminate the student's studies.

19. Students may appeal against the decision of a Panel of Enquiry by writing to the Vice-Chancellor within 10 working days, where practicably possible, of receiving the Panel's decision. The Vice-Chancellor's decision is final and students who remain dissatisfied after an appeal to the Vice-Chancellor may contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, according to the guidelines available at [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk).

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. Bangor University is a member of this scheme. If you are unhappy with the outcome from Bangor University, you may be able to ask the OIA to review your case. You can find more information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and cannot look at and what it can do to put things right here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>.

You normally need to have completed this procedure before you complain to the OIA. Bangor University will send you a letter called a 'Completion of Procedures Letter' when you have reached the end of these processes and there are no further steps you can take internally. If your complaint/appeal is not upheld, Bangor University will issue you with a Completion of Procedures Letter automatically. If your complaint/appeal is upheld or partly upheld you can still ask for a Completion of Procedures Letter from Bangor University if you want one. You can find more information about Completion of Procedures Letters and when you should expect to receive one here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers/completion-of-procedures-letters>.

To bring a complaint to the OIA, you need to submit a completed OIA Complaint Form within 12 months of the date of Bangor University's final decision (usually the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter), and you will normally need to send the OIA your Completion of Procedures Letter.