



**UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM**

**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PROCEDURES FOR EXTENSIONS TO STUDY PERIODS**



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Code of Practice applies to all Registered Students, Students on Leave of Absence and Externally Registered Students undertaking Undergraduate (UG), Postgraduate Taught (PGT) and Postgraduate Research programmes (PGR), hereafter referred to as “Students”, who require an extension to the maximum period of study and for PGRs to the deadline for submission of a corrected or revised thesis.
- 1.2 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students are expected to complete their Award within the prescribed maximum period of study as set out in Regulation 6.2. PGRs are expected to submit the thesis for examination by the end of the maximum period of study and submit a corrected or revised thesis by the specified date.
- 1.3 Where circumstances arise during the normal period of study that affect the student’s ability to continue with their studies, it is expected that these are raised and dealt with under the Code of Practice on Leave of Absence Procedures. For all PGRs and for Taught students who entered the University from 2015/16 onwards, any period of Leave of Absence shall be excluded from the calculation of the maximum period of study. For taught students who entered the University in 2014/15 or earlier, the maximum periods of study as stated in the Regulations for 2014/15 apply and time spent on Leave of Absence will be included when calculating the maximum period of registration.
- 1.4 In this Code of Practice “extension to maximum period of study” means an extension to the maximum period of study as set out in Regulation 6.2 and an extension to the date for submission of a revised or corrected thesis.
- 1.5 Application for an extension to the maximum period of study should be submitted approximately two months before the expiry of the maximum period of study and as early as possible before the deadline for submission of corrections or a revised thesis.

## 2. Definition

- 2.1 An extension to maximum period of study is considered exceptional, rather than the norm. An extension is not a right and therefore it may be refused depending upon the circumstances. An extension may be granted to enable the student to complete the requirements of their programme of study or for PGRs to the maximum period of study (thesis submission deadline), the deadline for submission of corrections or resubmission of the thesis for a further examination.
- 2.2 An extension is not the same as Leave of Absence. The latter relates to a period of time when the student temporarily withdraws from their study and is dealt with under the Code of Practice on Leave of Absence Procedures.
- 2.3 For taught students where the maximum period of study has lapsed and the requirements for the Award have not been completed or for PGRs where the deadline for submission of the research degree thesis or a corrected or revised thesis has lapsed and the thesis has not been submitted, the Student will be deemed to have withdrawn. The Student may be eligible



for the award of an alternative qualification based on the marks for modules for taught modules that the student has already completed.

- 2.4 Where the request for an extension to the maximum period of study is refused for a UG or PGT student, the original completion date will stand. If the student is unable to complete by this date, a recommendation will be made at the next meeting of the Board of Examiners based on the marks for modules that the student has already completed.

Where the request for an extension to the maximum period of study is refused for a PGR then the original end of maximum period of study and deadline for submission of the thesis will stand.

### **3. Evidence Requirements**

- 3.1 All applications for extensions should be accompanied with appropriate supporting evidence of impact.
- 3.2 Evidence must be in English, with certified translations being provided where necessary (all costs to be borne by the student where applicable).

### **4. Work Plan**

- 4.1 All applications for extensions must be accompanied by a work plan to demonstrate how the requested period will be used effectively in order to complete the outstanding work for the Award.
- 4.2 The work plan should provide a schedule of the outstanding work and the time frame for completing each section.
- 4.3 Extension requests without work plans, with incomplete work plans, work plans that do not provide sufficient detail or are considered unrealistic will not be approved.

### **5. Extension Time Limits**

- 5.1 In all cases the length of the extension requested must be specified and be commensurate with the grounds cited as the reasons for applying for an extension.
- 5.2 Students should make themselves aware of any additional accreditation, professional, disciplinary or sponsor-related requirements that may impact on their extension request.
- 5.3 Sponsored students are responsible for notifying their sponsor of their request and the revised end date if approval is granted.

### **6. Processing Extension Applications**

- 6.1 The authorised signatories for Extension requests (name and role) should be agreed at a local level on an annual basis in advance of the start of the new academic session.



- 6.2 The authorised signatory or nominee should ensure that all relevant sections of the form have been completed before signing off the form.
- 6.3 Applications for extensions for taught programmes are considered by the University's Progress & Awards Board and for research programmes the Research Progress & Awards Sub Panel.
- 6.4 Extension request forms should be downloaded from the Taught Student Administration Extensions web page for [UG](#) and [PGT](#) students and the Research Student Administration web pages for [PGRs](#) as and when they are required to ensure that the correct version of the form is being submitted and thereby avoid delays from applications submitted on out of date forms being returned.
- 6.5 Applications must be completed by the Student who is requesting the extension and forwarded to the appropriate signatories within the School/College.
  - 6.5.1 Extension request forms submitted in hard copy must always be signed by the student, and authorised signatory for the Principal Academic Unit (PAU).
  - 6.5.2 Extension request forms submitted by e-mail do not require a signature providing it is clear from the e-mail chain that it has been sent by the student and authorised signatory.
- 6.6 Supporting evidence should normally be submitted at the same time as the request form, but if this is not possible, the reasons for the delay should be provided on the request form. The authorising signatory should indicate where the supporting evidence has been provided by the student and is being stored at local level.
- 6.7 The completed request form and supporting documents should be submitted to Registry for processing.
- 6.8 Requests without a work plan will not be processed and will be returned.
- 6.9 Once processed, Registry will notify the student of the outcome of the application by e-mail.
- 6.10 Where the application is approved, the e-mail will include the revised completion/submission date and any tuition fee liability.

## **7. International Students**

- 7.1 In this Code of Practice "International Students" means international, non-European Economic Area (non-EEA) students who require immigration permissions to study in the UK.
- 7.2 In accordance with the Code of Practice on Compliance with Student Immigration Visa Permissions and Obligations, international students intending to stay in the UK for the duration of the requested extension must ensure that they have appropriate leave to enable them to continue their studies.



- 7.3 The University of Birmingham has been granted a Home Office Student Sponsor Licence (previously Tier 4) and must ensure that it complies with the conditions of the Student Sponsor Licence.
- 7.4 International Students who are sponsored by the University under its Home Office Student Sponsor Licence are required to maintain academic engagement, as set out in the Code of practice and policy on Student Academic Engagement, during the extension period and keep their contact details up to date via the student gateway:  
<https://student-gateway.bham.ac.uk/>.
- 7.5 International students who return home during the approved extension period must complete the [Authorised Absence](#) process and must update their contact details (address, telephone and e-mail) the student gateway (<https://student-gateway.bham.ac.uk/>) accordingly.
- 7.6 Where an international student's visa expires before the end date of an approved extension and the student intends to remain in the UK for the duration of the extension period, they must renew their visa before the current visa expires.