

Special Cases Progress Cases Policy

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1. Definition

A 'progress case' refers to any case relating to taught student progression for which Special Cases approval is required.

2. Introduction

This document sets out the policy for consideration of progress cases where Special Cases approval is required. It should be read in conjunction with University Regulation 6.

This policy also provides information about initial considerations for staff and students, and what should be done where Special Cases approval is not required.

This policy does not apply to research students. Research students should refer to the Policy on Research Degrees.

3. General Principles

The Special Cases team, when considering progress cases, will have regard to the principle of fairness and aim to ensure that no student is placed at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

To have regard at all times to principles of equity, fairness and transparency and to bear in mind relevant equality and diversity, confidentiality and data protection policies and legislation.

We encourage students to seek advice from their academic department, in particular their personal supervisor. Staff in the Student Hub are also able to provide advice on the financial implications of the categories of progress case listed in this document. Students may also seek independent advice and guidance from the advice services at the Students' Unions.

Progress cases will usually be considered by Special Cases Officers, however, decisions may also be taken by the Special Cases Manager, a Senior Manager in Student Education and Experience, or their nominee.

4. Leave of Absence and Repeat Study

A leave of absence allows a student to take an authorised break from their studies, usually for a maximum of one calendar year.

Please note that this section of the policy does not apply to York Online students taking 100% online part-time Masters programmes. LoA and Repeat study policies and processes are presented to students in their Orientation modules in Canvas. If you require access to this information please contact york-online-loa@york.ac.uk.

4.1 Basic Principles

If a student wishes to take a leave of absence they must apply in advance for permission to do so. Any student can apply for a leave of absence, however, approval is not guaranteed.

If possible the Leave of Absence Form (with evidence) should be submitted before the leave of absence proposed start date, as the leave of absence may not always be approved. In all cases leave of absence recommendations should be submitted no more than one month later than the proposed start date.

Leave of absence that is entirely retrospective will not normally be considered or approved.

If a student has never attended any part of the programme, the student should be deferred or asked to reapply to a programme of study. A request for leave of absence should NOT be made. Please inform Student Services (student-records@york.ac.uk) so the current student record can be updated and if a deferral is made also inform the relevant admissions department.

Leave of absence requests must all be approved by a Board of Studies/Graduate Board. Requests submitted directly by students will not be considered.

Most leave of absence requests will not require Special Cases consideration. See section 4.3 for the criteria for Special Cases consideration.

4.2 Important Initial Considerations for Students and Staff

Student Visa Holders

If a Student Visa holder wants to request an interruption of studies, they **must consult** with an Immigration Adviser **before** the leave of absence can be approved. Where a leave of absence is 60 days or less, the student's sponsorship will continue but a leave of absence of 61 days or more will

result in the Student Visa being cancelled. The student will then have 60 days in which to leave the UK and will need to make a new visa application from outside the UK if and when they wish to resume their studies in the UK.

Where a Student Visa holder requests to repeat Year 1 of their studies, this will be considered by the Visa Compliance team who will take into account the student's academic engagement record. If the request is approved, the student will be required to request a new CAS within five weeks of accepting the offer to repeat study. A new visa application to cover the duration of the course must then be made immediately and evidence of application sent to the Visa Compliance team.

Should the student wish to transfer to a new course rather than repeat the same one, the student will be required to leave the UK to make a new visa application. If the student is considering this as an option, they must discuss this with an Immigration Advisor as soon as possible.

Funding

Please ensure that it is stated on the Leave of Absence Request whether the student receives any funding from an external source: foreign loans, sponsors, studentships, scholarships, charities, etc. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the proposed leave is compatible with the regulations of any granting agency from which funding would normally be received during the leave period, and that such agencies are informed of the proposed leave.

For candidates in receipt of University studentships or UK Research Council studentships paid through the University, departmental administrators/finance officers should arrange for payment of the stipend to be suspended for the duration of the proposed leave of absence. An exception should be made in the case of maternity, where paid maternity leave up to six months may be taken on top of the normal duration of the stipend or short term illness.

Leave of absence and repeat study can impact bursary eligibility. A student will be still eligible for a bursary for up to one year of repeat study. Please consult the [Bursary webpages](#).

Students should seek advice from the Student Hub about the financial implications of repeat study.

Student Loans From UK Government

If a student has financial support from Student Finance England, Registry Services will inform Student Finance England of the period of leave of absence and the total amount of tuition fees for the period the student attended prior to their leave of absence. A student will not receive any payments from Student Finance England during their period of leave of absence.

A student will not normally be eligible for maintenance loan support if they are on a leave of absence, as they are not in active study during this time. However, depending on the date of the leave of absence and when students receive their student finance, a student may have an overpayment and be required to repay immediately, or have the overpayment deducted from future instalments. There can also be some exceptions, e.g. if a student is on an LOA for health reasons, or if a student is in financial hardship. Students rejoining a programme following a leave of absence also need to check they have sufficient student finance entitlement to cover an

additional year's study. Please consult [Leave of Absence](#) and LOA [FAQ pages](#). Students can seek further guidance from Student Advisers in the Student Hub.

US loans: Students with US loans must meet the criteria required by US regulations relating to Federal Aid in order to take a leave of absence. A student must apply in advance to interrupt their studies unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from doing so. The total period of leave of absence must not exceed a total of 180 days in any 12-month period and this includes weekends and scheduled breaks. [Find further information about US loans.](#)

Accommodation

Students taking a leave of absence are **not** eligible to remain in University Accommodation and they must complete a request to vacate form and give notice to vacate their room. Students **must** have written approval from the University before they can terminate their residence contract. Students will need to give four weeks' notice to Accommodation Services. [Find out more about requesting to vacate.](#)

The accommodation office is unable to terminate a student's contract until the University has approved the change in circumstance. Academic departments must allow time for processing to be undertaken on the SITS Student Record system in order to expedite this process. All decisions should therefore be communicated to Registry Services as soon as they are known.

[Find further information on Accommodation Services.](#)

If a student is returning from a period of leave of absence or placement, they are not eligible for University accommodation unless they have a medical condition or other special circumstance that requires them to live on campus.

Library access

A student's access to University library facilities will remain active for the period of Leave of Absence.

Independent Students

The implications of a period of leave of absence may be exacerbated for independent students who do not have another home to move to during a break in their studies.

As noted above students are not eligible to remain on campus during a leave of absence. This can lead to many independent students being faced with homelessness.

Taking a leave of absence also has an implication on the bursary that independent students receive.

Independent Students are strongly encouraged to seek further advice from the University's dedicated contact for independent students - contact details can be found on the webpages for [Estranged Students](#) and [Care Experienced Students](#).

Academic Work

Except where an academic condition is set, a student may not do work which contributes to their period of study or research during the Leave of Absence.

Students' Union Sabbatical Positions

A student may take a leave of absence at any time during their study to take up a sabbatical position with the Student's Union. For those undertaking postgraduate study, this will normally mean delaying the summer semester project module for 12 months.

4.3 Special Cases Approval Criteria - Leave of Absence

A request for leave of absence will require Special Cases approval where any of the following criteria is met:

- a) The start date of the Leave of Absence requested is more than 1 semester prior to the date the form is received by Student Records/Special Cases.
- b) The student has requested to repeat more than 10 teaching weeks.
- c) More than twelve consecutive months of Leave of Absence is requested at one time.
- d) Appropriate supporting evidence has not been provided.
- e) A fee waiver has been requested.
- f) For undergraduate students, where the total period of Leave of Absence exceeds 4 years, or for postgraduate taught students, where the total period of Leave of Absence exceeds 2 years.

If any of the above conditions are met, the department must request approval from Special Cases by emailing the relevant application form and evidence to scc@york.ac.uk.

If Special Cases approval is **not** required, the fully completed form and evidence should be emailed to student-records@york.ac.uk.

In cases where departments are concerned about an extended period of LoA that may impact a student's likelihood of program completion, they can seek advice from Special Cases. Special Cases can be asked to make a decision in such cases.

4.4 Information Required from Student/Department

The leave of absence application form has multiple sections:

- Part A should be completed by the student.
- Part B should be completed by the department.
- Part C should be completed by the Chair of the Board of Studies or their nominee.
- Part D explains the process of submitting the form.
- Part E is for Special Cases team use only.

Please ensure that the relevant form is **completed fully and accurately**, with all necessary supporting evidence **before** it is submitted to Special Cases or Student Records. This will save time for both Student Services and academic departments and ensure faster processing of the request.

Before the form is submitted please ensure that:

- a) The student details are accurate
- b) The correct reason and code has been selected
- c) That the correct start date has been provided for the leave of absence (see 4.4.1)
- d) That the correct end date has been entered for the leave of absence (see 4.4.2)
- e) That a new programme end date has been provided
- f) The correct repeat study dates have been entered (see 4.4.3)
- g) Relevant evidence has been attached in PDF format (see evidence section)
- h) Details of any outside funding has been provided (ie Research councils, foreign student loans, etc.)
- i) Any academic conditions of return, repeat study, exams required to sit prior to or immediately upon return, or any other conditions required, have been listed
- j) "Electronic" signature confirmation of the Chair of the Board of Studies or their nominee has been provided.

4.4.1 Start date of leave of absence

The start date of the Leave of Absence must be the date the student last attended term-time exams, dissertation supervision, seminars, lectures or labs, which is the last date of active study, even where a student's attendance has been intermittent.

Engagement with an academic mentor is not considered to be evidence of engagement with study.

Where a student has attended a supervision meeting, whether that meeting counts as academic engagement will depend on the content of the meeting; if the meeting is purely pastoral, it cannot be used as a last date of engagement. If the meeting also involved discussion of academic work, for example discussing assessment feedback and upcoming assessments, it may be used as a last date of attendance.

It is essential that the start date of leave of absence is accurate and verifiable as there are regulatory, fees and student finance implications. **Backdating a period of LoA can have very serious student finance implications for students.** Student Advisers must be consulted by students in such cases at student-hub@york.ac.uk.

Departments may be asked by Special Cases to confirm that the student is aware of the financial implications of a backdated period of leave of absence before they consider it.

4.4.2 Date of Return to Study

Please note that the return date should not result in part of the student's programme being missed.

4.4.3 Repeat Study Dates

A student cannot repeat a period of study that they have not already followed, e.g. if a student is being placed on a period of LoA from 12 January 2023 to return on 18 September 2023, the period

of repeat study would be 18 September 2023 - 12 January 2024, not 18 September 2023 - 7 June 2024.

The application should either be emailed from a member of the departmental teaching leadership team (e.g. the Chair of Board of Studies or the Student Services Manager) or should be copied into the email to Special Cases (scc@york.ac.uk).

4.5 Evidence - Leave of Absence

Students on medical leave of absence (types 7-11) must provide medical evidence with the leave application. Medical evidence should be a medical certificate or a letter from a doctor or certified/accredited medical professional, such as a clinical psychologist. Open Door team evidence can be used to support leave on compassionate grounds, but is not considered 'medical' evidence for these purposes.

Evidence is required for all types of LoA except codes 02, 03, 12, 16, 17. Repeat study is not permitted for periods of leave of absence on motivational grounds.

No evidence will be required to enable return to study, except where a student is subject to a Support to Study enforced suspension of registration.

If a Maternity LOA request refers to pregnancy related health issues, this should be processed as '09 Heath (physical)' to ensure the student receives all SLC funding they are entitled to. They will not be required to provide medical evidence in order to return.

4.6 Special Cases Consideration of Applications for Leave of Absence/Repeat Study

If Special Cases approval is required, a Case Officer will consider the request and supporting evidence.

The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

- (a) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
- (b) The request has been submitted after programme failure, or in order to avoid programme failure.
- (c) The request is entirely retrospective.
- (d) There is insufficient evidence to justify repeat study, i.e the evidence does not demonstrate that the student was unable to benefit from teaching the first time around.
- (e) The repeat study request has been submitted after mark ratification (Summer Boards). Repeat study requests based on retrospective consideration of assessment performance will not be considered.
- (f) The leave of absence or repeat study request has not been submitted by the deadline specified by Special Cases.

- (g) The request is likely to have significant financial implications for the student, and the student has not confirmed that they are aware of these implications.
- (h) There are valid concerns about the period of time which the student has been away from their studies and subsequent likelihood of completion of the programme.
- (i) The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.*

*For example, a request which would involve a reduced credit load which is not an adjustment for disability, or where a student has already had more than one attempt at the learning material.

Special Cases may also approve a request but specify that no further periods of leave of absence will be approved.

If the request is not approved, Special Cases will inform the student in writing and explain the rationale for the decision. The student will be informed of their right to appeal this decision.

4.7 Conditions Applied During Period of Leave of Absence

During the period of leave of absence the following conditions will apply unless specific permission for a variation has been given by Special Cases:

- a) students are expected to spend their time away from the University
- b) students are expected to leave University accommodation and should complete a 'Request to Vacate' form available from Accommodation Services
- c) students are permitted full borrowing rights from the University Library
- d) students are not permitted to use University resources (attend lectures, seminars, supervision meetings, or work in a laboratory) during a leave of absence
- e) students are permitted to access IT Services facilities.

4.8 Conditions of Return

Departments should indicate whether there are any academic conditions of return requested as part of the leave of absence application. This would include any assessments which are outstanding and required to progress to the next stage of study.

No medical evidence will be required to enable return to study, except where a student is subject to a Support to Study enforced suspension of registration, where there are fitness to study requirements, or apprenticeships or professional programmes which may require evidence of fitness to return to satisfy PSRB requirements (PGCE, Health Sciences, Hull York Medical School and Social Work).

4.9 Repeat study

Repeating a period of study allows a student two attempts at the same material, which could place a student at an academic advantage relative to their peers. As a result, students will only be permitted to repeat a period of study where there is medical evidence which demonstrates that they were unable to benefit from teaching the first time and also unable to take appropriate action (such as a leave of absence) at the appropriate time (i.e. when the circumstances began).

Repeat study is not permitted for periods of leave of absence on motivational grounds.

The evidence should provide direct confirmation of the student's circumstances and their impact on the student's ability to benefit from teaching and request a period of leave of absence at the time those circumstances occurred. This evidence should be a medical certificate or a letter from a doctor or certified/accredited medical professional, such as a clinical psychologist. Engagement information, further information from the student and/or supporting statements may be used to support a request for repeat study, but there must also be medical evidence.

A student who is permitted to repeat a period of study due to exceptional circumstances will be liable for all repeat study fees associated with that period of repeat study.

Leave of absence and repeat study can impact bursary eligibility. A student will be still eligible for a bursary for up to one year of repeat study. Please consult the [Bursary webpages](#).

Students should seek advice from the Student Hub about the financial implications of repeat study.

The only other circumstance in which repeat study will be approved is where the repeat is necessitated solely by an action of the University, for example, significant changes to a programme of study.

Repeat study may be permitted on the basis of a programme relying heavily on group work, meaning that a student cannot rejoin the programme part-way through, but no fee waiver will be permitted for this repeat study.

Repeat study will not be permitted on the basis of a student being away from their programme of study for a long period of time.

4.10 Deadlines for Repeat Study Requests

In order to be considered for repeat during the upcoming academic year, requests for repeat study must be submitted before progression outcomes are ratified (Summer Boards). Requests for repeat study submitted after that date will require students to take a Leave of Absence for potential repeat in the following academic year.

4.11 Fee Waivers

The University will only waive tuition fees for repeat study where the period of repeat is solely a result of an action of the University.

The University will not waive repeat tuition fees on the basis of a student's individual circumstances, irrespective of how difficult they may be. If a student is facing financial difficulty, there is information available on sources of support on the [Student Webpages](#).

The Special Cases team is able to make fee waiver recommendations to the Academic Registrar. The decision of the Academic Registrar is final, and the student does not have the right to appeal this decision.

4.12 LoA or Programme Extension?

Where a student has outstanding teaching which they must return to in order to complete their programme of study, they should be placed on a period of leave of absence.

If there is no teaching outstanding, the student must be placed on a programme extension - see section 5 of this policy below for further information about programme extensions.

5. Programme Extensions

A programme extension can be recommended where a student cannot complete the programme within the normal timescale (by their enrolment end-date), and there is no teaching outstanding.

Not every programme extension request will be considered by Special Cases. Please see section 5.1 below.

Programme extension requests must be submitted in advance of the assessment deadline(s) the student is requesting to extend.

5.1 Important Initial Considerations for Students and Staff

Use of the Library

During the period of the extension you may borrow books, use the Library for reference and access Library online resources all free of charge. Access to computing and library facilities will be provided for the period of the extension. Access to computing and library facilities will end after the extension period is over.

Student visas

If you are an international student and you wish to take an extension of submission, you are advised to consult with an Immigration Adviser before taking this step.

The University is required to report any change in enrolment for an international student to [UK Visas and Immigration](#) within 10 days of the start date of the leave of absence.

For more information see the [Immigration Advice Service](#) website.

Funding

You are responsible to inform the University when requesting an extension of submission if you receive funding from an external source: research council studentships, foreign loans, sponsors, scholarships, charities, etc. It is your responsibility to ensure that the proposed extension is compatible with the regulations of any granting agency and that such agencies are informed of the proposed extension.

Funding is normally only provided for the period originally indicated to you at the beginning of your award. You will not normally receive additional funding for your extension period.

Foreign loans

Students on student loan programs should clarify the consequences that an extension of enrolment might have on their repayment status.

US loans

For further information please see the Student Financial Support Website.

Externally funded scholarships (eg Research councils studentships)

If your studies are supported by an external funder (eg Research Council), you should speak to your department/supervisor and check the specific terms and conditions of your external funding before requesting a formal extension of enrolment since there may be implications to your studentship.

In general, if you are in writing up status you can apply for an extension to the submission date of your thesis for reasons such as maternity, illness or other exceptional personal circumstances, but your request may need to be approved by the external funding body (eg Research Councils) as an individual case. Most external funding bodies (eg Research Councils) WILL NOT consider a request to extend the submission deadline for a student on the grounds that they have taken up employment.

Retrospective extension requests and extensions requests related to previous difficulties will not be considered by Research Councils.

External Funding bodies (eg Research Councils) will only fund you for the period originally indicated to you at the beginning of your award. You will not receive additional funding for your extension period.

For more information please see your external funder's website.

Council tax

If you are considered a full-time student, under certain circumstances, you may be eligible to claim Council Tax Exemption.

Part-time students are not exempt from Council Tax, either during or after their period of part-time enrolment.

For more information please see the Council Tax website.

5.2 Special Cases Approval Criteria - Programme Extensions

Programme extensions of up to 12 months beyond the student's original programme end date can be approved by Boards of Studies.

Programme extensions of more than 12 months beyond the student's original programme end require Special Cases approval.

When counting the length of a programme extension, academic departments should count from the original programme end date. If a student has taken leave of absence and returned to study, the programme end date approved after that leave of absence should be taken as the "original" programme end date for the purposes of this process.

The total length of cumulative extensions should be measured - a student who has had a series of short extensions will only need Special Cases approval once the total of those extensions exceeds 12 months.

Exceptional Circumstances Committees may refer, via the Board of Studies, any extension cases to Special Cases that would not ordinarily need Special Cases approval, but which they have concerns about. They are normally expected to have taken a provisional decision on these, however, even if the decision has not been communicated to the student at the point that they approach Special Cases.

5.3 Requirements for Programme Extension Requests

All programme extension requests **must** come about as a result of either:

- a) A student submitting an exceptional circumstances claim which is then upheld and the remedy for the claim includes a submission deadline extension which goes beyond the student's current programme end date;
- b) As an adjustment approved by a Student Support Plan, a departmental disability officer approves a submission deadline extension which goes beyond a student's current programme end date; or
- c) Marginal fails in line with university policies.

Any exceptions to this require Special Cases approval.

5.4 Application Process

Students should usually submit any extension requests to the Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment (ECA) Committee by completing an Exceptional Circumstances claim form. These claims must be evidenced, in line with the relevant [Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#).

Students are not required to complete programme extension paperwork. This should be completed by their academic department.

5.4.1 Special Cases Approval Not Required

Where the extension does not take the student more than 12 months beyond their programme end date, the student's Board of Studies can approve a programme extension.

Boards of Studies should ensure that the correct process has been followed to approve any new submission deadlines - either via the exceptional circumstances process or the SSP-approved extension process.

Once a Board of Studies is satisfied that this has taken place, the [relevant form should be completed](#). Before the form is submitted please ensure that all fields are completed and that the new proposed programme end date is correct. This form should be sent to Student Records (student-records@york.ac.uk) who will then process the request.

5.4.2 Where Special Cases Approval Is Required

Where Special Cases approval is required, as with shorter extensions, Boards of Studies should ensure that the correct process has been followed to approve any new submission deadlines - either via the exceptional circumstances process or the SSP-approved extension process.

Once a Board of Studies is satisfied that this has taken place, the [relevant form should be completed](#). Before the form is submitted please ensure that all fields are completed and that the new proposed programme end date is correct.

Students must be made aware that any decision by the ECA to offer a deadline extension which takes the student more than 12 months beyond their programme end-date is only provisional pending Special Cases approval. Special Cases approval is not guaranteed.

The fully completed application form, alongside any relevant supporting documentation/evidence should be sent to Special Cases (scc@york.ac.uk).

The programme extension application form has multiple sections:

- Part A & B should be completed by the department.
- Part C should be completed by the student's supervisor.
- Part D should be completed by the Chair of the Board of Studies.
- Part E explains the process of submitting the form.
- Part F is for Special Cases team use only.

The application should either be emailed from a member of the departmental teaching leadership team (e.g. the Chair of Board of Studies or the Student Services Manager) or should be copied into the email to Special Cases (scc@york.ac.uk).

5.5 Evidence - Programme Extensions

As noted in 5.4 above, relevant supporting documentation must be attached to the extension of enrolment request, as specified on the application form.

The evidence must provide an independent confirmation of the student's circumstances and indicate the duration of the impact. This evidence should come from a relevant independent professional, e.g. a GP or psychotherapist.

5.6 Special Cases Consideration of Applications for a Programme Extension

If Special Cases approval is required, a Case Officer will consider the request and supporting evidence.

The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

- (1) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
- (2) The request has been submitted after programme failure, or in order to avoid programme failure.
- (3) The request is entirely retrospective.
- (4) Sufficient mitigation has already been provided for the circumstances, and there is no medical evidence which confirms a deterioration in those circumstances, nor that there are new or different circumstances which require mitigation.
- (5) There are valid concerns about the period of time which the student has been away from their studies and subsequent likelihood of completion of the programme.
- (6) The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

Special Cases may also approve a request but specify that no further programme extension requests will be approved, or will be approved on the presented grounds.

Special Cases may also specify that a referral is made to Support to Study if there are concerns about the likelihood of a student completing their outstanding assessments without additional support. Engagement in Support to Study can be made mandatory for consideration of further extensions, if appropriate.

If the request is not approved, Special Cases will inform the student in writing and explain the rationale for the decision. The student will be informed of their right to appeal this decision.

5.7 Extensions with Built in Recovery Time

Where a student requires time away from their studies for medical reasons, but cannot be placed on a leave of absence, they may be permitted a programme extension with built-in recovery time. This is an extension which accounts for a period of time during which the student is not expected to be working on their outstanding assessments.

Case Study

- A claim was submitted on 20 July 2023.
- The student has been unwell since the end of June 2023.
- The medical evidence suggests that the student is currently too unwell to work and is likely to be too unwell to work for the next two months from 20 July 2023.
- A request is made for an extension of two months and 20 days (or thereabouts, depending on timing of notifying the student and, if relevant, dates on the medical evidence) to account for a period of recovery, plus the 20 days already lost when the student should have been working but wasn't well enough to do so.

If approved, Special Cases will inform the student that they are not expected to begin work until a particular date, and let them know that the extension approved takes that period of recovery into account.

If a student would have been placed on medical leave of absence had they had outstanding teaching to return to (i.e. a department is concerned about a student's ability to study) Special Cases are unable to enforce a medical condition of return for an extension with built-in recovery time. In this case, the department is advised to contact the student prior to their return from the recovery period to check on their health, and to recommend a further EC/SSP claim if they continue to be too unwell to work on their outstanding assessments.

The department may also consider making a referral to Support to Study should they be concerned about the student's ability to submit their assessments due to ongoing health concerns.

6. Programme Transfers

There is no automatic right for a student to transfer programmes.

If a student wishes to apply for a transfer of programme, they should first approach their supervisor and discuss their options.

6.1 Important Initial Considerations for Students and Staff

The initial decision on whether or not a transfer is possible is made by the Admissions Tutor for the new programme, who will also consider whether or not there is space on the programme the student wishes to transfer to, whether the student meets the entry requirements for that programme, and what the student's academic standing is on their existing programme.

There is no right of appeal against a decision of an academic Department/School not to accept a transfer request since this is an admissions decision, and admissions decisions are not appealable because they are academic judgements.

If an Admissions Tutor supports a request to transfer, a programme transfer form should be completed and will require the signature (written or electronic) of the student, and the Chairs of Board of Studies or Graduate Schools Board Chairs for both the original programme and the programme the student is transferring to. Certain cases will also require approval of Special Cases (see section 6.2 below).

Applicants must demonstrate that they are in good academic standing in their current department, meet the academic criteria and requirements for the new Programme, and the application must be approved and signed by both the original and new department (where the student is moving to a new department).

When a student transfers to a new programme, it is expected that they will complete its full academic requirements. However, it may be possible to allow some of the credit previously gained to be transferred. The receiving department will make a decision as to whether the modules already taken meet the learning outcomes of the new programme.

If it is not possible for the student to start the new programme until the next available opportunity, the student is expected to take a leave of absence (a leave of absence application form must be completed).

Until formal approval is given, the student will remain registered on their current programme and will be expected to comply with all its requirements, including attendance at all classes.

Student Visa Holders

Students must consult with an Immigration Adviser **before** requesting a course or programme transfer. Once a Student Visa holder submits a transfer request it will be considered by the Visa Compliance team and the student contacted with further information. Students must not transfer to their new course until it has been agreed by the Visa Compliance team. In some circumstances the student will be required to make a new visa application from their home country if they transfer.

Advice on transfers

Students who are considering a programme transfer are advised to talk with their supervisor in the first instance, and should contact a Student Adviser for advice about the financial implications of transferring.

In particular, where students receive student finance, they should check they have sufficient student finance entitlement available to them to cover their study costs, otherwise they may be required to self-fund.

If a programme Transfer Request is approved, the student and department will receive a transfer email confirmation, confirming the dates of the transfer and including any conditions that may apply.

Independent Students

A student may not be eligible for a bursary in a repeat year if one or more occurrences of a repeat year of study have previously taken place. Independent Students are strongly encouraged to seek further advice from the University's dedicated contact for independent students - contact details can be found on the webpages for [Estranged Students](#) and [Care Experienced Students](#).

6.2 Special Cases Approval Criteria - Programme Transfers

6.2.1 Special Cases approval is required for any transfer request where the student is transferring into a new programme after the first five weeks of that programme, if the transfer would result in any:

- (a) **Repeat study** (ie repeating any study/content the student has studied in their original programme)*
- (b) **Exemption from assessment** (assessment(s) that were due to take place imminently are now avoided due to the timing of the transfer)

- (c) **Missed essential teaching** (essential teaching as defined in the programme specification for the new programme has been missed and will not be repeated);
- (d) **Waiving of credit** (the student is going to be missing credit as a result of the transfer).

*If the student is transferring to a programme which is similar to their previous programme, Special Cases will expect that any repeat study will be avoided if possible. This means that the student may need to replace modules which they have previously studied with elective modules, if they require repeat study.

6.2.2 Special Cases approval is required for **all transfer requests after the end of Stage 2 of a taught programme**.

6.2.3 Even where conditions 6.2.1 or 6.2.2 are met, SCC approval is **not required** where:

- (a) The student has no option but to transfer because they have not met the progression requirements on their existing route, and an alternative route is built into the programme, e.g. where a student is transferring from an integrated Masters to a Bachelor's route having not met the required Stage average to continue with the Masters programme; or
- (b) The transfer is a straightforward route change or degree title change within the same academic department, and the teaching received on the new route is the same as the teaching received on the original route.

6.3 Application Process

If the student's original and new department (where applicable) agree to the programme transfer, and Special Cases approval is **not required**, the student can request the transfer through e:Vision.

Where Special Cases approval is **required**, applications must be emailed to scc@york.ac.uk using the [appropriate form](#).

Before the form is submitted please ensure that the following has been completed:

Part A (Completed by the Student):

- Confirmation that the details the student has entered are correct, including the current and new programme title and start date of the proposed transfer.
- The Transfer Disclaimer has been signed and dated.

Part B (Completed by the CBoS of the current programme):

- Whether the student is a visa holder has been included.
- Information about the student's current academic standing, which assessments/credits will have been completed, and which will be outstanding, at the point of transfer.
- This section is signed and dated.

Part C (Completed by the CBoS of the new programme)

- List any repeat study required, missed teaching (and how this will be remedied), waiving of credit or exemptions from assessment that apply to the transfer.
- This section is signed and dated.

Part D explains the process of submitting the form and the Special Cases Approval Criteria.

Part E is for Special Cases use only.

6.4 Transfers late in the Academic Year

Where a transfer is being requested particularly late in the academic year, Special Cases may request further information from the academic department the student is requesting to transfer into, including confirmation that the programme outcomes can still be met, information about the rationale for this decision and why it is being supported by the department at this late stage, and an explanation of the steps the department will take to minimise the risk of programme failure.

Special Cases may also seek additional confirmation that the student is aware of and has accepted the risks involved in transferring at this late stage.

6.5 Special Cases Consideration of Programme Transfers

If Special Cases approval is required, a Case Officer will consider the request.

The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

- (a) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
- (b) The request has been submitted after programme failure, or in order to avoid programme failure, and the student did not express a desire to transfer prior to programme failure.
- (c) The student has been withdrawn from their programme.
- (d) The request is entirely retrospective.
- (e) The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

If the request is not approved, Special Cases will inform the student in writing and explain the rationale for the decision. The student will be informed of their right to appeal this decision.

6.6 Students who have failed and want to transfer

Where a student has failed to meet the progression requirements for their programme, has exhausted all reassessment opportunities, and has been withdrawn from their programme, a

programme transfer will not be permitted. Instead the student will be required to apply as a new applicant to any other programme they wish to join within the University.

There are two exceptions to the above:

- (1) Where a transfer is provided for within the programme regulations, the transfer will be permitted, or
- (2) Where a student has had an academic appeal upheld in relation to their original programme of study. Once reinstated onto their original programme of study, they may request permission to transfer to a different programme, (notwithstanding that there is no automatic right to transfer programmes). Permission to transfer to a new programme of study is not a possible outcome of an academic appeal however. Rather, any transfer would need to be agreed via a separate process once the academic appeal had been resolved.

Where a student has failed to meet the progression requirements on their existing programme but expressed an interest in transferring programme prior to failure, and has *not yet been withdrawn from their programme*, they may apply to transfer programmes. Any transfer agreed in these circumstances can only be processed if the following has taken place **before** the student is withdrawn from their existing programme of study:

- The transfer has been approved by the Chairs of Board of Studies or their nominees for both the original and new programmes; **and**
- the transfer form has been completed and signed by all parties; **and**
- **where required**, Special Cases approval has been granted.

If the above have not taken place before the student is withdrawn, the student will have to reapply as a new student for entry onto another programme within the University.

Where a student has (1) failed to meet the progression requirements on their existing programme of study, but had (2) expressed a desire to transfer programme prior to failure, and is (3) still eligible to apply for a transfer because they have not yet been withdrawn from their programme of study, permission to transfer to any programme of study where there is an overlap in content between the original and new programme (whether or not both programmes are within the same academic department) will not normally be approved since this constitutes repeat study. Repeat study is only permitted where there is medical evidence which demonstrates that a student was unable to benefit from teaching the first time and also unable to take appropriate action (such as a leave of absence) at the appropriate time (i.e. when the circumstances began).

6.7 Transfers and Academic Appeals

There is no automatic right to transfer and an admissions decision taken by an academic department or school is not appealable because this is an academic judgement.

However, students retain the right to appeal against a decision not to accept their transfer request on the basis of procedural irregularity only (i.e. if there is evidence that a procedural irregularity has taken place in the way in which the transfer request was considered) as per Section 8.4 of the Student Academic Appeals Procedure.

7. Change in Mode of Attendance

Students can apply to change their mode of attendance, from full-time to part-time, and vice-versa where part-time modes of attendance exist on the student's programme. A change in the mode of attendance will impact on the tuition fees due and timetable arrangements and will therefore require prior discussion with the department. If a student is extending their studies by changing mode of attendance it could have serious implications on their funding and finance.

If a student wishes to apply for a mode of attendance change, they should first approach their supervisor and discuss their options. Once a student has spoken with their supervisor/department and fully understood the possible implications of a mode change (see section 7.1 below) the student can then complete the form.

Change of mode of attendance can only begin on a semester basis, and will be considered by the fees office to start on the first day of a new semester.

Not all requests for a change in mode of attendance require Special Cases approval. Please see section 7.2 onward for information about criteria for Special Cases approval and the application process.

Change in mode of attendance requests submitted within three months of a student's programme end date will not be considered.

7.1 Important Initial Considerations for Students and Staff

Fees

If a student changes their mode at the beginning of the academic year, their tuition fees will be adjusted to the full/part time rate as appropriate. If they change their mode during any other semester, their fees will be calculated proportionally.

For more information see the Student Financial Support website.

Student Visa Holders

The University does not sponsor students who are enrolled on a part time course. Student Visa holding students who wish to change their mode of attendance should contact an Immigration Advisor for further advise.

For more information please see the [immigration information](#) website.

Funding

Students are responsible for informing the University when requesting a change of mode of attendance if they receive funding from an external source (ie Research Council funding, foreign loans, etc.). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the change in mode of attendance is compatible with the regulations of any granting agency from which funding would normally be

received, and that such agencies are informed of the change. Extending studies or changing their mode of attendance, particularly for Postgraduates, could have serious implications on their funding. It is especially important to check the implications if their funding is provided through Student Finance England (the Student Loans Company) as they may be ineligible for further funding and may have to repay part of their loan.

If a student is a University of York or external scholarship holder, they should check the terms of their award before requesting a formal change to mode of attendance since there may be implications for their scholarship.

A change in mode of attendance can impact bursary eligibility. Please consult the [Bursary webpages](#).

Foreign loans

If a student has a student loan from outside of University, they should clarify the consequences that such a mode change might have on their status and eligibility.

Externally funded scholarships (e.g. Research Council studentships)

If a student's studies are supported by an external funder (e.g. Research Councils) any change to mode of attendance may have funding implications. For example, if an overpayment occurs as a result of a change of the mode of study, they may be liable to repay payments on a pro-rata basis.

Before requesting a formal mode of attendance change we recommend that students:

- Speak to their department/supervisor, and
- Check the specific terms and conditions of their funding, and
- Seek further guidance from the Student Advisors in the Student Hub.

Accommodation

Students who are changing their mode of attendance to part-time are **not** eligible to remain in University Accommodation. They must complete a Request to Vacate form and give notice to vacate their room.

For further information please see the Accommodation Services website.

Council tax

Students changing their mode of attendance to full-time may be eligible for Council Tax Exemption.

Part-time students are not exempt from Council Tax, either during or after their period of part-time enrolment- this extends to the full household where the student is resident.

For more information please see the Council tax website.

Independent Students

A change in mode of attendance may have significant implications for independent students. Independent Students are strongly encouraged to seek further advice from the University's dedicated contact for independent students - contact details can be found on the webpages for [Estranged Students](#) and [Care Experienced Students](#).

7.2 Special Cases Approval Criteria

Special Cases approval is required where:

- a) The mode change, for programmes that have approved part-time and full-time routes, is retrospective by more than a month (i.e. the length of time between the mode change 'effective from' date and the date on which it was approved by the Board of Studies is more than one month).
- b) There is no approved part-time route (see 7.4 below).

7.3 Application Process

All requests for mode of attendance changes must be on the [appropriate form](#).

The change in mode of attendance application form has multiple sections:

- Part A should be completed by the student.
- Part B should be completed by the department only where Special Cases Approval is required.
- Part C should be completed by the Chair of the Board of Studies or their nominee.
- Part D explains the process of submitting the form.
- Part E is for Special Cases team use only.

Before the form is submitted please ensure that the following information is included:

- Confirmation that the details the student has entered, including that the start date of the proposed mode change are correct. Change of mode of attendance can only be requested on a semester basis, and will be considered by the fees office to start on the first day of a new semester.
- Details of any outside funding (e.g. Research Councils, foreign student loans, etc.).
- Progress report stating support for mode change.
- "Electronic" Signature Confirmation of Chair of the Board of Studies/Executive Committee.

Until formal approval is given, the student will remain registered on the current programme and will be expected to comply with all its requirements, including attendance at all classes.

If Special Cases approval is not required, please submit the form to student-records@york.ac.uk.

If Special Cases approval is required, please email the form to scc@york.ac.uk.

After the mode change request has been approved, the student and department will receive a mode of attendance change email confirmation, confirming the dates of the new mode of attendance and any conditions that may apply.

7.4 Requests for Full Time Study in Part-Time Attendance

There is a specific type of change in mode of attendance which can be requested *as an adjustment for a disability*. If approved, this would result in full-time study in part-time attendance. This type of request always requires Special Cases approval.

Special Cases cannot consider this type of request where a part-time version of the course already exists.

This type of request will only be approved where there is specific recommendation for full-time study in part-time attendance included in a Student Support Plan, or where there is medical evidence which explicitly confirms that this is a necessary adjustment due to disability.

If this is being requested, the department must complete Section B of the Change in Mode of attendance application form, which includes:

- a) An explanation from the Chair of the Board of studies explaining why this request is being made and why alternative forms of mitigation (for example, a period of Leave of Absence) are not appropriate.
- b) A proposed breakdown of the modules/credits the student will complete and when.
- c) The normal module breakdown for the programme (for comparison).
- d) A completed change in mode of attendance form (see 7.3 above).
- e) Confirmation that the student is aware of the financial implications of this change in mode.
- f) An updated Student Support Plan and/or medical evidence which explicitly confirms that this is a necessary adjustment due to disability.

If approved, the change in mode will apply only to the relevant stage of study unless specified otherwise, i.e. if the request is for a change in mode of attendance for stage 2 of a programme, a new application will need to be submitted for stage 3.

7.5 Special Cases Consideration of Change in Mode of Attendance Requests

If Special Cases approval is required, a Case Officer will consider the request.

The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

1. There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
2. The student has not confirmed that they are aware of the financial implications of the change in mode of attendance.
3. The request is entirely retrospective.

4. A part-time version of the course already exists.
5. The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.
6. The request is being submitted within three months of a student's programme end date.

If the request is not approved, Special Cases will inform the student in writing and explain the rationale for the decision. The student will be informed of their right to appeal this decision.

8. Readmission

The readmission process is for former students who are requesting permission to be readmitted to study, having previously chosen to withdraw or having been withdrawn for reasons other than academic failure or disciplinary exclusion. It does not apply to students who have failed their programme and wish to be readmitted to the same programme of study, or one with substantial content overlap. Students that have failed or received a lower exit award will be required to follow the [academic appeals](#) process.

Not every application for readmission requires Special Cases approval.

Applications for admission received from students who have failed a University examination at another university shall be considered in the normal way, and may be accepted without reference to Special Cases.

Applications for admission from students whose enrolment with the University has been terminated as academically unsatisfactory, other than where triggered by failure of the programme or failure to progress, must, if approved by the Board of Studies concerned, be submitted as recommendations to Special Cases.

Students in poor academic standing, who have expressed a desire to transfer programme prior to programme failure, can be considered as transfers by Special Cases provided the student has not yet been withdrawn from their programme and provided that the department the student has requested to transfer into is willing to offer a place to the student (see 6.6).

Special Cases approval is required where the student is seeking admission to the same programme, or one which has content overlap with a programme they studied previously at York, or if the student has already twice been admitted to a first year at York. Otherwise they may be accepted directly by the Board of Studies concerned.

Students whose enrolment at York has been terminated through failure to progress, and have had a new application accepted to a programme with content overlap, will be considered by Special Cases as exceptional readmission provided there is evidence that the circumstances leading to programme failure have substantially changed.

Students who have voluntarily withdrawn from York, and have had a new application accepted to the same programme or one with content overlap, will be considered by Special Cases as exceptional readmissions provided that the department is willing to offer a place to the student

and where there is evidence that the circumstances leading to withdrawal have substantially changed.

8.1 Special Cases Consideration of Readmission Requests

If Special Cases approval is required, a Case Officer will consider the request.

The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

- a) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
- b) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence which confirms that the student's circumstances leading to programme failure or withdrawal have changed.
- c) The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

Special Cases will inform the department of the outcome.

9. Exemption from Attendance and Residence Requirements

In some cases, students can be granted exemption from University attendance and residence requirements. Chairs of Boards of Studies can approve exemptions from residence requirements without reference to Special Cases. Special Cases approval is required for requests for exemptions from attendance requirements beyond 4 weeks.

9.1 Residence Requirements

Full-time students are normally required to live within 40 miles of their ordinary place of study, part-time students within 60 miles. The Chair of the Board of Studies in the Student's academic department can give permission for this limit to be extended.

Where fieldwork or practice placements constitute part of a programme of study, these locations may be regarded as an alternative place of study.

It is expected that students will attend all timetabled teaching and supervision meetings associated with the programme of study. Students are responsible for seeking approval for absences at other times from their supervisor or, in the supervisor's absence, the Chair of the Board of Studies concerned.

"Designated periods of study" will usually equate to University semesters. Exceptions to this will be recorded as programme requirements in departmental documentation.

Exceptions: distance learning programme: Students on distance learning programmes are expected to demonstrate attendance through participation in all designated academic engagements.

9.2 Attendance Requirements

University Regulations state that undergraduate students should be present at any time at which teaching or other academic engagements have been arranged for their programme (including Saturdays, reading and assessment weeks). This also includes teaching which is not compulsory.

9.3 Special Cases Approval Criteria

An absence of no longer than four weeks can be approved by the Chair of the Board of Studies in the Student's academic department. Any longer absence during a semester which will be counted towards completion of a student's degree requires the approval of Special Cases.

9.4 Special Cases Consideration of Exemptions to Attendance Requirements

Requests for exemption beyond 4 weeks will only be approved where there is specific recommendation for exemption from attendance requirements in a Student Support Plan, or where there is medical evidence which explicitly confirms that this is a necessary adjustment due to disability.

The request must come via email from the Chair of the Board of Studies to scc@york.ac.uk, with relevant supporting documentation attached (see below).

Special Cases will require the following in order to consider this type of request:

1. A memo from the Chair of the Board of Studies explaining why this request is being made and why alternative forms of mitigation (for example, a period of Leave of Absence) are not appropriate.
2. An outline of the impact that this will have on the student's studies.
3. An explanation of the measures which will be taken to mitigate the impact of the adjustment.
4. An updated Student Support Plan and/or medical evidence which explicitly confirms that this is a necessary adjustment due to disability.
5. An email from the student confirming that they are aware of and accept the risks involved in being permitted an exemption from attendance requirements and understand that it cannot be used as the basis of an exceptional circumstances claim, academic appeal or complaint.

If approved, the exemption will only apply to the current stage of study unless specified otherwise, i.e. if the request is for an exemption to the attendance requirements for stage 2 of a programme, a new application will need to be submitted for stage 3.

If Special Cases approval is required, a Case Officer will consider the request.

The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

- a) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
- b) The request is entirely retrospective.
- c) The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

Special Cases will inform the department of the outcome.

10. Credit load Variations

A student may only register for more additional credit than is required by their programme (e.g. more than 120 credits per year for UG and 180 for PGT) where this is expressly approved as part of the programme specification, or with explicit permission from Special Cases.

Where additional credit is taken, it cannot be included in the calculation of any progression decisions or degree classifications, and as such it must be clear to both the student and the school/department which credit is additional and which is included in calculations of progression and award at the outset of the module. This is known as 'auditing' credit.

Students will only be permitted to audit credit where the request is supported by the department and it is due to a procedural error on the part of the University or compelling reasons for the request can be evidenced.

The University Academic Framework can allow a credit load of between 100 and 140 credits per academic year. Any variation below or above those limits will only be approved where it is a result of a change in mode of attendance request (7.4).

The University Academic Framework also limits the number of credits per degree programme to 360 for three-year programmes and 480 for four-year programmes.

Special Cases cannot permit variations to these limits, aside from permitting auditing of additional credits as outlined above.

A request to audit a module must come via email from the Chair of the Board of Studies to scc@york.ac.uk.

Special Cases will require a memo from the Chair of Board of Studies explaining why this request is being made.

A Case Officer will consider the request. The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

1. There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
2. The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

Special Cases will inform the department of the outcome.

11. Waiving of Compulsory or Prerequisite Modules

If a department wishes to waive a compulsory or prerequisite module for a student, Special Cases approval is required.

A request to waive a compulsory or prerequisite module must come via email from the Chair of the Board of Studies to scc@york.ac.uk.

Special Cases will require the following in order to consider this type of request:

- a) A memo from the Chair of Board of Studies explaining why this request is being made, i.e. if a module is compulsory or has a prerequisite this implies it is pedagogically necessary, so the department would be expected to explain why an exception is being requested in this case;
- b) Where it is a waiver of a compulsory module, confirmation will be required that the learning outcomes of the programme can be met if the request is approved;
- c) An explanation of the steps that will be taken to mitigate the risk to the student, i.e. what support will be put in place to reduce risk of programme failure;
- d) An email from the student confirming that they are aware of and accept the risks involved in waiving the compulsory or prerequisite module and understand that it cannot be used as the basis of an exceptional circumstances claim, academic appeal or complaint.

A Case Officer will consider the request. The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

- a) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
- b) The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

Special Cases will inform the department of the outcome.

12. Late Module Change Requests

If a student wishes to change a module late in the academic year, Special Cases approval is required.

A request to change a module late in an academic year must come via email from the Chair of the Board of Studies to scc@york.ac.uk.

Students will only be permitted to change modules late where the request is supported by the department and it is due to a procedural error on the part of the University or compelling reasons for the request can be evidenced.

Special Cases will require the following in order to consider this type of request:

1. A memo from the Chair of Board of Studies explaining why this request is being made.
2. An explanation of the steps that will be taken to mitigate the risk to the student, i.e. what support will be put in place to reduce risk of programme failure.
3. An email from the student confirming that they are aware of and accept the risks involved in changing modules at this late stage and understand that it cannot be used as the basis of an exceptional circumstances claim, academic appeal or complaint.

A Case Officer will consider the request. The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

- a) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
- b) The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

Special Cases will inform the department of the outcome.

13. Requests for Placement Years Out of Sequence

If a department wishes to request that a student be permitted to complete a placement year out of sequence, Special Cases approval will be required.

Programmes are designed and structured in a specific way in order to ensure that students are able to receive the maximum benefit from their teaching and, where applicable, from their placement year. As such, requests for a placement year out of sequence are only approved where accommodations for disability require an exception to the usual programme structure.

Students are advised to seek guidance from Student Advisers in the Student Hub about the financial implications of taking a placement year out of sequence.

A request for a placement year out of sequence must come via email from the Chair of the Board of Studies to scc@york.ac.uk.

Special Cases will require an email from the Chair of Board of Studies explaining why this request is being made.

A Case Officer will consider the request. The Case Officer may decide that the request should be immediately approved, that amendments should be made to the request (in consultation with the student's academic department), that further information is required from the student or their academic department, or that the request should be rejected.

A Case Officer may reject the request if any of the following apply:

- a) There is insufficient information and/or supporting evidence to consider the request.
- b) The request would place the student at an academic advantage or disadvantage relative to their peers.

Special Cases will inform the department of the outcome.

14. Progression at Risk

The University's progression and award rules, as published in the Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking, and Feedback, make it clear that an undergraduate student must "satisfy the requirements for each stage of his/her programme (a stage is equivalent to a year's full-time study) before progressing to the next stage". There are usually no permitted exceptions to this rule.

However, there is a specific circumstance in which the University does allow 'Progression at Risk'. This is where students have completed study abroad or placement years but are awaiting formal confirmation from other institutions or organisations. In these circumstances, students are permitted to register for the following academic year where Departments/Schools confirm that a student has met all of the necessary requirements of the previous stage.

Special Cases cannot permit students to 'Progress at Risk' on the basis of outstanding resits or 'sits as if for the first time' from the previous stage, irrespective of how compelling the student's circumstances may be. Whilst the University is sympathetic toward students who are facing challenging circumstances, permitting progression at risk in these circumstances places potentially vulnerable students at an even greater risk.

15. Progress Cases and Academic Appeals

Students have the right to appeal a decision taken by Special Cases not to approve their Progress Case request on the basis of procedural irregularity only (i.e. if there is evidence that a procedural irregularity has taken place in the way in which the transfer request was considered) as per Section 8.1(ii) of the Student Academic Appeals Procedure.

Version Control:

- *Created January 2024*
- *August 2024 - Addition of Section 5.1*
- *July 2025 - Addition of paragraph 1 Section 8 to clarify readmission for students who have failed their programme and exhausted their assessment opportunities, amendment to section 13 to clarify that requests for a placement year out of sequence do not need to be based on an adjustment for disability and should be made via email by the Chair of Board of Studies.*