

London's
International
Drama School

**Rose
Bruford
College**
of Theatre
& Performance

Interruption of Study

POLICIES and
PROCEDURES

INTERRUPTION OF STUDY

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1.0 Introduction and scope of this policy

Rose Bruford College expects that all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students pursue their studies on a continuous basis for the published duration of their programme. It is understood however, that you may encounter personal difficulties or situations which may seriously disrupt your studies or opportunities may arise which require extended leave.

In such cases, which may result in prolonged interruption of normal activity and where it becomes clear that continuation of your studies is not possible, you may be granted a temporary interruption to your studies.

The College has produced this policy so that such requests for interruption to your studies can be reported and considered and to ensure that all students are treated equitably and fairly.

Requests for interruption are a type of extended request for mitigation and the decision to approve, either in full or in part, or to reject an application for a leave of absence will be taken by the Mitigating Circumstances Committee. You are advised to consult with your Programme Director and/or personal tutor before applying to interrupt your studies.

2.0 Applying for interruption to study

If you wish to apply for interruption to your studies, you should do so in writing using the Interruption of Study Form. You should also include any supporting documents which you feel are relevant to your application.

Any application to interrupt a programme of study must normally be made before the beginning of the proposed leave of absence. You must ensure that your application form has been signed by your **Programme Director** or **Subject Leader** who will also discuss with you any issues that may result from your requesting an interruption to your studies.

Completed forms should be sent to the Registrar who will convene a meeting of the Mitigating Circumstances Committee where your application will be considered.

The decision of the Mitigating Circumstances Committee will be relayed to you in writing within **10 working days** of your application.

3.0 The Mitigating Circumstances Committee

The Mitigating Circumstances Committee (MCC) is a formal committee of the College. The committee will consider your application and any supporting documents you have included. Your **Programme Director/Subject Leader** may be invited to discuss any issues that arise from your application.

Each request for a leave of absence will be considered on an individual, case by case basis and any decision made will be at the discretion of the MCC.

Consideration will also be given as to whether a change of mode of attendance to part time status may be an appropriate alternative to a leave of absence.

The duration of the period of absence may have to be determined by the point in your studies when the interruption occurs. For example, if you interrupt during practical modules and/or projects, your return may be dictated by the practicality of your undertaking or completing that work. A period of interruption would not normally be for more than a complete year. **You should note that when you return to College, you will resume your studies under the academic regulations in force at the time of your return.**

If you are granted an interruption to your programme of study for medical reasons, you will be required to provide a letter from your doctor or healthcare professional stating that you are fit to resume your studies before you will be allowed to re-register.

NB If you are a non-EU student in the UK on a student visa or residence permit, the College is legally required to report to the government and other relevant authorities that you intend to interrupt your studies. International students should seek the advice of the Student Services team to discuss the consequences of taking an

interruption. International students in the UK on a student visa are not normally permitted to study part-time and it is essential that they seek impartial immigration advice from the Student Services team before considering this option.

The MCC will inform you in writing of the outcome of your application along with details of the period of interruption including your return date and any requirements or other arrangements relating to your absence.

4.0 During the interruption

If your application is approved you should inform any organisation or person who is funding your studies. In particular, you should inform the Student Loans Company if you are a home student and/or any sponsoring body if you are a home or overseas student. (See above). The College is required to inform any funding agencies (including student loan companies or postgraduate funding agencies) that your registration has been temporarily suspended.

During the period of interruption you will not be expected to pay tuition fees. Any tuition fees that have already been paid will be refunded or held over by the College. If a whole year's fee is refunded and you return in the following year you may have to pay the any higher rate of fee should there have been an increase in the fee level. If the College holds the money for you, would not have to pay the higher fee.

While you are absent from College, you will not be entitled to supervision or access to College facilities and will not be covered by any College insurance policies other than its Public Liability Insurance.. Depending on the duration of your absence, your email and library accounts may be suspended.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you keep your Programme Director/Subject Leader informed of any changes in your situation during the interruption of your studies.

5.0 Returning from interruption

Before you return to your studies, you must confirm with the Registrar that you intend to return on the date agreed in your letter confirming your interruption of study. Depending on the length of absence you may be required to re-register.

If you fail to return or re-register as agreed in your interruption letter, the College will attempt to contact you. If you do not respond within 30 days of the agreed return date, you will be automatically withdrawn from the programme.

You will resume your studies under the academic regulations in force at the time of your return.

The College will notify the appropriate funding and/or sponsoring agencies once you have returned from interruption and re-registered for your programme of study

If you are a non-EU student in the UK you will need to fulfil any requirements in respect of visas and you should consult the Student Services team in respect of queries relating to visa extensions or temporary employment.

6.0 Applications which are not approved – Your right to appeal

If your application for interruption is declined by MCC, you have the right to appeal against this decision. However you must appeal on your own behalf. An appeal submitted by a third party will not be accepted.

Notice of appeal should be sent to the Registrar in writing within seven working days of the dispatch of the decision of the Mitigating Circumstance Committee.

If you are studying on an award of The University of Manchester and you still believe that your case has not been dealt with properly by the College or that the outcome is unreasonable you may make a further appeal to the validating university (University of Manchester). If you are dissatisfied with the decision of The University of Manchester, you may be able to complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) provided the complaint is eligible under its rules and once all internal procedures have been concluded.

If you are studying on a Rose Bruford College award, and you believe that your complaint has not been dealt with properly by the College you may be able to complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) provided the complaint is eligible under its rules and once all internal procedures have been concluded.

Information about the role of the OIA and the procedure for submitting complaints can be obtained from the OIA website: www.oiahe.org.uk

7.0 Disabled students or students with other protected characteristics.

If you feel that you may have been discriminated against because of a disability or any other protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010, you can make a complaint through the College complaints procedure, but you also have the right to pursue a complaint under the terms of that Act to a county or sheriff court. If you feel you have a case you may bring proceedings against the responsible body, that is, the Governing Body of the College. The claim must normally be started within 6 months of the alleged discrimination. Where there has been a process of discrimination taking place over a period of time, the six months begins at the date of

the last discriminatory act. Courts have the discretion to consider a claim brought outside the six-month period if they consider that it is fair to do so.

If you wish you can take a case under this Act at the same time as making a complaint through the College complaints procedure. Most of the cases under this act are dealt with in the first instance by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) which has set up an independent conciliation service for disputes arising under the act, and tries to promote settlement of disputes without recourse to the courts. Agreeing to the conciliation process does not prevent a complainant from pursuing a case through the courts and the time limit for bringing an action in court is extended by two months if the conciliation process has been used within six months of a discriminatory act. For further information about the EHRC and the conciliation service, contact the EHRC helpline by ringing 08457 622 633. Textphone users should dial 08457 622 644. Further information can be obtained from the EHRC website:

www.equalityhumanrights.com

8.0 Reporting

Each year, the MCC will prepare a report to the **LQSC** on the number and nature of cases referred to the Principal, identifying any general issues that may have arisen.

Appendix 1 - Examples of exceptional circumstances

The following circumstances are typical of what may be considered grounds for applying for an interruption to a programme:

- Serious physical or mental illness of the student;
- Death / serious illness of a partner, close family member or close friend;
- Unforeseeable or unpreventable events such as distress or injury caused by a serious accident; the effects of being the victim of a criminal act or the distress or serious disruption caused by fire, flood or other natural catastrophe;
- Extreme family or financial circumstances leading to stress;
- Breakdown of essential equipment where a student is unable to continue a project and the use of alternative equipment is not possible;
- Jury Service;
- Delays in progress due to unforeseen problems (e.g., moving of offices/buildings, supervisor changes etc.) which are outside of the student's control

Maternity leave - Students may interrupt their studies for the purpose of maternity leave for a maximum period of 12 months during their degree. The period of leave must be taken in one consecutive block.

Paternity leave - A total of two weeks paternity leave may be taken at any time during a partner's pregnancy or within three months following birth. The student must inform the Programme Director of this absence.

Adoption leave - Students who are adopting a child may interrupt their studies for a maximum 12 month period during their degree. The period of leave must be taken in one consecutive block.

The following circumstances will not be regarded as grounds for applying for an interruption or an extension:

- The student or Programme Director was unaware of policy and application procedures for interruptions and/or extensions for courses. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure that they are aware of all policies and procedures relevant to their degree;
- Further primary research and/or laboratory work that is part of your curriculum
- Long-term holidays/vacations;
- Inadequate planning and time management;
- Difficulties with English language (including delays as a result of proofreading);
- Computer or other equipment failure where use of an alternative is possible or any loss of work was avoidable;

Appendix 2 - Supporting documentation

Medical evidence:

A doctor's note or note from another medical professional should be submitted in support of an interruption based on a prolonged or acute medical condition

Other documentary evidence:

Appropriate third party independent supporting or collaborative documentation is required. Where there is considerable personal or family difficulties that have led a student to seek a leave of absence these circumstances should be fully explained. The College will determine, on an individual case by case basis, if the documentary evidence supplied is satisfactory.

The College reserves the right to contact any person named in a submission to seek further clarification or further information. Please note: this will not be done to remedy omissions in the completion of the documentation by the student / Programme Director, or to seek supporting evidence when not supplied

DOCUMENT CONTROL BOX		Version 1.3
Policy / Procedure title:	Interruption of Study	
Policy owner:	Registrar	
Lead contact:	Registrar	
Audience:	Students/staff	
Equality Impact Screening date Referred to Equality Impact Assessment Group?	Yes May 2014	
Approving body:	LQSC	
Date approved:	11 June 2014	
Implementation date:	1 September 2014	
Previous revision dates:		
Supersedes:	New Policy	
Previous review dates:		
Next review date:	August 2019	
Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations	Academic Regulations	
Related Policies, Procedures and Guidance:	Mitigating Circumstance	
Further information: updated in August 2017 to take account of Taught Degree Awarding Powers. Updated in August 2018 to take account of new nomenclature relating to Subject Leaders in DMTA		