

## Applications for Resuming Study following Disregarding terms

### Notes for Guidance for Staff and Students 2020-21

These guidance notes are intended to complement the relevant University Ordinances and they relate to applications submitted to the Committee in 2020-21.

They do not themselves constitute a set of regulations, nor should they be taken to imply that, given a particular set of circumstances, the Committee will automatically reach a particular decision.

The relevant Ordinances can be found online in Chapter III (Examinations) of Statutes and Ordinances. (<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/>)

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee

The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC) is a committee of the General Board which meets monthly throughout the year to consider applications for examination allowances and related matters. There is also a large volume of student casework undertaken under delegated authority much of which involves the expert opinion of its Medical Advisers.

Prior to October 2018, most of this work was undertaken by the Council's Standing Committee on Applications (known as the Applications Committee).

The EAMC has the following overarching aims:

- To endeavour to ensure parity of treatment between applicants to the Committee who share similar circumstances, whilst recognising that each case is individual.
- To be mindful of the interests of students **taking the same examination but** who are not applicants to the Committee.
- To ensure that, particularly in relation to disregarding terms and repeating a period of study, an applicant is **neither** advantaged **nor disadvantaged** in comparison with other students.

### 1.2 Eligibility

The EAMC considers applications from colleges on behalf of undergraduates and also on behalf of students on the following postgraduate courses: EMBA; LLM; MAST; MBA; MCL; MEng; M.Fin; MMath; MMus; MSci; PGCE.

### 1.3 Purpose of the EAMC

The purpose of the EAMC is to consider the cases of students relating to applications for;

- (a) Examination access arrangements (including adjusted modes of assessment);
- (b) Coursework extensions;
- (c) Disregarding terms;
- (d) Examination allowances
- (e) Consideration of non-standard combinations of papers;
- (f) Remission of University Composition fees.

## **2 Return to study**

### **2.1 General**

When the period of disregarding terms is drawing to a close and the student is ready to resume their studies, the college is required to apply to the Committee for permission for the student to return. A student may not resume without obtaining this permission. At this point, the college should also submit any required evidence of fitness to return.

When a student returns, they may find that the content of the course and / or examination has changed. No special provision is made for this and the student is expected to comply with the course content and examination as required for that year.

#### *Fees*

If the Committee approve a student to return at a time that requires them to repeat a term that they have already studied, fees for that repeated term are still due. Any application for fee remission is unlikely to be approved as repeating a term is not a reason for fee remission. Further details on fee remission can be found [here](#).

#### *International Students*

Where an overseas student is returning following a period of disregarding terms, there may be implications for the University and for the individual student for visa requirements. In the first instance the college should contact the [International Student Office](#).

### **2.2 Evidence of fitness to return to study**

When the Committee grants a student permission to have terms disregarded, it normally attaches conditions of fitness to return. Evidence of these conditions having been met is required before the point when the student intends to return. A student may not resume without the permission of the Committee.

Wherever possible, medical evidence confirming fitness to return should be provided by the same person who made the original diagnosis. Where this is not possible, the student should arrange for the current practitioner, for example GP or consultant, to see the medical evidence from the time of the original diagnosis to inform their judgement on the student's fitness to return.

The Committee and or the College may have set other, non-medical, conditions before resumption. For example, students may need to satisfy the requirements of a college examination or some other form of academic assessment as a condition of returning from a period of disregarded terms. These should be made clear to the student when permission to disregard terms is given. The student should be in no doubt as to the nature of these conditions, what is required of him/her and the deadline for satisfaction of such conditions. A clear statement of what facilities (if any) and support will be made available to the student to meet any such conditions should be given.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain this evidence in time for the college to submit it by the Committee's deadline. If the evidence is delayed for reasons outside the student's or the College's control, this should be made clear. The deadline for a college to apply for a student to return for the academic year is 24 August; for the calendar year is 24 November; and for return in the Easter term is 24 March. The college and student(s) should ensure that all the documentation is ready for submission by that date. Any applications received after this date may be delayed with an outcome not known before the start of the term, putting the student's return to study in jeopardy.

In cases where continued medical treatment, including psychiatric treatment, is required, the Committee needs to be satisfied that such treatment can satisfactorily be delivered in Cambridge.

In the cases of disabled students returning from a period of disregarded terms, the Committee would expect an indication that the DRC had been informed in order for any necessary support to be ready from the resumption of the student's studies.

For all students, study should be the primary focus of attendance. Engagement with extra-curricular activities is not prohibited and the University encourages students to have a positive work / life balance. However, it is advised that participation in extra-curricular activities should not prevent a student from meaningful engagement with their studies and / or impact the student's ability to perform academically.

### 3. How to make an application

#### 3.1 General information

The Committee only considers applications made through the college on the student's behalf, except in the most exceptional circumstances.

Applications must be complete, i.e. they must include all the required documentation, a tutorial signature and explicit confirmation as to whether or not it has the College's support, and if it does not, to confirm it has told the student so. Applications that have not had this information completed may be returned, and this could delay the Committee's consideration. The application may also include any additional information which the college wishes to submit.

The student may, if they wish, seek to have their own statement or other supporting evidence included. It is in all parties' interests that any such statement is clear and concise. The Committee regards it as good practice that the student should be fully aware of all the documentation being submitted by the College.

An application must include all of the following:

- a completed and signed [application form](#);
- a completed [declaration form](#) from the student giving permission for medical evidence to be disclosed to medical members of the Committee;
- evidence that any conditions of the original disregarding terms have been met, including any medical evidence of fitness to resume study (where required).

Completed applications should be sent to the Secretary of the EAMC at [eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk). Please note that in fairness to all students and to allow members sufficient time to read the papers, the submission deadline for each meeting of the Committee is strictly observed. Details of meetings and submission deadlines can be found [here](#).

### **3.2 Medical Evidence**

If the reason for the original disregarding of terms is for medical reasons, evidence of fitness to resume study must be included with the application. The following should be noted;

- Evidence must be submitted by the deadline of the Committee meeting at which the college would like the application to be considered. The Committee expects to receive evidence from a medically qualified practitioner, for example a doctor's report, preferably from a doctor based in Cambridge.

Where appropriate, it will additionally consider evidence from an accredited counsellor.

If there is a disability element to the application, the Committee would normally expect to see reference to consultation with the DRC.

- The medical evidence should be a clear diagnosis which includes the nature and severity of the illness and a treatment plan. The evidence should be precise and self-explanatory and indicate that the student is now well enough to return to study as well as any on-going treatment or support that would be required once the student returns.

Strict confidentiality is observed regarding medical evidence. Medical evidence is disclosed only to the medical members of the Committee (although it is accepted that it will also be seen by the Secretary and Assistant Secretary to the Committee and by College staff collating the application). Other members of the Committee do not see this part of the application unless the student explicitly asks that they should do so. The student is required to submit a form giving permission for their medical evidence to be disclosed to the medical members of the Committee.

### **3.3 Evidence of other grave cause**

Where a student is resuming study following mitigating circumstances which are not medical, a letter from the College indicating that those mitigating circumstances are now resolved is required. The College must be satisfied that the student is able to return to study.

### **3.4 Deadlines**

The deadline for a college to apply for a student to return for the academic year is 24 August; for the calendar year is 24 November; and for return in the Easter term is 24 March. The college and student(s) should ensure that all the documentation is ready for submission by that date. Any applications received after this date may be delayed with an outcome not known before the start of the term, putting the student's return to study in jeopardy.

## **4 How the EAMC considers applications**

### **4.1 General overview**

Members of the Committee normally receive applications seven days before the scheduled meeting. Where necessary a second circulation of applications will be issued: but only in the most exceptional circumstances will the Committee feel able to consider tabled applications. Medical evidence is only sent to medical members of the Committee.

Where the medical evidence is considered by the medical members to be weak or unconvincing, the Committee may defer a decision until further appropriate evidence is obtained, or it may decline the application.

### **4.2 Applications dealt with by delegated authority**

Many applications for fitness to resume study will be dealt with by authority delegated to the Chair / Secretary or Medical Advisers. Typically this includes straightforward applications to return.

If, however, they wish the application to be considered at a scheduled meeting, then the application will need to await that meeting. Applications to resume study must be submitted by the deadline

## 5. Review procedure

Details of the [Review Procedure](#) and form can be found online and requests for review should be submitted on the Review Request form within 14 days of the formal decision being issued. It is particularly important for this purpose that the College keep records of when it communicates the Committee's decisions to the students. In instances where the Committee has declined an application or offers an alternative to the allowance sought, it is essential that the decision is conveyed to the student as soon as possible.

The review will essentially be of a procedural nature i.e. the Reviewer will consider whether in reaching its decision(s) the Committee has observed the relevant Ordinances and these Notes of Guidance and whether or not it has come to a reasonable decision in that context. The Review Procedure is the final stage before the student may take their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

## 6. Key contacts

Complex queries	<a href="mailto:Jenny.green@admin.cam.ac.uk">Jenny.green@admin.cam.ac.uk</a>
General / preliminary queries	<a href="mailto:eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk">eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk</a>
Making an application to the Committee	<a href="mailto:eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk">eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk</a>