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## GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAMMES WITH MANDATORY LONG PLACEMENTS

### 1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the Placements: Policy and Procedure 4K.
- 1.2 These guidelines should be referred to for students completing a first degree with a mandatory one-year placement.

### 2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 These guidelines are for BU staff.

### 3. ACCESSING OTHER RELEVANT BU DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 All documents can be accessed [here](#)
- 3.2 Other documents with direct relevance to this are:
  - *4K - Placements: Policy and Procedure*

## Guidelines

- 4.1 Where a placement year is mandatory, students cannot normally choose to 'opt out' unless they are exempt from placements, as per section 6.4 of the 4K Placements: Policy and Procedure.
- 4.2 Where a student is on a mandatory placement year, which is non-credit bearing and is not required to meet the ILOs of the programme, there may be exceptional circumstances in which they will be allowed to transfer to Level 6 of the full time programme without undertaking a placement (see section 6.1 of the 4K Placements: Policy and Procedure).
- 4.3 As a result of the ongoing impact of the pandemic on placement provision students studying a programme with a mandatory placement in 2020/21 or 2021/22 (that is non-credit bearing and not required to meet the ILOs of the programme) will be able to transfer to L6 of the full time programme if they are unable to secure a placement.
- 4.4 In situations where students are unable to find a placement by 31 August, they should be contacted by the faculty to explore the options of moving to Level 6 of the full time programme at the start of the academic year. Where there is a change in the availability of units between academic years, students should be informed of the changes when making their placement choice and should be advised that they will be required to accept any necessary changes to their published programme details.

- 4.5 The exceptions to the approach outlined in section 4.3 are programmes in the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences which lead to professional registration which incorporate mandatory practice learning elements within the curricula to meet Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements. These PSRBs have provided specific guidance to HE providers to help manage their placement requirements in the current circumstances.
- 4.6 In situations where students are unable to find a placement by the 31 August and want to continue to look for a placement up to the March deadline they should be contacted by the faculty to explain that should they be unsuccessful in finding a placement they will be able to move to Level 6 of the full time programme at the start of the following academic year.
- 4.7 Students should be actively encouraged to seek placements as early as possible and support mechanisms should be in place to allow greater opportunities for students to secure placements.
- 4.8 Where a student has not secured a mandatory placement by 30th September, faculties will need to interrupt the student on MyHub within 7 days of this date. The date of interruption should be the start of the academic year. This does not apply to Student Visa holders. At this point a 'change of circumstance' notification will be sent to Student Finance England (SFE) to notify them that the student is not actively on a placement. This is required to meet our obligation to SFE to report attendance. It should be noted that students cannot complete Online Registration (OLR) while interrupted, but access to their BU student email account, Brightspace and MyCareerHub is unaffected.
- 4.9 Given the ongoing impact of the pandemic on placement opportunities the minimum placement duration for students studying a programme with a mandatory placement in 2020/21 or 2021/22 will be reduced to 15 weeks in recognition of the decreased number of placement opportunities available. Faculties through their engagement with students, should emphasise that this is a minimum and students should be encouraged to undertake longer placement opportunities where they can.
- 4.10 The final deadline to secure a placement is the 31st March. Students who are unable to secure a mandatory placement by the 31st March will be unable to resume their studies until the start of the next academic year. Faculties should ensure that students are advised of this.
- 4.11 Where a student undertakes more than one placement there must be a gap of less than 4 weeks between one placement ending and another one starting or the student will be interrupted. A student should be advised to contact their PDA within a week of their placement ending if it ends early.
- 4.12 Once a student has completed 15 or more weeks in an approved placement they will not be interrupted.
- 4.13 The first loan instalment is paid to all placement students 20 working days before the start of the academic year. If a student has not secured a mandatory placement by 30th September and their placement year has been interrupted, they will have been overpaid their loan. SFE may take this overpayment from the student's future funding entitlement, although SFE can also ask for this to be repaid sooner. SFE will contact the student directly about the repayment of this loan. More information is available via the link in section 5.1.
- 4.14 Where a placement is secured between the 30th September and the 31st March, the student must complete the 'Placement Details Form' available on MyCareerHub. The faculty should process the resumption of studies on MyHub no more than 7 days before the placement starts. If a student has not completed their enrolment and is still 'provisional' the faculty will need to notify Student Lifecycle. If there is any difficulty processing the resumption on MyHub, faculty staff should contact Student Lifecycle for assistance. Upon resumption, the student status will be updated to Live within SITS and a notification of resumption will be sent to SFE (to confirm that they are undertaking a placement). At this point any loan entitlement will be released to the student from SFE. It should be noted that the loan entitlement from SFE may

be subject to restrictions, based on any money already received and the date the student has secured their placement.

- 4.15 Faculties should advise students as early as possible on the potential loan implications of not securing a placement by the 30th September (listed in points 4.13 to 4.14 above). Specifically, that any funding already received and the date the student secured a placement will determine how much funding is left to be paid during the placement year.
- 4.16 Faculties should use the pre-placement seminars in May, MyCareerHub and Brightspace to notify students of the key dates and implications of not securing a placement by each of these dates. For 2020/21 and 2021/22 they should also use these seminars to explain to students that they will be able to transfer directly to L6 of the full time programme if they are unable to secure a placement and the timescales for making this decision.
- 4.17 BU are required to provide the official academic year dates to SFE who will calculate funding based on these dates. For those students who are not considered as in attendance for that full period, funding can be affected. This is beyond BU's control. Students in this position should be advised to speak with SFE on 0300 100 06 07 if this is likely to cause any financial difficulty. They can also contact AskBU on 01202 969696 for further guidance regarding funding and fee payment based on their specific circumstances.

## General

### 5 REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- 5.1 Student Finance England Suspension Guidance  
<http://media.slc.co.uk/sfe/overpayment/suspending.html>