



## UCL Academic Manual 2018-19

### Chapter 6: Student Casework Framework

# Section 4: Learning Agreements, Barring, Suspensions & Terminations of Study

## 4.1 Learning Agreements

1. Learning agreements are written agreements with a student meant to support students experiencing significant difficulties by agreeing a way to address problems such as, for example, attendance problems, coursework submission problems, communications problems, welfare concerns, problems with administrative requirements, etc.
2. Learning Agreements can be agreed by Departmental Tutors, Departmental Graduate Tutors<sup>1</sup>, Faculty Tutors, Faculty Graduate Tutors and the Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs).
3. Special arrangements for a student and/or measures subject to approval can be made conditional on concluding and abiding by the conditions of a learning agreement.
4. The learning agreement will set out what UCL will do to support the student as well as the conditions which the student agrees to meet. These conditions will usually cover some or all of, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Attendance at teaching and learning events. A higher attendance requirement than the normal minimum attendance requirement can be specified for the remainder of the term or academic year.
  - Completion and timely submission of coursework and other forms of work, both summative and/or formative, assessed and/or unassessed.
  - Responding appropriately and in a timely manner to UCL communications and attending meetings with UCL staff as requested.
  - Completion of additional work to ensure sufficient coverage of the syllabus.
  - Providing requested information within a specified time period.
  - Supplying proof of continuing medical or specialist treatment.

---

<sup>1</sup>In Faculties organised on a divisional or other basis, rather than on a departmental basis, this applies to the equivalent officers.

5. Breach of a learning agreement will result in the revocation of any special arrangements made and/or measures approved and in the application of any penalties specified in the learning agreement.
6. Learning agreements should specify the duration of the agreement and when compliance with the agreement will be reviewed. Compliance should be reviewed at least once a year.

## 4.2 Barring Students from Assessment

1. Departments must ensure that all students taking a module, including students from other departments, are informed of the policy on barring and of the applicable definitions of what will constitute unsatisfactory attendance and engagement. Students must be informed from the outset and in writing.
2. Barring requires a written record of attendance. Wherever it is practicable for them to do so, departments must have adequate mechanisms in place for:
  - Regularly recording attendance at teaching events such as seminars, classes, laboratory classes, tutorials, etc.
  - Recording the submission of required coursework.
  - The reporting of significant deficiencies to the designated departmental officer with overall responsibility for the barring process.
3. UCL's minimum attendance requirement is 70% (see [Chapter 3, Section 3: Attendance and Absence](#)). Departments may stipulate a higher percentage and additional requirements where appropriate. Students whose attendance falls below the attendance requirement are ineligible for summative assessment.
4. If a student's attendance falls below the attendance requirement so that a bar needs to be imposed, the teaching department must notify the student's home Department.
  - a) Where practicable, the home department should review the student's overall record to establish whether the problem extends beyond the teaching Department.
  - b) If the problem is limited to the teaching department, the teaching Department should impose the bar and issue the subsequent learning agreement.
  - c) If the problem extends beyond the teaching department, the home department should take over the barring and subsequent coordinated learning agreement, covering all affected modules.
  - d) However, teaching departments have the right to impose bars and issue learning agreements for their modules: information provided by the home Department must be taken into account, but bars do not require permission from the home department.
5. The barring Department must notify the student in writing that he or she is barred from summative assessment for the module (copying the student's home Department and Faculty Tutor as well as [UCL Student Records](#)) and must summon the student for a departmental interview to allow for an explanation of the case.
6. Since the bar may still be lifted, such students should continue to attend the module and submit coursework. However, marks for any summative assessment tasks will only count and be considered by the examination board if the bar is subsequently lifted.
7. The barring department MUST give such students a written learning agreement setting out the conditions under which the bar will be lifted. Students cannot be barred from summative assessment without the opportunity to conclude a learning agreement and having the bar lifted if they fulfil the conditions set out in the agreement. Copies of all learning agreements should be sent to the student's Faculty.
  - a) Usually learning agreements will specify attendance conditions, among others, for lifting the bar. If the student can no longer meet or exceed the minimum attendance requirement for the module by the end of the module, a higher attendance requirement of up to 100% will usually be specified for the remainder of the module.

- b) Bars should be notified and learning agreements issued as soon as possible, but learning agreements can still be issued after the end of term. Late learning agreements towards or after the end of term, when there are no teaching events left to attend, can rely on conditions other than attendance, such as additional work required to ensure coverage of the syllabus.
  - c) If the student does not accept the learning agreement within five working days of it being issued, the bar stands, subject to the appeals procedure set out below.
  - d) If the student accepts the learning agreement and subsequently fulfils the conditions set out in the learning agreement, the bar will be lifted.
  - e) If the student breaks the conditions of a signed learning agreement, the bar will remain in place, subject to the appeals procedure set out below.
  - f) Barring-related learning agreements must specify their end points, and Departments must review compliance with the learning agreement and notify the student of the outcome in writing within ten working days (excluding the UCL Christmas and Easter closure periods) after the expiration of the learning agreement, copying the home department, the student's Faculty Tutor, and [UCL Student Records](#).
8. If a bar that prevents progression or award of the degree remains in place following a refusal to accept the learning agreement or following a breach of the conditions of the learning agreement, the bar must be reviewed and confirmed (or lifted) by the student's the Faculty Tutor.
  9. Barring forfeits an attempt at assessment. If the student has a second attempt remaining, he or she must repeat the module in attendance the following year. Normal progression and substitution rules apply.
  10. Affected students have a right of appeal against the imposition of a bar, against the conditions of the offered learning agreement, against the continuation of a bar after the compliance review, or against the Faculty Tutor's confirmation of a bar.
    - a) Appeals against departmental decisions must be submitted to the Faculty Tutor within five working days of the relevant notification.
    - b) Appeals against a Faculty Tutor's confirmation of a bar preventing progression or graduation must be submitted within five working days of the relevant notification and will be dealt with by [UCL Academic Services](#) on behalf of the Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs).
    - c) If a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, he or she may then go through the procedures set out in [Section 10: Student Complaints Procedures](#) but must accept that a final outcome is unlikely to be reached before the student would have been due to take the assessment in question.

### 4.3 Suspensions of Studies on Grounds of Academic Insufficiency

1. Faculty Tutors/Graduate Faculty Tutors can suspend the studies of students in their Faculty on grounds of academic insufficiency as per paragraphs 13.1 and 13.2 of [UCL's Regulations for Management](#).
2. Academic insufficiency occurs when a student's overall attendance and performance, rather than that in a particular module, is deemed to be unsatisfactory, so that it is not viable for the student to continue with his or her studies for the remainder of the session.
3. All such cases must be referred to the Faculty Tutor/Faculty Graduate Tutor. If the Faculty Tutor confirms academic insufficiency, the expected outcome is that the Faculty Tutor suspends the student's enrolment for up to one year, specifying at the beginning of which term the student will be allowed to return to repeat.
4. Students must have had due warning prior to a suspension of studies.
5. Prior to a suspension on grounds of academic insufficiency, the Faculty Tutor must have summoned the student to a Faculty interview to allow for an explanation of the case.

6. To suspend a student on grounds of academic insufficiency, the Faculty Tutor must send a letter of notification to the student that includes details of the appeals mechanism, copying the home Department, all teaching Departments and [UCL Student Records](#).
7. Suspensions of studies forfeit an attempt at assessment for all affected modules. A suspended student must repeat either the year or the term(s) in which the insufficiency occurred in the next academic year, repeating in attendance all modules for which the student has second attempts remaining. (Additional interruptions can be applied for, but are subject to scrutiny and approval.) If a suspension would permanently prevent progression or award of degree due to one or several forfeited second attempts at assessment, suspensions become terminations of study, unless [UCL Academic Services](#) on behalf of the Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs) suspends regulations to allow further attempts.
8. As a condition of returning to repeat after the suspension, the student must sign a learning agreement. Refusal to sign the learning agreement or breach of the learning agreement following an earlier suspension will usually result in termination of studies.
9. Suspended students have a right of appeal:
  - a) Appeals against a suspension on grounds of academic insufficiency must be submitted within five working days of the relevant notification and will be dealt with by [UCL Academic Services](#) on behalf of the Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs).
  - b) Should a student be dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, he or she may then go through the procedures set out in [Section 12: Student Complaints Procedure](#).
10. In cases involving poor performance in Postgraduate Research Students, separate guidance applies (see Research Degrees: Guidance on Addressing Poor Performance in Research Students).

## 4.4 Termination of Study

1. Faculty Tutors/Graduate Faculty Tutors can also terminate the studies of students on grounds of academic insufficiency as per paragraphs 13.1 and 13.2 of [UCL's Regulations for Management](#).
2. In such cases the academic insufficiency must be deemed to be irretrievable.
3. For any student whose studies are to be terminated in this way, it is essential that he or she has previously been referred to the Faculty Tutor/Faculty Graduate Tutor for a formal interview and received a written warning that their studies are at risk of being terminated should the insufficiency continue.
4. Should the insufficiency continue or should any conditions that were made for the continuation of the student's studies at the interview and/or in the written termination warning not have been met, the Faculty must interview the student again.
5. If the termination of studies is confirmed, the Faculty must issue a formal written notification of the termination of studies and the reasons for it, including a reference to the appeals procedure.
6. Students have a right of appeal:
  - a) Appeals against a termination of studies on grounds of irretrievable academic insufficiency must be submitted within fifteen working days of the relevant notification and will be dealt with by [UCL Academic Services](#) on behalf of the Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs).
  - b) Should a student be dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, he or she may then go through the procedures set out in [Section 10: Student Complaints Procedure](#).

## 4.5 Mandatory Faculty Interviews

1. Faculty Tutors and Faculty Graduate Tutors can summon students in their Faculty to mandatory Faculty interviews, requiring the student either to attend the interview at a set date and time or to make and keep an appointment by a set deadline.
2. If a student fails to do so, he or she will be written to by the Faculty Tutor or Faculty Graduate Tutor with a suspension warning, informing the student that failure to make and/or attend an alternative appointment by a set deadline will result in a suspension of studies.
3. If a student fails to make or attend the alternative appointment, the Faculty must send the student a formal letter confirming the suspension of studies and issuing a termination warning. The student must be informed that failure to make and/or attend a final appointment by a set deadline will result in a permanent termination of studies.
4. If a student fails to make or attend the final appointment, the Faculty must send the student a formal letter confirming the termination of studies and informing the student of the right to appeal.
5. Students have a right of appeal against a suspension or termination of studies for non-attendance at mandatory Faculty interviews:
  - a) Appeals must be submitted within five working days of the relevant notification and will be dealt with by [UCL Academic Services](#) on behalf of the Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs).
  - b) Should a student be dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, he or she may then go through the procedures set out in [Section 10: Student Complaints Procedure](#).