



## Programme Withdrawal, Temporary Interruption and Transfer Policy

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. Point Blank Music School is committed to supporting students if they require temporary time away from their studies, want to transfer programmes or completely withdraw from their studies. The Student Services Team will assist students in gaining the best possible outcome in their studies ensuring students are aware of all financial, scheduling, and academic implications before processing a student status change request. The aim of this policy is to highlight the possibilities and restrictions for Higher Education students when requesting to make a change to their programme of study.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all full-time students studying at Point Blank Music School, enrolled on an accredited programme validated by Middlesex University.

## 3. Revalidated Programmes

- 3.1. As of the 2022/23 Academic Year, Point Blank have revalidated several degree programmes and are undergoing a teaching-out approach of these modules. Students who enrolled on a programme prior to this date and have not adjusted their end date will be unaffected. Students should be aware that any interruptions to their study may result in the modules they were originally scheduled to undergo no longer running. In these circumstances, Point Blank will endeavour to provide a smooth transition to most relevant module in the revalidated programme. This may result in students having to study a similar module at another level or must complete multiple modules prior to their official return date. Any additional modules will be at no extra cost to the student.

## 4. Temporary Interruption of Studies

- 4.1. A 'temporary interruption' is whereby a student temporarily *stops/ pauses* their programme due to extenuating circumstances until they can resume their studies.
- 4.2. Once the temporary interruption has been processed, the student will stop attending all classes and revoke studio access from the agreed pause date to the agreed return date. This is subject to advice and the discretion of Point Blank staff regarding the logistics and practicalities of scheduling. If a programme paused before the completion of a term or module, the return to studies will be from the beginning of same module.
- 4.3. Students who interrupt their studies should be aware that their current academic programme cannot be guaranteed to resume as if no interruption had occurred following re-admission. Point Blank will advise, but it is the student's responsibility to make themselves familiar with any changes in policy or the programme's study syllabus that may have taken place during their absence.

- 4.4. Students are only able to temporarily interrupt their studies with evidenced extenuating circumstances in accordance with the Point Blank Extenuating Circumstances Policy. All temporary interruption requests will be reviewed by Point Blank Senior Management and Middlesex University and decisions regarding the temporary interruption will be communicated within 14 days from the initial request.
- 4.5. Students must submit a temporary interruption request prior to the commencement of week 7 of an academic term in order to pause that term. Any requests submitted after week 7 will only be liable for the following academic term and students are expected to continue progress and submit the current term's assignments as normal while a decision from the Student Records Board is pending.
- 4.5.1. If the student is in receipt of Student Loan Funding, the student will be liable for that term's tuition fees. Tuition fee charges are determined based on enrolment status and not attendance.
- 4.5.2. Any maintenance loan payments made to the student for the temporarily interrupted term *may* need to be reimbursed to the Student Loans Company. Should the maintenance loan payment not be clawed back, the student will not be able to receive an additional maintenance loan payment on their return to study the interrupted term. This is not a decision of Point Blank but is Student Finance England choice.
- 4.5.3. For private fee payers, who have paid for their term in advance and wish to interrupt their studies, the credit will be held and applied to the returning modules.
- 4.6. Temporary interruptions are only able to be processed for students with **valid** and **evidenced** extenuating circumstances. If a student temporarily interrupts with outstanding fees, they will not be permitted to resume their studies until the debts are settled. Students will have one year from the point of postponement to clear outstanding debts or are at risk of being withdrawn from their programme. We advise that students in this situation contact us to set up a payment plan.
- 4.6.1. All students are given a minimum of a one-year deferral.
- 4.6.2. If we receive no communication from the student after 1 year of temporary interruption the student can be deferred further if in good financial standing or will be withdrawn if they are debtor. A debt collection agency may be used in line with the **Tuition Fee Policy**.
- 4.6.3. Students who are Temporarily Interrupting at the end of an Academic Year are not permitted to return to their studies in the July intake. This is due to the phase-out of the July HE intake and complications with the SLC.
- 4.6.4. Students who are sponsored by Point Blank on a student visa may not be able to temporarily interrupt within the constraints of their visa requirements and therefore must consult with the international visa team. The decision to approve or refuse the request will be at the discretion of the Admissions Manager and Student Services Manager and will be subject to the rules of the Home Office Student Visa Sponsor Guidance applicable at the time the decision is made. All changes are subject to module availability.

- 4.6.5. In the event that a student stops communicating and engaging in their course Point Blank may enforce a temporary interruption for an initial one year. Before processing the temporary interruption, the student will receive multiple forms of communication about the potential temporary interruption and the student will have 21 days to appeal the decision from the day in which the temporary interruption is actioned.
- 4.6.6. Students who are enrolled on resubmission or retake modules must complete their resubmissions and retake modules before returning to their studies from temporary interruption. A resubmission (no attendance required) or a retake module (attendance required) will depend on the length of the temporary interruption of studies and will be decided upon by the Assessments Team/Senior Management Team.
- 4.6.7. No guarantee can be given that, following deferral of assessment or reassessment beyond the next available opportunity, the module content and form of assessment will remain unchanged. Normally, deferred assessment or reassessment will not be permitted beyond two years following the start of study for the module (normally the fourth opportunity for assessment of component).

## 5. Programme Transfers

- 5.1. Students sponsored by Point Blank on a Student Visa are not permitted to change their programme pathway for the duration of their course after their CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) has been issued. The decision to make the amendment will be at the discretion of the Admissions Manager and will be subject to the rules of the Home Office Student Visa Sponsor Guidance applicable at the time the decision is made. All changes are subject to module availability.
- 5.2. Students who are in receipt of a Point Blank scholarship or bursary may not be permitted to transfer programme or change duration of their course. The scholarship or bursary is primarily linked to the course as agreed in the student's offer letter and the scholarship panel must approve any change. This is to ensure that scholarship support is provided equally for students across various programme.

### Course length transfers (Degree Programmes)

#### 5.3. 3 year pathway to 2 year pathway

5.3.1. Transfers from the 3 year pathway to the 2 year pathway are not permitted.

5.3.2. Students are assessed at the admissions stage as appropriate for the mode of study and the offer to study at Point Blank is for the course and route specified.

5.3.3. Operationally, as an alternative provider, there is a greater strain on the limited resources available for the 2 year pathway. Considerations including, but not limited to, capacity, marking, moderation and (during the COVID-19 Pandemic) social distancing have been carefully organised in advance of a new student intake. Point Blank forecasts the intake and can only permit a limited number of students on to each programme to ensure there are sufficient resources and capacity for those who are originally enrolled and applied for the programme – this is to maintain an excellent student experience. Any disruptions or additions to the intake, such as students wishing to transfer course lengths, can have a negative effect on these considerations and the student body.

5.3.4. Academically, it is not a holistic approach to move students to a more intense pathway as this may put the student at academic risk.

#### 5.4. 2 year pathway to 3 year pathway

5.4.1. If a student requests to transfer from a two year pathway to a three year pathway on the same academic programme, they will only be able to do so in accordance with the following regulations:

- i. Students are only permitted to transfer at the end of an academic level and if they are in both good financial and academic standing. Point Blank reserves the right to reject transfer requests on this basis. Students who are enrolled on resubmission or retake modules will need to successfully complete all outstanding assignments before the transfer request can be considered.

- ii. Following the Student Records discussion, if the student transfer is approved the student must remain on the same academic intake. I.e., if a student started their course in the September term, their next year would commence in the following September. This may result in the temporary interruption needing to be longer or shorter than intended depending on the student circumstances.
- iii. Transferring from the 2 to 3 year arises various complications of scheduling, finance, and academic progress. The above bullet points are guidelines, but the transfer cannot be guaranteed and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

#### 5.5. Change in course pathway (MPSE/ MPDJ)

5.5.1. Students are only able to transfer course programmes in their first academic level and will not be able to transfer courses once level 5 or 6 modules have commenced. There are modules that are specific to each pathway and must be studied to complete relevant credits for programme. For example, if a student on the DJ pathway contacts Point Blank after the completion of their first year and wants to transfer to the Sound Engineering degree, they will need to have achieved the Sound Engineering module. This module, due to being a different level, will need to be studied **prior** to the commencement of their second year. This will be at an additional private cost, subject to the board's discussions and student circumstances.

5.5.2. Students can only complete a course transfer once during their studies. Students must be certain of their decision and aware that once it is processed it is final. If the student wishes to seek more advice before coming to a conclusion, we advise that they contact us via telephone or email immediately.

5.5.3. Programme transfers are only available to students on the 3-year (non-accelerated) study mode since there is no break term on the accelerated course, and therefore no opportunity to complete the additional modules needed in order to transfer.

#### 5.6. Change in course pathway to/ from MIM or MP&VP

5.6.1. Students enrolled on the Music Industry Management (MIM) or the Music Production & Vocal Performance (MP&VP) degree are not permitted to transfer to a different accredited programme. If students wish to take another course programme, they will need to process an official withdrawal request and apply for the new course programme via the admissions process. This may result in the student losing a year of Student Loan funding.

5.6.2. Students enrolled on an accredited programme and wish to transfer to the Music Industry Management or the Music Production & Vocal Performance degree will not be permitted to directly transfer and will need to process an official withdrawal request and will be assessed by the Admissions Team for their suitability for the MIM or MP&VP degree.



## 5.7. Change in pathway and course length

5.7.1. Students are strictly not permitted to transfer both course programme and course length as only one transfer can be processed per student during their academic studies.

## 6. Withdrawal of Studies

- 6.1. Students must notify Point Blank of their decision and submit a withdrawal form to the Student Services Team. A lack of attendance, engagement, and willingness to pursue the programme is not considered a withdrawal. Students must return the withdrawal form to be officially withdrawn.
- 6.2. It is the student's responsibility to make themselves aware of any financial implications of their withdrawal. We advise that the student contacts us to seek advice should they have any concerns. Tuition fee charges are determined based on enrolment status and not actual attendance. This means that if you stop attending, but do not formally withdraw or interrupt you will be liable for tuition fees until the point in time that you officially notify the University. If exceptional conditions exist which justify a late submission of a voluntary withdrawal request, an explanation and supporting evidence should be provided prior to submission of a request. Withdrawals will not be backdated following a voluntary withdrawal request. In such cases, please note there must be an exceptional, compelling, and evidenced reason why the student could not submit the form at the appropriate time. In the absence of such a reason the submission date of withdrawal form will be used as the student's withdrawal date.
- 6.3. Students who continually do not engage with their programme, fail to communicate, and/or neglect the submission of their assignments run the risk of being forcibly withdrawn. In these circumstances students will be contacted multiple times in advance of a notification of formal withdrawal. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the contact information provided is correct.
- 6.4. Students who are on a temporary interruption of studies and do not resume their studies when scheduled are at risk of being withdrawn due to lack of engagement and failure to communicate with Point Blank staff. Students are only able to temporary interrupt their studies for a certain amount of time so if the student exceed this time, they will be withdrawn from their studies.
- 6.5. It is the student's responsibility to make themselves aware, from the point of withdrawal, of any credits and an exit award qualification they may receive.
- 6.6. International Students must liaise and have their request approved by both Student Services and the Admissions Manager.
- 6.7. Any amounts due to be refunded by Point Blank will only be processed on receipt of a completed Student Refund Request. This can be issued once a request has been placed in writing to the Student Services Manager. Where fees have been paid by the Student Loan Company any refunds due will be paid to the Student Loans Company thereby reducing the value of the loan. If the payment was made by bank transfer or by card, the refund will be

issued to the account made in the original transaction – this is to comply UK Money Laundering regulations. It is the student’s responsibility to make us aware of any issues or changes to the account details. The University will not be liable for any incorrect account details or misdirected payments as a result of incorrectly provided details. A debt collection agency may be used should the student withdraw with outstanding fees and have not endeavoured to communicate and arrange a payment plan or alternative. For more information regarding liability of fees in relation to the timing of withdrawal, you can refer to the **Tuition Fee policy**.

6.7.1.If a student is considered not fit to study, The Head of Education may refer the case to the General Manager or Managing Director if it is considered that the risk to the student or School is very high and emergency suspension at the soonest opportunity is in the best interest of all who may be affected.

6.7.2.If this course of action is commenced, the General Manager or Managing Director may impose an emergency suspension with immediate effect. The student in concern will be prohibited from entering School grounds and participating in School activities, including assessment. In exceptional circumstances, the student may still be allowed to attend a meeting with Student Services, to further clarify the decision, or attend a final meeting with the Student Counsellor. The decision and terms of the suspension will be communicated to the student in writing. A meeting should also take place with the student to clarify and explain the rationale of the decision by the Head of Admissions and Student Services or General Manager. A student will be marked as ‘suspended’ on their student record and no further fees will be charged to the student whilst suspended, except any debt already held by the student prior to suspension.

6.7.3.The decision to suspend may be reviewed every term following commencement of the decision at the request of the student, if there is any evident change to the circumstances under concern.