

POLICY NAME	STUDENT INITIATED EARLY LEARNERS POLICY & PROCEDURE		
POLICY REF	PSPP09	REVISION	7
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APPROVED BY	J HAMER	NEXT REVIEW	31/01/2025

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

1. Set out the principles, responsibilities and procedures surrounding how we support students who request to withdraw from their programme of study.
2. Provide a framework for responding to withdrawal requests initiated by students and procedures for both the student and staff members involved to follow that ensures that all relevant information is made available to enable the individual concerned to make an informed choice. This may include:
 - Academic options available to them (dependent on date of proposed withdrawal), such as;
 - Information regarding support available to them which may help them to consider whether withdrawal is their best option, such as;
 - Information on how withdrawal would affect their current and future funding for study;
 - Information on any costs that would be incurred at the time of the withdrawal and how these would be recovered.
 - Provide a procedure for students and staff to follow to ensure that the individual concerned is fully supported throughout this process.

Scope

This policy accepts that students may withdraw at any point due to personal choice. The policy seeks to ensure that students do not withdraw for any reason, including those related to a protected characteristic, due to lack of information on the support and guidance which could assist them to continue their course to obtain a qualification. The policy applies to all students; however, it is expected that it would be positive regarding equality issues as it would ensure that any student who needed support was directed to the appropriate service, including Disability and Dyslexia and Student Health and Wellbeing services.

Policy

It is policy that if a student needs or wishes to withdraw from their programme of study:

- We will encourage the student to discuss the decision with their tutor/assessor or with specialist support staff and we will provide a supportive and understanding environment for them to do so;
- We will encourage the student to consider the short and longer term implications of withdrawal and the full range of options open to them;
- We will provide information, advice, guidance and support to help students to make the right decisions for them;
- Where relevant we will be clear about the opportunities for returning to Pentagon

Skills or elsewhere, the mechanisms for doing so and the timescales and financial considerations that would apply;

- We would encourage the student to complete the Exit Review so that Pentagon Skills can correctly assess the date of withdrawal;
- It is essential that the form is returned. It allows us to calculate the leaving date of the student and to understand the reason for withdrawal;
- In certain circumstances the student may not be able to complete all stages of authorisation (i.e. have the form signed off) e.g. seriously ill student. In these circumstances the Customer Services Team may be able to assist the student too complete the documentation a copy of which will be provided to the student concerned for future reference;
- We require that all students who have withdrawn from the course should return any course resources that has been given to aid learning.

When is this Policy Applied?

This policy will be applied when a student initiates a request to withdraw from their programme of study.

Student responsibilities under this policy:

- To work with their tutor/ assessor, to provide the information required relating to their withdrawal
- To obtain and complete the Exit Review.
- To work with staff to obtain relevant information on the options available to them, so they can make an informed choice regarding withdrawing from the University.

Procedure

Pentagon Skills understands that there may be occasions when a student may wish to withdraw from a programme of study. This may be because of personal issues, financial issues or academic issues. This is an important decision which may impact on your ability to obtain an award from the designated awarding body or even your ability to undertake future study. Pentagon Skills wants students who are considering withdrawal to understand all the possible implications so that they can make an informed decision clearly. Pentagon Skills wishes all students to succeed and complete their programmes and it may be that we can find a method of supporting you to continue studying. There may also be options that you were not previously aware of, such as the availability of Awards, Certificates and Diplomas, based on completed modules that can be claimed, part-way through your studies. However, if the decision to leave is final, we would also want to ensure that you are aware of any financial implications regarding your decision.

Student Actions

1. Make an appointment to see your Tutor/assessor to discuss your possible withdrawal (Distance Learning students can have this discussion by telephone);
2. Download a copy of the Student Withdrawal Form (or obtain a copy from tutor/ assessor) and complete the relevant sections ready for your appointment. Distance Learning Students should ensure that the tutor has their part completed form in advance of the telephone appointment time via email

3. At your appointment be open to the suggestions of your tutor/ assessor, who may be able to give viable options other than withdrawal.
4. If your decision is based on issues that are non-academic, your tutor can refer you to specialist services (depending on eligibility and circumstances) can provide emergency funding or put in place reasonable adjustments to help you to continue to study. They can also discuss the implications of your withdrawal on Student Loans, benefits and let you know what your financial commitments are with regards to withdrawing part way through a course as further clarified below in the fees incurred section.
5. If you decide at the meeting with the tutor/assessor that you do not wish to be referred to specialist teams, the tutor/ assessor can authorise the withdrawal from the programme.
6. You must return any resources belonging to Pentagon Skills immediately. If you do not return property, Pentagon Skills reserves the right to issue an invoice to recover the cost of the property.
7. If you would be responsible for meeting fee costs personally, our accounts team will be able to assist you. Further information regarding fees can be found below in the 'Fees Incurred' section.
8. Where a student is unable, due to a health or disability-related reason to undertake this procedure, the relevant customer services team will work with the student find an alternative method of providing this information. Information in this way will be accepted as if submitted by the student personally. Students will be provided with a copy of anything submitted on their behalf. The student should contact Head Office who will make an appointment with the relevant team (this could be via telephone etc. as required).

Fees Incurred

Candidates incur fees upon enrolling on any programme of learning, whether funded or commercial in nature. The fees incurred represent non-refundable costs for activity undertaken and include but are not limited to:

- Awarding Organisation registration and certification costs
- Licence and administrative costs associated with the provision of e-portfolio or other web/ cloud based learning solutions
- Administrative time spent in the collection, processing and storage of candidate data for the purposes of maintaining organisational and legal requirements
- Administrative resources used in the collection, processing, storage and postage of candidate data for the purposes of maintaining organisational and legal requirements
- Trainer/ Assessor costs associated with the delivery of the programme of learning
- Internal Verifier costs associated with the verification of learning and assessment occurred prior to the student initiating the early withdrawal request

In the event that a candidate decides to leave the programme of learning early then the costs incurred will be calculated and measured against funds received to produce the final statement of account. This can then be advised to learners prior to the final decision to withdraw being taken.