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Interruption, Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

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1. Aim

This procedure is designed to:

1. Identify the obligations on both IDEA Academy and its students within the interruption, withdrawal and exclusion processes;
2. Provide guidance on the process to be followed when a student has failed to satisfy the criteria for continuing his/her studies.

2. Scope

This procedure covers all IDEA Academy Study Programmes.

3. Definitions

Withdrawal from studies	This is a voluntary decision by the student to terminate their studies at IDEA Academy.
Exclusion from studies	This is where the student is required to leave IDEA Academy.
Interruption of studies	This is a temporary suspension of studies.
Interrupting Students Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive / Coordinator Nursing Programme	Students who have been granted a temporary suspension of studies. The responsible person in charge of the day-to-day logistics and operations of particular study programme(s).

4. Authorised Interruption of Study

4.1 Introduction

- a) An interruption of study involves taking a complete break from study for an agreed period of time, usually not exceeding one year.
- b) In cases when a student is temporarily unable to engage with their studies, they can apply for an authorised interruption of study.

4.2 General Factors to Consider

- a) Authorised interruptions of study shall normally be granted when academically viable. Where this is not the case, a student shall be required to withdraw.
- b) Normally students interrupting their study should resume study from the start of the module in which they originally interrupted. However, the point of a student's return from the interruption shall be determined by the Academy on case by case basis in consultation with the student.
- c) The Academy reserves the right to change study programme features e.g., modules, assessments and timetabling. As a result, module(s) might not be available upon a student's return.
- d) Students who are currently resitting assessment without attendance may request to interrupt their studies. Any such requests are considered by the Academy on a case by case basis and in consultation with the student in order that the student understands any implications a period of interruption may have on their outstanding assessments.
- e) If suitable arrangements cannot be made, the student may be required to withdraw.

4.3 Study Programme Special Requirements

- a) Some study programmes may have special requirements which may not allow the option for interrupting the study.
- b) The Academy cannot guarantee that students will be able to return to their studies in cases where study programmes include special components e.g., Placement.
- c) If suitable arrangements cannot be made, the student may be required to withdraw.

4.4 Submitting the Request Form for Interruption of Study

- a) The Request Form – Appendix 1 - must be submitted at least 1 month in advance of the period of interruption.
- b) In case of exceptional circumstances, students must continue to engage with their studies until their request for authorised interruption has been approved.
- c) It is the responsibility of the student to submit the request to the Director of Studies Support.

4.5 Approval

- a) The Director of Studies Support in conjunction with the Registrar and the Board of Studies will make one of the following decisions:
 - i) Approve.
 - ii) Reject.
- b) The Director of Studies Support in conjunction with the Registrar and the Board of Studies may consider a request for approval on condition e.g., an alternative start and/or end date of interruption.
- c) The student is notified of the final decision within a month from the request.
- d) Where the request is approved, the notification will include the formal Start Date of Interruption and Date of Return.

4.6 Start Date of Interruption and Date of Return

- a) Both dates must be recorded before an application can be formally approved. These dates are not to be back-dated.
- b) In exceptional circumstances, the start date of a period of interruption may be backdated.
- c) The Academy may permit a student to return before the approved return date if this allows the student to engage with his/her study.
- d) If an assessment deadline falls immediately after the Date of Return, the Academy will take this into consideration and a suitable assessment deadline agreed.
- e) Unless previously agreed otherwise, where a student returns at the approved return date, they will incur no additional tuition fees other than those resulting from inflation for the remainder of the study period within the same study programme.
- f) It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Academy at the end of the interruption period, or they will be deemed to have withdrawn.
- g) The Academy provides support to students resuming their studies in order to facilitate their return.

4.7 During Interruption

- a) The Academy will not assume any responsibility for students whilst interrupted from their studies at the Academy.
- b) Students shall discontinue their studies whilst on interruption hence the student would not be allowed to participate in any academic activity or submit any academic work e.g. assignments, online discussions, tutorials etc. with the Academy.
- c) Normally, interrupting students do not have access to the Academy's services and resources. Students may be given access to some services and resources upon request.

5. Withdrawal from Studies

- 5.1. A student may withdraw from his/her studies at IDEA Academy at any point in the course. However, a student may not voluntarily withdraw after IDEA Academy has decided to exclude the student.
- 5.2. Before applying to withdraw, the student is strongly advised to consult with the Director of Studies Support in order to consider the implications of the withdrawal.
- 5.3. Withdrawal implications include matters such as:
 - Financial issues;
 - Visas, when applicable; and
 - Readmission into IDEA Academy.
- 5.4. Students wishing to withdraw must signal their intention by completing and submitting a 'Withdrawal Form'.
Refer to: Appendix 2 – IDEA Academy Withdrawal Form – General Study Programme.

6. Exclusion from Studies

'Exclusion from Studies' refers to those cases when the student is required to leave IDEA Academy due to academic, professional, clinical practices or other reasons that fail to satisfy the criteria set for the programme of studies and/or the regulations of IDEA Academy.

6.1 Reasons for Exclusion

The Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive / Coordinator Nursing Programme in conjunction with the Registrar and the Director of Studies Support may recommend students for exclusion mainly on the following criteria:

1. Exclusion for unsatisfactory academic, professional, and clinical progression;
2. Exclusion for non-attendance or non-engagement;
3. Exclusion for who is not fit to practice;
4. Exclusion for disciplinary offence;
5. Exclusion for non-payment and debt.

6.1.1 Exclusion for unsatisfactory academic, professional and clinical progression

The criteria for progression are stated on the Programme Specifications and on Document 037_22: General Programme Regulations.

6.1.2 Exclusion for non-attendance or non-engagement

Students must attend and participate as required in all the components of study as established in the Study Programme. Refer to Programme Specifications and Document 037_22: General Programme Regulations.

6.1.3 Exclusion for failing to meet Fitness to Practise requirements.

a) In line with the provisions specified in the Programme Specifications, IDEA Academy may exclude students who have failed to meet Fitness to Practise requirements for their programme.

b) For the study programme, MQF Level 5 Undergraduate Diploma in Nursing Studies, in line with the provisions of this Programme Specifications, IDEA Academy may exclude students who have failed to achieve competences in clinical practices, and shall follow NMC (UK), The Code, based on: *'Being fit to practise requires a nurse or midwife to have the skills, knowledge, good health and good character to do their job safely and effectively.'*

6.1.4 Exclusion for disciplinary offence.

IDEA Academy may impose permanent exclusion of a student from the Academy, when the student's behaviour is unacceptable.

Refer to Doc_009_22: The Student Disciplinary Procedure.

6.1.5 Exclusion for non-payment any debt.

IDEA Academy may also impose exclusion of a student due to non-payment of any debt to the Academy.

6.2 Exclusion Procedure

6.2.1 In cases where, the Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive / Coordinator Nursing Programme in conjunction with the Registrar and the Director of Studies recommend a student for exclusion, the Director of Studies Support will invite the student for an interview.

6.2.2 The interview provides an opportunity for the student to make a case for continuation.

6.2.3 The interview also provides an opportunity where the student is helped to comprehend the implications of the exclusion, which include matters such as:

- Financial issues;
- Visas, when applicable; and
- Readmission into IDEA Academy.

6.2.4 The outcome of the interview may be one of the following options, though not limited to:

- a) The student is permitted to continue his/her studies.
- b) Student support, if any is required, is identified and established, and the student is permitted to continue his/her studies.
- c) The student is not permitted to continue the current studies, but is permitted to continue their studies under other options permitted by IDEA Academy.
- d) The student may voluntarily withdraw permanently from studies. This option will not be available if the student has already been notified in writing of exclusion from studies.
- e) The student may be expelled from IDEA Academy.

6.2.5 The full range of options does not apply in every case of exclusion. Exclusion from studies will only be invoked after other available options have been considered.

6.2.6 The Board of Studies in conjunction with the Registrar and the Director of Studies will decide which option to apply.

6.2.7 The Director of Studies Support will inform the student of the decision in writing.

6.2.8 In cases where the student does not attend the interview, the Board of Studies in conjunction with the Registrar and the Director of Studies will proceed to make a decision on the case.

6.3 Appeals

Any student who has been excluded, irrespective of the reason for exclusion, may submit an appeal against the decision of exclusion, through the appeal procedure described in Document 008_22: Grievances Policy and Procedure.

7. Readmission

7.1 After withdrawal or exclusion an individual is no longer a student at IDEA Academy and loses student status and access to the Academy's facilities.

7.2 After withdrawal or exclusion, a former student wishing to be considered to return to study at the Academy must go through the normal application and admission procedures.

8. Supporting Documents

- Document 008_22 Grievances Policy and Procedure
- Document 009_22 The Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Document 018_22 Student Support Policy Statement
- Document 031_22 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
- FRM_068_22 The Assessment/Examination Appeal Form
- Programme Specifications for specific study programmes
- Programme Specifications: MQF Level 5 Undergraduate Diploma in Nursing Studies

Appendix 1 – IDEA Academy Authorised Interruption of Study Request Form – General Study Programmes

This form must be completed and submitted by any student requesting to interrupt his/her studies at IDEA Academy.

Advice

Taking an authorised interruption of study may have academic, financial and visa implications. Before completing and submitting this form, please discuss your application with the Registrar who can provide advice about potential implications which might arise when taking an authorised interruption of study, and help you put together a proposed return to study plan.

Submitting this form

To confirm your intention to take an authorised interruption of study please email this completed form to the Director of Studies Support.

Student's Surname		Student's First Name	
IDEA Academy Student Number		Year of Study	
Title of Study Programme			
Proposed Interruption of Study Start Date		Proposed Date for Returning to Study	

Please indicate your reason for applying to interrupt your studies by marking the appropriate box(s) below:

Health reasons	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial circumstances	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maternity/Paternity/Adoption/Family leave	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	

Please provide more information about your reason for requesting an authorised interruption of study.

Please list any evidence included in support of this application (e.g., medical certificate)

Please outline your return to study plan

Student Signature

Date

Appendix 2 – IDEA Academy Withdrawal Form – General Study Programmes

This form must be completed by any student choosing to withdraw permanently from studies at IDEA Academy.

You have the right to withdraw voluntarily from IDEA Academy. By submitting this form, you are formally instructing the Academy to process your permanent withdrawal from studies.

Advice

IDEA Academy strongly encourages you to discuss your intention to withdraw with the Director of Studies Support, who can provide support, advice and guidance on your situation. In some cases, there may be alternatives to permanently withdrawing from IDEA Academy which we encourage you to consider.

Submitting this form

To confirm your intention to withdraw please email this completed form to the Director of Studies Support.

To be completed by the student wishing to withdraw:

I wish to withdraw from my studies at IDEA Academy on the date shown. I understand the implications of this action as shown below:

- After the date of withdrawal, I will no longer be a student at IDEA Academy and will have no access to the Academy's facilities.
- If I hold a visa and if I withdraw my studies, this may impact on my duration stay in Malta. (Students should seek advice from the Registrar before making any decisions to withdraw from studies).
- I agree to pay any outstanding sums of money due to the IDEA Academy, and will contact the Registrar Office to find out what they are and to arrange payment.
- I accept that, if I re-apply for study at the IDEA Academy, I must do so using the Academy's normal admission procedures and I may not necessarily be accepted. If I am, then the academic credits I have accumulated to date may not necessarily be used for any accreditation of prior learning that may be applied at that time.

Date:

Student's Surname:

Student's First Name:

Student IDEA Academy Identity Number:

Title of Study Programme:

I wish to withdraw from this date:

Note: This date cannot be in the past

Please indicate your reason for withdrawing by marking the appropriate box below:

Medical Condition	
Financial Hardship	
Incorrect advice at enrolment	
Changed mind about course	
Course more difficult than expected	
Other (please specify)	

Please provide more information about your reason for applying to cancel your enrolment:

If you have attended any lectures, do you have any feedback you can provide about the course?

Student Signature

Date

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