

Withdrawal policy

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Section 1: Overview



1.1 Purpose and general principles

- 1.1.1 This policy details the processes related to participant **withdrawals** from the Frontline programme. [Section 1.2](#) defines what withdrawal means for the purposes of this policy.
- 1.1.2 Children and families value consistency when it comes to having a social worker involved in key decisions in their lives. By accepting a place on the programme participants commit to complete the two years and to be placed in any of the regions within which Frontline works.
- 1.1.3 Frontline recognises, however, that there may be instances whereby a participant can no longer or does not wish to continue with the programme, and therefore must withdraw. Before a withdrawal is confirmed, Frontline will aim to explore whether any additional support or other options would enable the participant to continue.
- 1.1.4 If participants withdraw from the programme in either the first or second year, they are terminating their place on the programme and will not be eligible to return at any point in the future. Participants are urged to discuss their thoughts about withdrawal as early as possible with their consultant social worker (CSW), practice tutor (year 1), and dissertation supervisor (year 2).
- 1.1.5 A requested withdrawal does not mean that other policy proceedings, such as Fitness to Practice, will cease.
- 1.1.6 Registration and enrolment end on the confirmed date of withdrawal.
- 1.1.7 Participants who have submitted assessments during the academic year up to the effective date of their withdrawal will receive marks for them. Participant eligibility for any exit awards will be considered as appropriate at the next examination board.
- 1.1.8 No credit will be awarded for any partially completed modules at the point of withdrawal.
- 1.1.9 Prior to the commencement of the Summer Institute, an applicant who has a conditional offer may request that their place on the programme is deferred to the following entry year. Please refer to the [recruitment and admissions policy](#) for details of the process to request a deferral. Deferral does not constitute a withdrawal and, therefore, the following section does not apply in cases of deferral.

1.2 Withdrawal definitions

- 1.1.1 **Voluntary withdrawal:** This is where a participant, at their request, chooses to leave. In year 1, participants withdraw from the Frontline programme in its entirety. In year 2, participants may withdraw from the Frontline programme in its entirety, *or* they can withdraw from the academic element of the programme *without* withdrawing from the Frontline programme (see 1.1.2).



- 1.1.2 **Voluntary withdrawal from year 2 academic component:** During year 2, a participant can voluntarily withdraw from the academic element of the programme (60-credit dissertation module) *without* withdrawing from the Frontline programme and their employment within the local authority. Participants who withdraw from the academic component in year 2 are still eligible to become Frontline Fellows, subject to remaining in employment as a social worker within a Frontline partnered local authority until the end of year 2.
- 1.2.1 **Exclusion:** where a participant, at the request of either Lancaster University or Frontline, is excluded from the programme and ceases to be a student of the University. This will be in rare circumstances, for example: where a participant has failed to meet the requirements of the programme; academic failure following reassessment; breached of the attendance and engagement policy and there are persistent concerns around a participant's attendance and/or engagement with little to no improvement following an escalation of the concerns; breach of the participant discipline policy; not met the conditions of return following a period of intercalation or extended leave, a placement not being available following a period of intercalation or extended leave. The decision to exclude a participant can only be taken by a Lancaster University examination board, Lancaster University's Standing Academic Committee, or the Lancaster University Board of Discipline.
- 1.2.2 **Deemed withdrawn:** a participant is assumed to have withdrawn where there is a breach of the [attendance and engagement policy](#) and the participant has:
- failed to respond to multiple communications;
 - stopped attending recall days without reasonable explanation, and failed to respond to multiple communications;
 - left/stopped attending their placement/employment without reasonable explanation and failed to respond to multiple communications.
- A participant may also be deemed withdrawn if they do not wish to take up an alternative placement offered following a period of intercalation.

Section 2: Procedure

2.1 Year 1: voluntary withdrawal

Withdrawal during the Summer Institute

- 2.1.1 Following the start of Summer Institute, a participant who is considering leaving the programme should discuss their concerns with their practice tutor, who may be able to help them consider potential solutions that can prevent withdrawal from the programme.
- 2.1.2 Where a participant decides to leave the programme, they will need to submit a withdrawal request through the [following link](#).



- 2.1.3 Participants should refer to the Frontline [bursary and financial guidance](#) for the financial implications of their decision.
- 2.1.4 Withdrawals will be confirmed in writing.
- 2.1.5 Participants will normally be offered the opportunity to undertake an exit interview.

Year 1: Voluntary withdrawal once the practice learning has started

- 2.1.6 Following the start of the practice learning experience, a participant who is considering leaving the programme should discuss their concerns with both their CSW and practice tutor, who may be able to help them consider potential solutions that can prevent withdrawal from the programme.
- 2.1.7 Where, following discussion with their CSW and practice tutor, a participant still wishes to leave the programme, they will need to submit a withdrawal request through the [following link](#).
- 2.1.8 Participants should review their practice learning experience agreement and consider the needs of their placement provider, the unit and the children and families they are in contact with when deciding a leaving date. Participants are expected to be reasonably flexible in agreeing to a leaving date that minimises disruption.
- 2.1.9 Participants should refer to the Frontline [bursary and financial guidance](#) for the financial implications of their decision.
- 2.1.10 Withdrawals will be confirmed in writing.
- 2.1.11 Participants will normally be offered the opportunity to undertake an exit interview.
- 2.1.12 Participant eligibility for any exit awards will be considered as appropriate at the next examination board.

2.2 Year 2: voluntary withdrawal from entire programme

- 2.2.1 Before confirming their intention to leave the entire Frontline programme, participants must discuss this with both their line manager and dissertation supervisor, who may be able to help them consider potential solutions that can prevent withdrawal from the programme.
- 2.2.2 Where participants decide to formally request a withdrawal from the programme, they will need to submit a withdrawal request through the [following link](#).
- 2.2.3 The Partnerships and Placement Manager (PPM) will normally share the participant's wish to withdraw with the team manager, local authority project manager, and any other relevant local authority staff as necessary.



2.2.4 Withdrawals will be confirmed in writing.

2.2.5 Participants withdrawing from the entire programme must honour the notice period and any contractual commitments stated in their employment contract with their local authority or children's trust employer.

2.2.6 Participants will normally be offered the opportunity to undertake an exit interview.

2.2.7 Participant eligibility for any exit awards will be considered as appropriate at the next examination board.

2.3 Year 2: withdrawal from academic component only

2.3.1 Participants may request to withdraw from the academic component only, if they do not wish to complete the MSc degree by submitting a dissertation. If participants go on to complete the practice component (remaining in employment as a social worker in a Frontline partnered local authority until 31 August), they meet the requirements to become a Fellow.

2.3.2 Where a participant decides to withdraw from the academic component of year 2, they will need to submit their withdrawal request through the [following link](#).

2.3.3 Withdrawals will be confirmed in writing; participants will no longer be students of Lancaster University.

2.3.4 Participants will normally be offered the opportunity to undertake an exit interview.

2.3.5 Participant eligibility for any exit awards will be considered as appropriate at the next examination board.

2.4 Deemed withdrawn

2.4.1 In year 1 a participant being deemed withdrawn would normally be due to a breach of the [attendance and engagement policy](#) where a participant, without reasonable explanation:

- fails to respond to multiple communications; and/or
- stops attending recall days without first discussing this with Frontline and then fails to respond to multiple communications; and/or
- leaves/stops attending their placement/employment without first discussing this with Frontline and their placement provider and then fails to respond to multiple communications.



- 2.4.2 In year 2, a participant being deemed withdrawn from the academic component and/or the Frontline programme would normally be due to a breach of the attendance and engagement policy where a participant without reasonable explanation:
- fails to respond to multiple communications; and/or
 - leaves/stops attending their employment without first discussing this with Frontline and their line manager and then fails to respond to multiple communications; and/or
 - stops attending recall days without first discussing this with Frontline and then fails to respond to multiple communications.
- 2.4.3 A participant may also be deemed withdrawn if they do not wish to take up a reasonable alternative placement offered following an intercalation (see [Intercalation Policy](#)).
- 2.4.5 If a participant stops attending all taught and practice-based elements of the programme without reasonable explanation Frontline will discontinue the payment of the participant's bursary (year 1).
- 2.4.6 Participants who have been deemed withdrawn will be contacted by Lancaster University to confirm this.
- 2.4.7 Participant eligibility for any exit awards will be considered as appropriate at the next examination board.

Section 3: Relevant references

3.1 [Frontline policies and documents](#)

- 3.1.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance:
- Attendance and engagement policy
 - Recruitment and Admissions Policy
 - Bursary & financial policy
 - Suitability for professional training policy
 - Fitness to study policy
 - Pregnancy and parenting policy
 - Transfer policy
 - Intercalation policy
 - Exceptional circumstances Policy
 - Fitness to practise Policy