

21<sup>st</sup> May 2009

University of Birmingham

**Proposal to Incorporate Intercalated Programmes Fully into Regulations**

**Purpose of Paper**

1. To incorporate the University's suite of intercalated programmes fully into Regulations.

**Proposal**

2. APRC is requested to approve the following clause to be added to regulations as 6.1.2 (r):

*Intercalated Programmes*

*An intercalated programme is a programme onto which registered students are enrolled whilst still also enrolled on their primary programme of study, which may be at the University of Birmingham or at another institution.*

*Registered students enrolled on an intercalated programme suspend their registration on their primary programme of study. Intercalated programmes will only be available to registered students who are enrolled on a relevant programme, as defined by the programme requirements of the intercalated programme.*

3. APRC is requested to approve the following clause to be added to regulations as 6.2.2 (f):

*A Registered Student on an intercalated programme may suspend his or her registration on his or her primary programme of study for the duration of his or her enrolment on the intercalated programme, including an intercalated programme undertaken at other institutions. The period of the intercalated programme shall not be counted towards the maximum duration of the primary programme of study.*

**Consultation**

4. These proposals arise from a position paper presented to the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Students), who recommended action on this topic.
5. The proposed wording of the new clauses has been discussed and agreed within Academic and Student Administration.

**Background**

6. The University currently offers a number of intercalating programmes, that is programmes where a student, normally between second and third year, suspends their registration on the programme on which they are registered in

order to follow a programme of study which develops new practical or academic skills beyond those on the original programme of study.

7. These programmes form an optional extension to the student's existing programme of study, providing an opportunity to study the subject with a more academic focus or to apply a subject practically, leading to a separate award. Into this category fall the BMedSc programmes in the School of Medicine, open to students on the MBChB and BDS programmes (and their equivalents in other institutions), and the Certificate of Industrial Studies programmes offered to all students within the Schools of Computer Science, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Metallurgy and Materials, and to students on environmental health programmes in the school of Biosciences.
8. There are normally around one hundred students registered on intercalating programmes of the University per session.
9. Students undertaking an intercalated programme are still eligible for HEFCE funding.
10. Government student support guidelines recommend a minimal position of only supporting intercalating students in medical, planning and architectural fields of study,<sup>1</sup> although the final decision rests with the Local Authority. From the point of view of the University, this means that the only intercalated programmes where students can expect to receive support will be the BMedSc programmes. However, students on Certificate of Industrial Studies programmes are normally undertaking an industrial placement, for which it is expected they will be paid.

### **Argument to Support Proposals**

11. Despite being an established part of the University's suite of programmes, intercalated programmes are not specifically mentioned in Regulations. This creates an anomalous situation, particularly as relates to calculating maximum durations.
12. It is not reasonable to seek to incorporate the period spent on an intercalated programme into the maximum duration of a student's primary programme, as the intercalated programme will involve further academic work in addition to that required for the primary programme. Therefore students who are intercalating should not have the period of intercalation counted towards the maximum duration of their primary programme.
13. These proposals only apply to stand-alone intercalated programmes. Optional placements or additions to primary programmes of study which are assessed as part of that programme, for example Year Abroad, Year in Industry or Year in Computer Science, are treated elsewhere in Regulations and are not covered by these proposals.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Education (Student Support) Regulations 2008*, Part 2 Eligibility, 5. Designated Courses 7; *2008/9 HE Student Finance Assessing Eligibility Guidance, Policy*, 1