Changing Course
A Guide to Changing Course, Withdrawing or Suspending Your Studies
Unhappy with your course? What do you do if you suddenly find you are not happy with the course you’re doing or the university you are at? You’re not alone, 1 in 5 of the millions of students who start university each year decide that the path they have chosen is not for them. Firstly, make sure you’re absolutely certain that it is the course that you’re unhappy with. If you are in your first year going to university is a major upheaval, and it may be that you’re feeling stressed, homesick or just finding it hard to adjust to new surroundings and people. So, give yourself a while to settle into university life so you can decide whether or not it is the course that’s the problem and avoid making a hasty decision. However, uncertainty about your course can happen at any time during your degree. Also, many students have high expectations about life at university and can feel disappointed if they’re not having the time of their life all the time.

However, if you do feel that you have made the wrong choice then don’t be afraid to admit it – if you think you would be happier on another course or at another institution then start to make some enquiries. It may also be useful to make a list of what it is that you don’t like about your course, so you can avoid making a similar choice next time.

You may want to talk to your family about your feelings and concerns. It may also be helpful for you to talk through your situation and concerns with someone who is not closely involved with you, such as your personal tutor, the Students’ Union AWARE Centre, the Careers Advisory Service or one of the Counsellors from the University’s Counselling Service.
What next?
When you have made your decision you will need to consider the following points:

Changing Course
Have you got an alternative course in mind? If so, you need to contact the admissions tutor in the new department/university and find out some information about the course that you want to change to:

• What are the entry requirements?
• If you don’t quite meet them, would they still accept you on the course, and if so what sort of confirmation can they give you before you leave your current course?
• Have they got space for you on their course this year?
• Is it too late in the year to transfer and catch up with work, or do they suggest you apply for the following year?
• If they would not accept you, are there any similar courses at Bath or other universities that you could approach instead?

Withdrawing
Have you got alternative plans in mind? Are you going to apply to another course or university, go into employment or take a gap year? If you have decided that either the University of Bath, or university life in general is not for you and you wish to withdraw from the University, then you will need to notify your department as soon as possible so that they can inform the Student Records and Examinations Office by means of a Change of Circumstance form.

Suspending
If you have circumstances which are affecting your studies and you feel that you would benefit from taking some time away from the University then you should discuss the option of suspending your studies with your department, the AWARE Centre or a counsellor from the University’s Counselling Service. As with withdrawing, it
is important to do this as soon as possible so that your department can arrange the necessary Change of Circumstance forms and work with you on your options for your return. If you are going to be suspending beyond the start of the next academic year you will still need to register with the University at the beginning of the new academic year to ensure that you still have access to your University email.

The University’s guide to suspending your studies can be found at the following link: www.bath.ac.uk/students/policy/suspendstudy.html

Things to consider when choosing whether to change course, withdraw or suspend:

Career options
If you have decided to change to a new course, it is worth talking to the Careers Advisory Service to look at your career options after graduating, taking into account the change in course.
For further information contact:
Careers Advisory Service 01225 38 60 09
careers@bath.ac.uk

Finance issues
If you are thinking about transferring, withdrawing or suspending you are advised to speak with the Student Money Service as soon as possible as each student’s circumstances are different and the following information is a general guide only.
If you do not get the correct advice at the time it could involve cost implications in the future.
For further information contact:
Student Money Service 01225 38 69 68
studentmoney@bath.ac.uk
UK and EU students
Tuition fees are normally worked out on a pro-rata basis for the time you have been registered at the University. If you have a student loan for fees and leave the university before the 1st December your tuition fee loan will not be released to the university by the Student Loan Company. However, you will still be liable for the fees for the weeks you have been registered. You will have to pay these fees yourself! This applies to both old (£1255) and new (£3145) fee system students. If you have paid your fees yourself (no loan) then any refund due will be paid directly back to you or the person who paid your fees.

International students
If you are sponsored by an organisation or another person you should check to see if there are any terms and conditions attached to your sponsorship that may affect future/continued funding of your studies. If you are withdrawing or suspending and you have paid all of your fees, then the period of study will be pro-rata for the time that you have been registered with the University. If there is any tuition fee credit left over it can be paid back to you or your sponsor depending on who paid the fees. There is also the option of having any tuition fee credit held on your University account if you are returning to the University of Bath in the next academic year to start a different course (this option may have to be agreed with your sponsor if you have one). If you are an international student, it is advisable to talk through any implications this may have on your visa.

For further information contact: International Office 01225 38 68 32 international-office@bath.ac.uk.

Accommodation
Unless you are immediately transferring to another course at the University of Bath (i.e. you are not taking any time out before starting the new course at the University of Bath) you will need to think about the implications for your accommodation.
For students living in halls of residence
If you are a 1st year you will probably be living in halls of residence. If you decide to leave you will need to let the Accommodation Office know and fill in a termination form. For further detailed information regarding the termination policy, please visit:
www.bath.ac.uk/accommodation/info/termination.shtml

If you will be returning to Bath in the next academic year, you need to consider where you will live and with whom. If you are returning as a first year student you can apply for a place in halls again but the Accommodation Office cannot guarantee until nearer the intake time. All current first years will start looking for accommodation around February, so if you would rather live with a group of friends you have met during your first year, you will have to organise your house hunting with them before the next academic year starts.

For further information contact:
Student Accommodation Services 01225 38 3111
www.bath.ac.uk/accommodation (to send an email enquiry)

For students living in private rented accommodation:
If you are living in private rented accommodation you need to think about your agreement with your landlord/letting agency and whether you can terminate the agreement early.

If you live with a resident landlord, you will have a licence agreement, this will mean that is relatively easy to leave. You will need to hand in your notice officially in writing, and the period you will have to remain in your accommodation for depends on how frequently you pay your rent (e.g. if you pay monthly you will have to give 1 months notice to leave).
If you live in a house with a group of people you will need to look carefully at your contract. Read through your contract and see what is says about terminating the agreement. Some contracts
will explicitly include terms or conditions regarding terminating the contract early, others will say that it is a **fixed term contract** which means that there is no option of terminating the contract early. You may see a clause saying that you cannot sublet or assign (which just means to give it to someone else to take over) your room to anyone else before the end of the agreement. It is still worth contacting your landlord/letting agency to see whether you can ‘assign’ your part of the agreement to someone else. A number of landlords/letting agents will agree to this.

You may be asked to pay a fee to have your part of the agreement ‘reassigned’, or the landlord may suggest taking some money from your deposit to cover this. Some landlords/letting agents will expect you to find the replacement tenant and others find someone themselves, so talk to your housemates about finding a replacement that they are all happy with. The landlord/letting agent will also ask you to pay your rent, as agreed in the contract, until a new tenant has been found.

You may have an **individual contract** (with just your name on it), or more likely you will have a **joint and several contract** (with all your housemates names on too). It is possible that your landlord/letting agent will refuse to release you from the contract, which would mean that you were legally bound to continue paying your rent. In this situation, if you decided to stop paying anyway and you have a joint and several contract, your housemates will be expected to pay your rent. However, if you have an individual contract this should not affect your housemates, although in theory the landlord could request the rest of your rent through a Small Claims court. It is important to be aware of these implications, but do discuss this with your landlord/letting agents – many will be co-operative!

**For further information contact:** AWARE 01225 38 6906
aware@bath.ac.uk
The University of Bath Student Union has a commitment to producing all its publications in alternative formats for students who require it.

To request an alternative format contact AWARE.

If you would like to discuss any of the points raised or seek advice about your academic studies, please drop into the AWARE Centre in the Students’ Union - no appointment is necessary. Alternatively, email, phone us or visit our website.

Students’ Union 1 East, level 3
aware@bath.ac.uk
01225 38 6906

www.BathStudent.com/aware

The Academic, Welfare, Advice and Representation (AWARE) centre offers support to all University of Bath students.

Opening hours *

Term time
Mon. 9-5pm
Tues. 9-5pm
Wed. 9-5pm
Thurs. 9-5pm
Fri. 10-5pm

Holiday Opening times 10-4pm

*Except when the University is closed.