York Online Repeat Study Policy, 2026/27

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Introduction

1. Purpose

1.1 This document sets out the University's policy for enabling York Online students to repeat taught modules that were adversely affected by the student's circumstances.

1.2 Studying at Masters level alongside employment represents a significant commitment and can often be challenging. Students have a responsibility to manage their time and workload effectively, monitor their engagement with the programme and plan accordingly. The University expects all students to monitor their progress through the programme, consider whether they have any personal circumstances that may affect their ability to study, and inform the University of whether or not they intend to register for an upcoming module.

1.3 The University expects that all students who have registered for a module will be actively studying that module and able to engage effectively. Where work, family or other life commitments impact a student's ability to engage with their studies, the University has policies in place to support students experiencing disruption to their studies and/or assessment. These are the York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment Policy and the York Online Registration, Absence and Engagement Policy. Students experiencing difficulties are expected to make use of these policies as soon as they become aware of a potential disruption to their studies.

1.4 However, the University recognises that sometimes the impact of a student's circumstances is so severe that they are unable to effectively engage with these policies in a timely fashion. The purpose of this policy is to provide students who encounter such circumstances with a means to manage their circumstances and progress on these programmes, by requesting repeat study. In this way, the policy is intended to recognise the diversity of experience of York Online students and to reduce barriers to attainment that they may encounter.

2. Scope of this policy

2.1 This policy applies to all enrolled students who have studied one or more taught modules on the York Online programmes.

2.2 The outcomes and procedures laid out in this policy apply to situations where a student has encountered severe circumstances that both affected their ability to engage with a registered taught module and to request any mitigation at the time. This policy is not designed to support students who exclusively encountered disruption when preparing for or attempting the module's assessment(s). In such cases, students are expected to submit a claim under the York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment Policy, or, where the marks for the affected assessment have been ratified by the Board of Examiners, submit an academic appeal.

2.3 Students may not use this policy to repeat a capstone project module (CPM). Any disruptions that a student encounters during the CPM must be managed under the York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment Policy.

2.4 Repeat Study requests are tied to specific modules, rather than to online learning periods. Consequently, being granted repeat study of a module does not grant the student permission to repeat assessments for other modules that were scheduled during the same online learning period. This means that marks for assignment extensions, reassessments and deferred or 'sit as if for the first time' (SAIFFT) assessments for earlier modules will be unaffected by the outcome of a student's Repeat Study request. If a student wishes to resit an assessment that took place in the same online learning period for which they are requesting repeat study, then they must submit a claim for that assessment under the York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment Policy.

3. Definitions

3.1 **Capstone project module (CPM)** - a module where students conduct an independent piece of research. CPMs have different assessment rules around compensation and reassessment, compared with **taught modules** (see below), and a specific contribution to the calculation of merits and distinctions. CPMs are not in scope for this policy; for mitigation of the CPM (including Leave of Absence with repeat study requests), please refer to the York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment Policy.

3.2 **Conditions of return** - any requirement that must be met before the student is permitted to resume their studies. These may be academic (such as the submission of outstanding assignments, exams, etc), or non-academic (for example, providing medical evidence of fitness to return).

3.3 **Leave of Absence** - an approved break from or between modules. This is usually requested by the student by submitting a break request in e:vision. Students may submit a break request due to personal circumstances or as a time-management tool. Students must also request a Leave of Absence when there are no modules available to study in the upcoming online learning period. A Leave of Absence is a suspended status that has implications for Student Finance payments (see section 10.3 of the York Online Registration, Absence and Engagement policy).

3.4 **Online learning period (OL)** - each online learning period lasts eight weeks and students study a single module in that time. The online learning periods are numbered OL1 (the September start) to OL6 (the June start). Start and end dates are published on the Online learning periods webpage.

3.5 **Taught module** - a module where the content has been defined and structured by the module author, even where study might be self-directed. This is distinct from modules where students are expected to identify a research topic and carry out their own research (see **capstone project modules**). Taught modules have seven weeks of teaching followed by an assessment period; learning and teaching are defined as 'complete' after the end of week 7, whether or not a student has engaged with the module content.

3.6 **Working days** - standard working days for the University are Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm UK time, excluding Bank Holidays and University customary closure days.

4. Grounds for requesting repeat study

4.1 Repeat study is the opportunity to take a previous taught module (or modules) again where the student's ability to engage with that module was affected by a significant disruption which could not have been foreseen, and where the student was unable to engage with, or benefit from, University processes at the time (eg by taking a Leave of Absence). Repeat study is therefore only granted in exceptional circumstances.

4.2 Where a student is experiencing an ongoing disruption to their studies and requests to take a Leave of Absence, they may request repeat study for any previously completed modules that have been affected by the same circumstances as part of their break request.

4.3 Alternatively, where a student previously experienced a disruption to their studies during one or more completed taught modules, and this disruption also prevented their engaging with, or benefitting from, University processes at the time, they may submit a wholly retrospective Repeat Study request. In such cases the circumstances that affected their studies have since been resolved, and the student is now fit to continue their studies.

4.4 All students submitting a Repeat Study request will be required to evidence not only good grounds for repeat study, but also good reason for failing to take action earlier (see section 7 on evidence requirements).

4.5 Where a student continued to sign up for modules when they were experiencing complex and challenging personal circumstances that prevented them from engaging with those modules, they will also be required to demonstrate and evidence good reason for continuing to sign up for modules during the affected period (see section 6 on what constitutes 'good reason').

5. Timing and permitted periods

5.1 The minimum period of repeat study is one module; repeat of weeks within a module is not permitted.

5.2 There is no maximum period of repeat study, but where the period of requested repeat study is greater than 10 weeks additional approval will be required (see section 8).

5.3 Repeat study may only be requested retrospectively. Students who know, or anticipate that, their ability to study will be impacted by an upcoming circumstance or event are expected to take a break from the programme by requesting a Leave of Absence.

5.4 The earliest point at which students may request repeat study is week 8 of the affected module. In such cases, the student must also request to defer the module's remaining assessment(s) by submitting a Disruptions affecting Assessment claim in e:vision whilst they await an outcome to

their request. Failure to take action to defer the assessment is not grounds for mitigation if the Repeat Study request is subsequently rejected.

6. 'Good reason' for not taking action sooner

6.1 The following are examples of 'good reasons' for not taking action sooner, through either the York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment Policy or the York Online Registration, Absence and Engagement Policy.

- A complex and ongoing medical condition which would have clearly impacted the student's ability to make informed decisions, and/or judge risk.
- A medical condition where symptoms have been ongoing, and have impacted their studies, but which has only recently been diagnosed, or where the extent of the impact has only recently been realised.
- Severe issues outside the student's control which meant they were unavoidably prevented from seeking support or taking a break from studies.
- The student was given misleading advice or incorrect information regarding this policy by an employee of the University, or an employee of the University of York Students' Union (including full-time officers), or an individual or company employed or contracted to act on the University's behalf.

6.2 The following are not considered to be 'good reasons':

- retrospective consideration of module results, including arguments that the student's performance in a specific assessment was surprising, disappointing or out of character
- continuing to register for modules because they were unwilling to extend their programme end date
- a belief that the University would not take the issue seriously
- ignorance of the student support policies and procedures available at the time that the student was affected (eg policies regarding Leave of Absence or Disruptions affecting Assessment procedures)
- that the student received a reminder about an upcoming payment deadline; such reminders are intended to help students plan and are an opportunity to report problems with their studies to the University
- where the student was given misleading advice or incorrect information regarding this policy by another student
- believing or hoping that they would do well enough in the module(s) not to need to take a break from studies
- deciding not to disclose their circumstances because they wanted to demonstrate that they could succeed without help

- general embarrassment or being reluctant to disclose their circumstances, including being reluctant because they belong to, or grew up in, a culture in which problems are not openly discussed or disclosed to others. *This is not accepted as a good reason for non-disclosure of exceptional circumstances at the appropriate time because it would be unjust to accept claims from some students but not others on the basis of assumptions about cultural norms based on a student's nationality, ethnicity or religious faith. The University does not discriminate against students on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, faith or any other protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.*

6.3 Evidence is required to support the student's reason for not taking action sooner, wherever possible. The evidence a student submits to demonstrate good reason for not taking action may also be used to demonstrate the disruption that affected the student's engagement in their studies, if the grounds for the disruption and for the delay in taking action are the same. If the reason that the student did not take action sooner is different to the reason why their studies were disrupted, then the student will be required to submit separate evidence for each.

7. Evidence requirements

7.1 When evidence is required

7.1.1 All requests for repeat study must include evidence that demonstrates the nature of the disruption, the timing and the impact on the student's studies. The student's own statement about their circumstances will be considered as evidence, particularly for demonstrating the impact of events, but in most cases independent corroborating evidence must also be provided.

7.1.2 Students will not be expected to provide independent evidence confirming the death of another person. Impact on the student's ability to engage with the module can be inferred where the death is of a close relative or of anyone with whom the student was living at the time. The following are considered close family members: parents (including step-parents and parents-in-law), siblings (including step-siblings or siblings-in-law), spouse or long-term partner, children, grandparents, grandchildren, uncles and aunts, nieces and nephews. Where the death is of someone other than a close family member or cohabitant, the student will be expected to explain the relationship and the impact of the bereavement on their ability to engage in their studies.

7.1.3 Students will not be expected to provide independent evidence confirming sexual violence or domestic or intimate partner abuse.

7.1.4 Students will not be expected to provide evidence of a miscarriage or of an abortion, or of complications arising from a miscarriage or abortion, or of health conditions related to pregnancy.

7.1.5 Where the student has been impacted by the serious illness or accident of a close family member (as defined in 7.1.2), they will not be expected to provide independent evidence confirming that illness. They will be expected to describe the situation and its impact on their ability to study. A serious illness is defined as anything involving inpatient hospital treatment, surgery, or several weeks outpatient treatment; an accident includes anything that requires emergency treatment. Acute incidents in chronic conditions will be considered in the same way.

7.1.6 The University recognises that students may encounter other circumstances where it is not possible to get independent evidence. In such cases, the student's statement, along with an explanation of why independent evidence cannot be obtained, may be sufficient. In such cases, consideration will be given to whether the explanation as to why evidence cannot be obtained is plausible.

7.1.7 Students should not wait for evidence to be available before submitting a Repeat Study request. Where evidence is not available at the time of application, students will be given four weeks from submission of the application to submit it. Where evidence is not received by this deadline, the Repeat Study request will be reviewed as set out in sections 8.1 and 8.2.

7.2 Acceptable forms of evidence

7.2.1 All evidence must be in English or be accompanied by an English translation; translations should preferably be provided by an independent third party. It is the student's responsibility to source the translation.

7.2.2 Evidence must demonstrate that the student was affected during the module(s) for which repeat study is being requested.

7.2.3 Where evidence is required, the following types of evidence are more likely to be accepted:

- a recent letter or certificate from a medical professional, dated and on headed paper; this includes GPs, consultants, midwives and nurses as well as psychiatrists and other mental health practitioners
- an appointment letter, hospital discharge letter or other medical documentation, dated and on headed paper, or a screenshot from a patient app, that confirms a medical diagnosis, clinical investigation or referral and the date this took place
- a letter from the student's employer, dated and on headed paper or an email from the student's employer, sent from the employer's email address
- for students running their own business, a letter, dated and on headed paper, from a business partner, solicitor or accountant or other independent evidence such as financial statements
- a police crime report
- a letter or other evidence from another professional service, such as the local council, a charity or independent advisory service, a family solicitor, etc
- a supporting letter from another University of York service such as the Open Door Team, Disability Services, Sexual Violence Liaison Officer, or Student Hub
- a written account from an independent third party from outside the University who directly witnessed the circumstances.

7.2.4 The following types of evidence are less likely to be accepted:

- a letter or certificate from a medical professional that simply repeats the student's own description of events and does not provide an independent assessment

- a medical appointment confirmation (for example email, or screenshot from a patient app) where the student has requested the appointment in question (ie the student requesting the appointment may not in itself be taken as evidence of a diagnosis)
- a letter or certificate from a complementary therapist
- a written account from the student's family or friends who have directly witnessed the circumstances, or their impact on the student's wellbeing or ability to study
- for students running their own business, their own statement about the situation.

7.2.5 The following types of evidence are unlikely to be accepted:

- a letter from the student's academic supervisor, module tutor or another academic contact regarding the student's circumstances
- a written account from the student's family or friends, if they have not directly witnessed the submitted circumstances or their impact upon the student.

7.2.6 The University reserves the right to check the authenticity of all information and supporting evidence provided by the student. Where it is suspected that a student has submitted evidence that is not genuine or has otherwise fabricated information regarding their request they may be investigated for suspected misconduct under Regulation 7: student discipline.

7.2.7 Where a student states that they were given misleading advice or incorrect information by an employee of the University, or the University of York Students' Union, or an individual or company employed or contracted to act on the University's behalf, the York Online Support Team may attempt to verify the claim by requesting copies of emails or telephone recordings from the employees concerned.

8. Approval and right of appeal

8.1 Repeat Study requests will be checked by the York Online Support Team. Where a student has not provided evidence, a 'good reason' for not taking action sooner, or other information necessary for their Repeat Study request to be considered, they will be prompted to provide the necessary information before any decision to reject the claim is made. Where further information or evidence is required, students should be expected to provide it as soon as possible and in any event no later than four weeks after submitting the Repeat Study request.

8.2 Where it is clear a student's request meets one or more of the reasons for rejection listed in section 9, their request will be rejected by the York Online Support Team.

8.3 Where a student has a case for their request to be considered, the York Online Support Team will recommend the request for approval to the Head of Online Partnerships (or deputy).

8.4 Where the period of requested repeat study totals more than 10 weeks, or where teaching occurred more than 20 weeks prior to the request, additional approval will be required from the Special Cases team.

8.5 Where a Repeat Study request is rejected or partially rejected, the student may submit a Formal Stage Academic Appeal to the Special Cases team. The student will be informed of the reason for the decision, their right to appeal the decision and any deadline for doing so when they receive the outcome for their Repeat Study request.

9. Reasons for rejection

9.1 The following scenarios will usually lead to a rejection of the Repeat Study request.

- The student does not have grounds for repeat study: that is, they have failed to demonstrate that the circumstances they encountered were a significant disruption which could not have been foreseen and that prevented the student from engaging with, or benefitting from, other University support processes at the time.
- The timing of the circumstances would not have had an impact on the module(s) for which repeat study is being requested.
- The student might reasonably be expected to provide evidence and has not done so.
- The student does not have, or has not provided evidence of, good reason for not taking action sooner.
- The student has been requested to submit further information or evidence and fails to respond by the specified deadline.
- The module will no longer contribute to the student's degree, for example, if they have transferred to a new route.
- The student has requested repeat study for a module where only the assessment was disrupted.
- The student has previously submitted a Repeat Study request for the same module(s) on the same grounds and this previous request was rejected, and no new supporting evidence or relevant information has been provided.

Where one or more of these scenarios apply to some, but not all, of the modules which the student wishes to repeat, they will usually result in a partial rejection of the request.

9.2 A student may not use this policy to request repeat study after their award outcome has been ratified by the Board of Examiners. In such cases the student's request must be submitted as an academic appeal.

10. Repeat study: programme implications

10.1 Returning to repeat a module

10.1.1 Students will always be given repeat study for the entire module, including cases where the grounds for repeat study only cover part of a module, and will always restart from week 1. The student will be required to retake all formative and summative assessments as part of repeating the module.

10.1.2 When a student registers for a module for which they have been granted repeat study, they will join a new iteration of that module with a new cohort of students. The University may make reasonable changes to the course or to related educational and other services and facilities where it is necessary for the University to deliver a better quality of educational experience to students enrolled on the course. It is the student's responsibility to engage with all material in the new iteration of the module from week 1. Failure to engage from the beginning of the module, or with any changes made to the module content, is not grounds for mitigation under the York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment Policy, or to request further repeat study of the module, unless there are other extenuating circumstances which impact the student's ability to engage.

10.1.3 Where a student is granted repeat study of a module, the student's access to the affected module on the learning management system will be removed.

10.1.4 Where a student is granted repeat study of a module, any marks that the student previously achieved for that module will be voided. The marks that the student achieves for their new attempt at the module will replace the previous results for use in any award calculations.

10.1.5 A student can choose to decline the offer of repeat study and keep their previous module marks by submitting the request to the York Online Support Team before they return to repeat the module. Once the student has started studying on the new iteration of the module they cannot request to keep the previous mark, unless use of the original mark is approved following an academic appeal.

10.2 Impact on programme end dates

10.2.1 Where repeat study is approved, the student's programme end date will be extended by the number of months required to complete the modules due to be repeated. Changes to the programme end date will not be updated in e:vision until the student registers for a module that they have been permitted to repeat.

10.2.2 In addition to the above, students who receive repeat study of one or more modules are likely to encounter online learning periods where no modules are available for them to study. In these cases, the student will be required to take a break in their studies to wait until the modules they are permitted to repeat are next delivered. Further information about what happens if there is no module available to study can be found in section 5.3 of the York Online Registration, Absence and Engagement Policy.

11. Fees and student finance

11.1 Fees for repeat study

11.1.1 If a Repeat Study request is approved, the student will not be charged tuition fees for the repeated module(s).

11.2 Funded students and Repeat Study

11.2.1 Where a student has financial support from a UK regional government funding body, such as Student Finance England, and is taking a break as part of a Repeat Study request, the University is

obliged to inform the funding body that the student has suspended their studies. Payments will be paused during the period of absence.

11.2.2 When a student returns from a Leave of Absence, the University will inform the funding body and payments will resume. Funding body rules mean that students must have commenced their next module before payments can resume: the University is not permitted to confirm student attendance until after the online learning period has begun. This means that students in England, Scotland and Wales are likely to have to pay for their next module before they receive their next loan payment.[1] The exceptions to this are students who have paid in full for their programme or students returning to a module they have already paid for.

11.2.3 The University will not inform the funding body if a student is granted repeat study, and the funding body will not take repeat study into account when setting funding payment schedules. As a result, students may have a period of time towards the end of their studies where they have received all funds due to them and are still required to pay for modules.

11.2.4 Where students are in receipt of other types of funding, it is their responsibility to ensure that the Repeat Study request, and any accompanying period of absence, is compatible with the regulations of any granting agency from which funding would normally be received, and that such agencies are informed of the proposed leave and extension to the programme caused by the approved period of repeat study.

12. Data protection and safeguarding

12.1 Information and documents provided by students under this policy will be treated confidentially in line with the University of York Data Protection Policy and the University's privacy notice for students.

12.2 The York Online Support Team typically obtains personal information directly from students, for example: when they contact the team by email, telephone or video call; when they enrol on the programme or select and pay for a module; or when they submit a Disruptions affecting Assessment claim form, request a Leave of Absence or submit a Repeat Study request in e:vision. The York Online Support Team may also receive information or data from the student's academic department/school, their Student Success Coordinator or Disability Services.

12.3 Students' personal information is used to prepare and process Repeat Study requests; to inform outcomes (ie to establish whether the student's request has grounds); to process those outcomes (eg to ensure to ensure the student record is correctly updated); to plan for and support a student's trajectory; and to establish whether they may benefit from additional support or signposting to other University services. Anonymised collated data on request outcomes may also be used to analyse the impact and efficacy of this policy and associated processes.

[1] Student Finance Northern Ireland pays the funding directly to the University so a different process is in place for these students.

12.4 Personal information will be available to the York Online Support Team, and may be discussed within the team and with the Student Success Coordinators in order to support the student journey and provide services to students. Special Category data may be discussed within the team when one student case falls under multiple different processes (eg the Disruptions affecting Assessment process; the Leave of Absence process; the Repeat Study process; or the appeals process). Evidence, which may include special category data, provided under one process may be used in support of a claim submitted through a different process, where applicable, with the student's permission (eg evidence submitted in support of a York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment claim may be used if a student submits a Repeat Study request on the same grounds but provides no evidence).

12.5 Where a York Online Support Team member believes a student may benefit from, or requires, additional information or support, personal information, including special category data, will be shared within the team in order to facilitate the provision of appropriate support (eg advising a student about other policies relevant to their circumstances or checking in on a student's welfare).

12.6 Outcomes from Repeat Study requests made under this policy may be shared with a student's academic supervisor and/or their Student Success Coordinator to enable them to provide advice about progress and trajectory through the programme. Outcomes may be shared with other relevant members of academic staff where a student needs an alternative assessment when they return to a module. Details of the request itself (ie the reason for it and evidence submitted) will not be shared.

12.7 Personal information will be shared with the Head of Online Partnerships or their deputy, in order for them to approve or reject a Repeat Study request. Personal information will also be shared with the Special Cases team if additional approval is required. This may include special category data. In rare cases, an anonymised summary of the claim may be shared with the Chair of the Standing Committee on Assessment, or with the Special Cases team, for advice on the application of this policy and to inform outcomes.

12.8 In the event that an appeal is submitted regarding a Repeat Study outcome, personal information will be shared with members of the Special Cases team considering the appeal; the Chair of the Board of Studies (or equivalent role) who will approve recommendations about the appeal; and occasionally members of the Standing Committee on Assessment, in order to respond to an appeal. To investigate an appeal, the York Online Support Team may need to request relevant information from module tutors, academic supervisors or Student Success Coordinators; in such cases, the staff concerned will be aware that an appeal has been submitted but will not be provided with personal information.

12.9 In the event that a student submits a complaint about their experience of this policy, the request form, communication with the student, evidence and the outcome will be reviewed as needed by the Head of Online Partnerships, or their deputy, in order to investigate the complaint and provide a response.

12.10 Where the York Online Support Team has a concern regarding the welfare of a student they may seek advice from the Open Door Team or Disability Services, and may share personal information where it is deemed necessary.

12.11 Where the York Online Support Team has a concern regarding the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult they will seek advice from a Safeguarding Designated Contact, and may submit a safeguarding report containing a student's personal information. Please see the University's Safeguarding Framework on the University website.

12.12 In the event that a student discloses sexual misconduct or harassment to a member of staff, that staff member will share the disclosure to relevant staff members at the University who can advise on support and any appropriate next steps. The information provided in the report will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Report + Support Privacy Notice.

Document control

Approval:	Head of Online Partnerships
Policy Owner:	Head of Online Partnerships
Responsible Service:	York Online Support Team
Policy Manager:	York Online Policy and Product Manager
This policy supersedes:	York Online Repeat Study Policy, 2025/26
Related policies, procedures, guidelines and regulations:	Regulation 7: student discipline procedure York Online Disruptions affecting Assessment Policy York Online Registration, Absence and Engagement Policy
Equality Impact Assessment:	N/A
Approval date:	12/10/2026
Effective from:	12/10/2026
Date of next review:	31/07/2027

In-year amendments

Date	Details of change