Introduction
This policy and procedure document has been developed to ensure that the academic standards of the College of Science and Engineering (the College) are maintained and that clear procedures are in place for the approval and monitoring of the concession to grant an authorised interruption of study.

Definition
Authorised Interruption of Study is when the student is given permission to suspend their studies for one academic year or part of an academic year, with the expectation that they will return to resume their studies after that period.

Personal Tutor and School Student Support Team - For the purposes of this document, the terms, Personal Tutor and School Student Support Team may be interchangeable as appropriate to the individual School’s authorised interruption of study procedure.

The form may be completed by the most appropriate member of staff to outline the case for a student, in agreement with the local School procedure. The form should be submitted by the School’s nominated person. The list of nominated people is available from the School Teaching Organisations.

Scope
This policy and procedure covers all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students in the College.

In the College, the authority to permit authorised interruption of study because of special circumstances for first and second year students is delegated to Personal Tutors. The approval procedure at this level is delegated to Schools.

Requests for more than one academic year or for consecutive periods for students in years 1 and 2 and for students in Junior, Senior or Undergraduate Masters Honours years and for Taught Postgraduate students, where marks count towards the final degree classification, must be referred to the College for consideration by the College Learning and Teaching Committee’s Concession Sub-committee (Sub-committee).

Policy for authorised interruption of study
The granting of an interruption is a concession and is not an entitlement. An interruption of study concession may be granted due to the classifications set out in section 4.1.

4.1 Authorised interruption classification
The College regards that there are three classifications of requests at undergraduate level; requests associated with:
### (i) Circumstances beyond a student's control

An interruption of study considered when the circumstances have been largely beyond the student's control and the student is unable to study due to the impact of those circumstances.

These circumstances can include:
- medical and health problems;
- personal and family problems;
- bereavement;
- a national legal obligation of military service; in which case, the student must have passed all their examinations and are eligible to return to the next year of study.

### (ii) Student Maternity and Family Leave

The policy applies to any student who:
- becomes pregnant during her studies;
- is to become a father during his studies;
- who is the partner of the student who is pregnant (including a same sex partner);
- is becoming a parent through adoption of a child.

### (iii) Student special interests

Interruptions for special interest activities are expected to be for distinct, time limited periods for a specified event.

These special interests may include:
- internships or other such activities relevant to the student’s degree choice and subsequent career aspirations;
- an independent year abroad (i.e. not part of the formal degree structure and not counting for credits);
- top level representation of country in sport or other prestige activities;
- full time paid employment opportunity relevant to the student's career aspirations.

### 4.2 Exclusions to the authorised interruption of study policy and procedure

#### 4.2.1 Interruptions of Studies cannot be granted retrospectively.

#### 4.2.2 The Personal Tutor and/or the Sub-committee cannot consider any requests that are not fully documented.

#### 4.2.3 An interruption is not appropriate where the student is able to study but has failed to perform or to prepare adequately for examinations;

#### 4.2.4 It is not to permit students to take extended annual/holiday leave or to effectively extend the period available to complete their programme.

#### 4.2.5 The failure on the part of a student to secure the appropriate visa is not a reason for an interruption. See section 7 - Student Visas and Immigration Regulations.

### 4.3 Permitted length of authorised interruption of study

#### 4.3.1 Interruption of study is normally for a maximum of a whole academic year, or for a large part of it, e.g. a semester of an academic year with the intention to return and complete the
4.3.2 Authorised interruption of study should only be considered where the circumstances surrounding the request are exceptional.

4.3.3 Cases of inability to study, involving continuing, minor or short term problems, should be considered under the Special Circumstances Committee procedures. See the College Policy and Procedure for Special Circumstances. 
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/CSETSA/Assessment

5  Procedure for authorised Interruption of study

5.1 Procedure for First and Second year students - authorised interruption for one academic year or part of an academic year because of circumstances beyond a student’s control

Authorised Interruption of Study because of circumstances beyond a student’s control for first and second year students, for one year, or part of a year, is delegated to Personal Tutors. There must be "good reason" for the interruption and contemporaneous evidence must be submitted with the request.

5.1.2 Submission of request to consider an interruption of study.

(i) The request is submitted by the student to the Personal Tutor/School Student Support Team for consideration.

(ii) Contemporaneous supporting evidence
If the student wishes to request an interruption of studies for circumstances beyond their control, they must supply contemporaneous supporting evidence. The nature of the supporting documentation and the responsibility for producing that evidence rests entirely with the student. If the student is overseas or is only resident in Edinburgh for the purposes of education then they are responsible for ensuring that they procure contemporaneous medical or notary evidence (translated to English by an official translator) for any circumstance that may occur in their home country, e.g. death or illness of a parent or close family member.

5.1.3 The request and outcome is recorded and filed in compliance with individual School’s procedure. It is the responsibility of the School to record the outcome on EUCLID.

5.2 Procedure for students in First and Second year - authorised interruption for more than one academic year or for consecutive periods because of circumstances beyond a student’s control.
AND
Procedure for students in Junior Honours, Senior Honours or Undergraduate Master Honours – authorised interruption for all periods of interruption because of circumstances beyond a student’s control

Requests for more than one academic year or for consecutive periods for students in years 1 and 2 and for students in Junior, Senior or Undergraduate Masters Honours years
or Taught Postgraduate students, where marks count towards the final degree classification, must be referred to the College for consideration by the Sub-committee.

5.2.1 Submission of request to consider an interruption of study

(i) The request is submitted by the student to the Personal Tutor/School Student Support Team.

(ii) The Personal Tutor/Student Support Team complete the College Concession Request Form. 
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/CSETSA/Concessions

(iii) Contemporaneous supporting evidence – see section 5.1.2 (iii). All requests must be accompanied by contemporaneous supporting evidence. In addition, it should be noted that applications for consecutive interruptions will be subjected to greater scrutiny and more detailed supporting documentation will be required.

(iv) The Personal Tutor/School Student Support Team must submit a case on behalf of the student to the Academic Affairs Section (lynda.m.henderson@ed.ac.uk) at the College Office, including the College Concession form and supporting evidence.

5.2.2 Upon receiving the application, the Sub-committee will consider each individual case on its merits within the context of the University’s Regulations.

5.2.3 The Sub-committee has the authority to reject an application or to impose conditions as it deems appropriate e.g. shorter time limit, requirement to repeat assessments or part of the course. The Sub-committee also reserves the right to refuse to grant continuous applications.

5.2.4 The College Office notifies the School Student Support Team of the decision of the Sub-committee. It is the responsibility of the School to notify the student and to record on EUCLID.

5.2.5 The request and outcome is recorded and filed in the student’s file at the College Office.

6 Procedure for students in all years of study - authorised interruption for all periods of interruption because of student interest activities

Interruptions of study for any reasons that do not fall into the category of circumstances beyond a student’s control can only be authorised by the Sub-committee.

6.1 Submission of request to consider an interruption of study

Applications must be received by 31st July of each year. Applications received after the end of August for the impending academic year will not be accepted.

(i) The request is submitted by the student to the School Student Support Team.

(ii) The Personal Tutor/Student Support Team completes the College Concession form. 
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/CSETSA/Concessions
(iii) Supporting evidence
The student will be required to submit a detailed proposal covering details of the proposed activity and justification and a personal statement outlining the skills and experience that they expect/aspire to gain from the activity. Where possible the student should provide supporting documentation. The responsibility for sourcing and determining the nature of the supporting documentation rests entirely with the student.

(iv) The Personal Tutor/School Student Support Team must submit a case on behalf of the student to the Academic Affairs Section (lynda.m.henderson@ed.ac.uk) at the College Office, including the College Concession Form and supporting evidence.

6.2 Upon receiving the application the Sub-committee will consider each individual case on its merits within the context of the University's regulations.

6.3 The Sub-committee has the authority to reject an application or to impose conditions as it deems appropriate eg shorter time limit, requirement to repeat assessments or part of the course.

6.4 The Sub-committee reserves the right to refuse to grant continuous applications.

6.5 The College Office notifies the School Student Support Team of the decision of the Sub-committee. It is the responsibility of the School to notify the student and to record on EUCLID.

6.6 The request and outcome is recorded and filed in the student's file at the College Office.

7 Student Visas and Immigration Regulations
Students and Programme Directors should note that an interruption of study will have major implications for students’ visas and that under new immigration regulations the University is obliged to report any interruptions granted for students on Tier 4 visas to United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA). Students should seek advice from the International Office or the Advice Place. It is the student’s individual responsibility to ensure that they abide by the conditions of their visa.

8 Finance
A student requesting an interruption should ensure that he/she can secure sufficient financial support since there may be implications for funding, benefits, council tax and access to some services etc resulting from the interruption.

9 Further information
Students should seek advice from their Personal Tutor/School Student Support Team.

Personal Tutors should seek advice from the College’s Academic Affairs section.
Lynda Henderson, Academic Affairs Officer
College of Science and Engineering, Weir Building,
The King’s Buildings, West Mains Road Edinburgh EH9 3JY
Tel: +44 (0)131 650 5765; Email: lynda.m.henderson@ed.ac.uk
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