

Applications for the Conditional Allowance of a Term

Notes for Guidance for Staff and Students 2023-24

These guidance notes are intended to complement the relevant University Ordinances.

They relate to decisions taken by the Committee in 2023-24 and they do not themselves constitute a set of regulations. Nor should they be taken to imply that, given a particular set of circumstances, the Committee will automatically reach a particular decision.

The relevant Ordinances can be found online, Ch. 2, Residence and Precincts of the University in Statutes and Ordinances (<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/>).

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee

The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC) is a committee of the General Board which meets monthly throughout the year to consider applications for examination allowances and related matters. There is also a large volume of student casework undertaken under delegated authority much of which involves the expert opinion of its Medical Advisers.

Prior to October 2018, most of this work was undertaken by the Council's Standing Committee on Applications (known as the Applications Committee).

The EAMC has the following overarching aims:

- To endeavour to ensure parity of treatment between applicants to the Committee who share similar circumstances, whilst recognising that each case is individual.
- To be mindful of the interests of students **taking the same examination but** who are not applicants to the Committee.
- To ensure that, particularly in relation to disregarding terms and repeating a period of study, an applicant is **neither advantaged nor disadvantaged** in comparison with other students.

1.2 Eligibility

The EAMC considers applications from colleges on behalf of students on the Foundation Year, Undergraduates and on behalf of students on the following Postgraduate courses: EMBA; LLM; MAcc; MAST; MBA; MCL; MEng; M.Fin; MMath; MMus; MSci; PGCE, MArch.

1.3 Purpose of the conditional allowance of a term

One of the purposes of the EAMC is to consider the cases of students who, due to unpredictable circumstances outside of their control, were not actually present in Cambridge for the required number of days in a term. Allowing a term means that a student is allowed to count as a term in residence, a term when in fact, for good reason, they were not actually present in Cambridge for the required number of days. An allowance of a maximum of two terms may be granted to a student who has six or more terms to complete. An allowance of a maximum of one term may be granted to a student who has six or fewer terms to complete.

2 How to make an application

2.1 General information

All full-time students on matriculated courses are required to be in residence in Cambridge, unless they are on a year abroad as part of their course, have been approved to intermit, or are postgraduate students who have been given leave to work away.

However, there might be short periods during a student period of study, that require them to be away from Cambridge and mechanisms exist to allow for these exceptional and short periods of absence. As part of those mechanisms, the EAMC consider applications for 'Allowance of a Term'. The Committee only considers applications made through the college on the student's behalf, except in the most exceptional circumstances.

In order to 'keep term', students are required to keep not less than three-fourths of that term. Where a student has not 'kept term', then an application can be made to have that term allowed. This is not needed for students who are applying to disregard terms.

In all cases, the application will need to demonstrate that the applicant has kept by actual residence as much as practicable of Full Term in the term applied for. If the student commenced residence later than the commencement of Full Term in the term applied for, the reason must be stated in the application. Any application for the allowance of a second term should give the reason, even if this is the same as that originally given.

The application form must be complete, i.e. it must include all the required documentation, a tutorial signature. The application should also include any additional information or evidence which the college wishes to submit. Medical evidence should be accompanied by a completed declaration form from the student giving permission for medical evidence to be disclosed to medical members of the Committee.

The student may include their own statement or other supporting evidence. It is in all parties' interests that any such statement is clear and concise. It is essential that the student should be fully aware of all the documentation being submitted by the College.

Completed applications should be sent to the Secretary of the EAMC at eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk. Please note that in fairness to all students and to allow members sufficient time to read the papers, the submission deadline for each meeting of the Committee is strictly observed. Details of meetings and submission deadlines can be found at <https://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/about-us/EAMC>

2.2 Medical Evidence

If the reason for the application is for medical reasons, evidence must be included with the application. Medical evidence should be provided in English. Where a translation has been provided, this should be carried out by an independent third party and not the student. Evidence should not be redacted. Where evidence has been redacted, the Committee will be unable to consider the application.

Strict confidentiality is observed regarding medical evidence. Medical evidence is disclosed only to the medical members of the Committee (although it is accepted that it will also be seen by the Secretary and Assistant Secretary to the Committee and by College staff collating the application). Other members of the Committee do not see this part of the application unless the student explicitly asks that they should do so. The student is required to submit a form giving permission for their medical evidence to be disclosed to the medical members of the Committee.

2.3 Evidence of other grave cause

Mitigating circumstances which are not medical may be considered. A grave cause may have a variety of characteristics but will include being (i) unanticipated and (ii) entirely beyond the student's control. In cases relating to grave cause, the Committee would expect to receive evidence from an appropriate professional; the evidence should be independent and should corroborate the college's application. The Committee is not able to consider evidence from a relative, friend or anyone with a close personal connection to the student or family.

3. How the Committee considers applications

3.1 General overview

Members of the Committee normally receive applications seven days before the scheduled meeting. Where necessary a second circulation of applications will be issued: but only in the most exceptional circumstances will the Committee feel able to consider tabled applications.

Medical evidence is only sent to medical members of the Committee.

In considering the college's application the Committee takes into account the evidence submitted, points raised in the college's application form, any statement from the student and any previous applications that have been submitted to the EAMC on behalf of the student. Where the medical evidence is considered by the medical members to be weak or unconvincing, the Committee may defer a decision until further appropriate evidence is obtained, or it may decline the application.

For all students, study should be the primary focus of attendance. Engagement with extra-curricular activities is not prohibited and the University encourages students to have a positive work / life balance. However, it is advised that participation in extra-curricular activities should not prevent a student from meaningful engagement with their studies and / or impact the student's ability to perform academically.

Applications for the conditional allowance of a second term are normally declined, unless a good part of the two terms has been kept or there are exceptional circumstances.

3.2 Matters dealt with by delegated authority

Some matters may be dealt with by authority delegated to the Chair and / or Secretary. In very exceptional circumstances i.e. where a decision cannot reasonable wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Committee and where the case is not straightforward, the Committee may be prepared to consider an application by circulation. If, however, in such circumstances any member of the Committee wishes the application to be considered at a scheduled meeting, then the application will need to await that meeting.

4. Approved applications

If the application is approved by the Committee, the College will receive an outcome notice from the Assistant Secretary to the EAMC. Please ensure the student receives a copy. Please keep this with the student's record.

If the application is approved before the end of Full Term in the term in question, the approval is conditional only, and is not ratified unless the Tutor subsequently certifies below that their pupil resided continuously, from the last day of residence originally certified, to the end of Full Term.

5. Review procedure

Details of the [Review Procedure](#) and form can be found online and requests for review should be submitted on the Review Request form within 14 days of the formal decision being issued. Requests for Review are encouraged to be submitted as soon as possible and not left until the day of the deadline. It is particularly important for this purpose that the College keep records of when it communicates the Committee's decisions to the students. In instances where the Committee has declined an application or offers an alternative to the allowance sought, it is essential that the decision is conveyed to the student as soon as possible.

The review will essentially be of a procedural nature i.e. the Reviewer will consider whether in reaching its decision(s) the Committee has observed the relevant Ordinances and these Notes of Guidance and whether or not it has come to a reasonable decision in that context.

The Review Procedure is the final stage before the student may take their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

6. Key contacts

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| Complex queries | Jenny.green@admin.cam.ac.uk |
| General / preliminary queries | eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk |
| Making an application to the Committee | eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk |