

## **WITHDRAWAL & ABSENCE & CONSEQUENT REFUND POLICIES**

Any student considering withdrawal or interruption should first seek advice from Student Support. More information and contact of the Student Services team can be found here: <https://www.rcm.ac.uk/life/studentssupport/>

Notice should then be given to the Head of Undergraduate (or the Head of Postgraduate) Programmes, a student with a valid reason for wishing to interrupt studies may be permitted to do so which shall normally be for a period of one, two or three terms. A student requiring further time before resuming their studies will be considered as withdrawn and will be required to apply formally for readmission at the point where they are ready to return to the College.

Programme Regulations are available at the following locations:

For Bachelor courses:

<https://www.rcm.ac.uk/media/BMus%20Programme%20Regulations.pdf>

For Master & Doctor courses

<https://www.rcm.ac.uk/media/Taught%20Masters%20Programmes%20Regulations.pdf>

### **Unofficial absence & Withdrawal**

Because the RCM is required to comply with the sponsorship regulations imposed by UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) and has a duty to ensure that its students are fully engaged with their courses, Registry staff will monitor principal study professors' registers on a regular basis, to ensure that students are attending all scheduled "principal study" lessons. Where a student has missed one expected contact, a warning e-mail will be issued by the Registry. Where the student misses two or more consecutive expected contacts, they will be required to attend a disciplinary meeting with the Director or Deputy Director in accordance with the Student Code and Procedures. Due to the more flexible nature of their studies, Doctoral students will be issued with a Supervision Log. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the logbook is completed. This must be brought to Registry to be checked each month. Failure to comply means that the College has to report the student to UKVI, which may result in the visa being withdrawn and the student being required to return to their home country

This is fully explained on page 43 at

<https://www.rcm.ac.uk/media/RCM%20Student%20Code%20and%20Procedures%2020-21.pdf>

In the case of American students with Federal Loans, Federal Regulations require that if an interruption of studies is more than 180 days, then it must be treated as a withdrawal backdated to the first day of absence.

### **RCM Refund Policies**

The RCM Student Code and Procedures states at 8.9.2 of the Terms and Conditions of Registration that students who interrupt their studies or leave the RCM are liable for tuition fees for terms commenced. Each term is one third of the annual tuition fee. Students who interrupt or leave are entitled to a refund or fee waiver for terms not yet started.

### **US Federal Refund Policies for US Federal Loan students**

The RCM is required to comply with the US Federal Regulations regarding the return of loan funds when a student withdraws. There is a disbursement at the start of each term (payment period) and loan money is "earned" for each day in continuous attendance during that term and unearned money has to be returned to US Department of Education.

Suppose a term lasts 100 days and a student withdraws on the 30<sup>th</sup> day, then 30% of that disbursement is "earned" and 70% is unearned and the school must return the unearned 70% of the loan money used for tuition and college accommodation to the US Department of Education. The full regulations and how the calculation is done is fully explained in Chapter 5 of the Federal Aid Handbook <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/fsa-handbook>

The date of withdrawal is the later of

- last date of attendance for that student in the principal study professors' register
- or the last date of proved academic activity (such as a tutorial or performance)

If an interruption of studies is more than 180 days, then it is treated as a withdrawal backdated to the first day of absence.

Because the RCM tuition policy is that each term started must be paid in full, then the return of Federal loan money used for tuition means that the student would still owe the shortfall tuition fees for that term. See section 8.6 of the Student Code and Procedures at

<https://www.rcm.ac.uk/media/RCM%20Student%20Code%20and%20Procedures%2020-21.pdf>

### **Post withdrawal disbursements**

As all disbursements are paid at the start of each term, the need for a post-withdrawal disbursement is very unlikely.

In the highly unlikely event of a student starting the term without receiving their disbursement, and then withdrawing without receiving their disbursement, then the school will calculate the "earned" value of the disbursement and pay it to the student by bank transfer within 30 days.

**Latest update: June 2021**