

Withdrawal Policy

Last reviewed	February 2022
Next review due	February 2024
Responsible division	Programmes Division Senior Leadership
Responsible director	Programme Operations Director
Applies to	Participants on all programmes unless specifically excluded
Exceptions	Participants on NPQ Alliance programmes and the Master's in Expert Teaching are excluded from this policy.
Audience	Publicly available on website
Applicable laws	
Other relevant regulations	

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1. Objectives

The objective of this policy is to set out the circumstances in which a withdrawal from one of our programmes may take place, and our approach should it arise.

Our intention through this policy is to ensure that we have measures in place to enable all participants to fully benefit from our programmes as far as possible, and that a withdrawal only takes place following full consideration of alternative options.

2. Background and Legal/Regulatory Framework

As with any programme provided by Ambition Institute, our aim is for participants to complete programmes in their entirety, including gaining intended qualifications where applicable. Programmes are designed as a sequence of learning episodes to be accessed in order and normally alongside a cohort of peers.

Where the programme carries an accredited qualification such as an NPQ qualification there is also a need to provide assurances regarding the learning that has been accessed by a participant in pursuit of this qualification along with an expected timeframe to gain the relevant qualification. In creating a policy, we therefore aim to adopt a fair and consistent basis for the withdrawal of participants, and to ensure that our policy is consistent with the criteria laid down by Department for Education (DfE) or other relevant body in respect of programme expectations that include attendance requirements.

3. Policy and Procedures

What is a withdrawal?

Whilst we expect participants to plan to complete their programme in its entirety, we understand that there may be circumstances which may impact their ability to do so. In these circumstances, the most appropriate course of action may be for the participant to withdraw from the programme. A withdrawal will normally be led by the participant but may on occasion be led by Ambition.

Whilst not exhaustive, circumstances which may lead to a withdrawal include:

- > A school move which results in the participant no longer being eligible to continue on the programme (specific to DfE funded programmes and will vary according to eligibility criteria for each programme).
- > Dissatisfaction with the programme on the part of the participant.
- > A change of role which means the participant will no longer benefit from the programme.
- > A change of role or responsibility which means the participant will not have sufficient capacity to engage with and complete the programme of study.
- > Disciplinary action or a criminal offence affecting a participant, which may risk the reputation of Ambition Institute.
- > Evidence that the participant has provided false information in the selection process.
- > Failure on the part of the participant to achieve required standards of the programme.
- > Illness and/or health-related issues and leaves of absence which impact the individual's ability to fully engage with and complete the programme.
- > Maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or parental leave where the option of deferral is not available or not chosen by the participant.
- > Bereavement or changes to personal circumstances which impact the individual's ability to fully engage with and complete the programme of study.
- > Any other change or occurrence which is out of their control and which could not have been foreseen or planned for, and which may impact the individual's ability to fully engage with and complete the programme of study.

Where a participant aims to re-join a future cohort, this would not normally be treated as a withdrawal, and in these circumstances the Ambition Institute Deferral Policy will be applied.

Participant led withdrawal

Where a participant is considering withdrawal from a programme, in the first instance they should contact their relevant Programme team to discuss this, with the aim of identifying whether any alternative options are available, for example, deferral.

Where the participant is being supported by their school or Trust, they will be asked to confirm that the school/Trust has been made aware and in agreement with the request to withdraw.

Should no alternative be available, participants will be required to advise us in writing of their withdrawal, giving the date, and the reason for the withdrawal. This latter is important for both quality assurance purposes and for DfE reporting where applicable.

Once the request has been received in writing, the Programme team will update our records, advise the School Partnerships team and ensure that any other programme support functions have been notified, for example, coaching and academic tutoring.

Ambition Institute led withdrawal

Where a participant is withdrawn from a programme by Ambition, this decision will only be taken where it is felt that no other option is appropriate and/or other opportunities to avoid this have been thoroughly explored.

Prior to withdrawal, Ambition will contact the participant to discuss the situation to determine whether the withdrawal can be avoided.

Any withdrawal will be confirmed in writing to both participant and School/Trust where applicable, outlining the reasons and effective date of withdrawal.

Once the withdrawal has been confirmed in writing, the Programmes team will update our records, advise the School Partnerships team and ensure that any other programme support functions have been notified, for example, coaching.

4. Funding Implications of Withdrawals

Programme fees will not normally be refunded where a participant withdraws from a programme before completion. A refund may be agreed in exceptional circumstances, but this will be at the discretion of Ambition Institute, and according to the Ambition Institute Refund Policy. Specific requirements apply to DfE-funded programmes, which are detailed below.

DfE-funded NPQ programmes (applicable to reformed NPQs starting from Autumn 2021)

In order to be categorised as a withdrawal, an NPQ participant must have started the programme, defined as having attended at least one event or engaged in online learning content. If this condition is not met, there will be no funding implications of leaving the programme.

Any participant who withdraws from a DfE-funded NPQ programme (beginning in Autumn 2021 or later) will be ineligible for future DfE funding on the same NPQ programme. However, participants who re-apply for a programme from which they had previously withdrawn will be able to self-fund their place on the programme.

DfE Scholarship-bearing programmes (applicable to legacy NPQ programmes only, starting on or before Autumn 2020)

The DfE reserves the right to reclaim scholarships awarded to any individual who has withdrawn from a programme for whatever reason, and so if a scholarship refund has been paid to a school, Trust or participant by Ambition we reserve the right to claim back the appropriate amount:

If the participant completes less than 25% of the course content/time/value –75% of the value will be repayable to DfE.

If the participant completes up to 50% of the course content/time/value, 50% of the costs will be repayable to DfE.

Where over 50% of the course costs have been incurred by providers and/or completed by participants, other than in exceptional circumstances, the DfE do not expect clawbacks/refunds to apply.

5. Links to Other Policies

Other policies referenced here include:

- > [Ambition Institute Deferral and NPQ Submission Extension Policy](#)
- > [Ambition Institute Refund Policy](#)