



# Deferral Policy

## Deferral

Deferrals are for participants who have successfully completed part of their NPQ Programme but would like to defer the remaining part until a later date. Participants can request a deferral when they believe they are unable to continue the programme due to extenuating circumstances which are beyond their control.

To be granted a deferral, participants must provide independent evidence that they have been affected by an extenuating circumstance. Deferrals cannot be guaranteed and will be agreed on an individual basis. Successful participants will be permitted to re-engage with their programme on an agreed date which has been sanctioned by LSSW. The re-engagement will be aligned to a future cohort and the relative dates therein as appropriate. However, due to the closure of the current licencing arrangements which will end in August 2022, we are unable to process deferral requests where re-engagement (including that of assessment submissions) would take participants beyond April 2022. This will enable sufficient time for participants to submit their Assessment Tasks, allow internal marking, internal and external moderation and release of results.

### Definition of extenuating circumstances:

- Unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the participant which directly affects their ability to complete the programme within the given time frame.
- The circumstances are supported by independent evidence where appropriate

### Please note that a deferral can only be considered if the following are met:

- The programme has been paid for in full
- The deferral occurs within a calendar year unless the participant has had a medical incident or is on maternity leave

### Examples of extenuating circumstances:

Whilst it is difficult to provide an inclusive list, please see below some typical examples which would meet the requirements:

- Significant medical issues
- Extended sick leave sanctioned by the participant's school
- Pregnancy and maternity/paternity leave

- Mental health issues
- Death/severe illness of an immediate relative
- Change in employment
- Sudden and unanticipated increase in workload, e.g. staffing issues significantly affecting the candidate's workload

**What is not considered as extenuating circumstances:**

- Failure to fully comply with the 'Minimum Requirements' of the programmes as detailed in the Participant Handbook.
- Medical reasons without sufficient evidence, e.g. a doctor's note
- Minor illness
- Planned familial obligations and holidays
- Childcare problems that could have been anticipated
- IT issues/failure to back up document
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**Deferral Procedures:**

- Participants email LSSW requesting a deferral
- The Company Associate then requests a detailed response outlining the reasons for the request including medical evidence if appropriate.
- A written response is also requested from the participant's Sponsor supporting the request.
- LSSW will check at this stage that the participant has paid for their Programme.
- The evidence is then scrutinised by the Company Associate who makes an initial judgement prior to the Managing Director making a final decision. The candidate is then informed of the decision and also of the arrangements pertaining to re-engagement together with new submission dates.
- LSSW finally changes the status of the participant on the DMS.

NB: Emails must be registered at a professional address. Medical issues must be supported by a communication from a qualified medical practitioner.

LSSW reserves the right to request additional information as appropriate prior to granting any deferral.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines may make the evidence inadmissible and affect the outcome of the participant's request for a deferral.

All information received from participants will be treated in confidence and must adhere to GDPR. All deferral requests will be reviewed and receive a verdict within ten working days of submission. When a request is approved, the candidate will be emailed to inform them of their re-engagement term. When a request is not approved, the candidate will receive an email explaining how this decision was reached.

### **Appeals process**

Participants may appeal the outcome of their deferral request within ten working days from the day the participant is notified of their failed deferral request.

Participants must have a demonstrable reason for their appeal, beyond simply being dissatisfied with the outcome. For example, an appeal may be made if the candidate can prove that their application was not judged in accordance with the definition of extenuating circumstances as outlined in this document.

The appeal will be judged on its merits as to how it meets the above criteria, together with a review of the original request. Appeals will be dealt with by the Lead Associate and the Chair of the Board. Outcomes will be communicated to the participant and their Sponsor within ten working days.