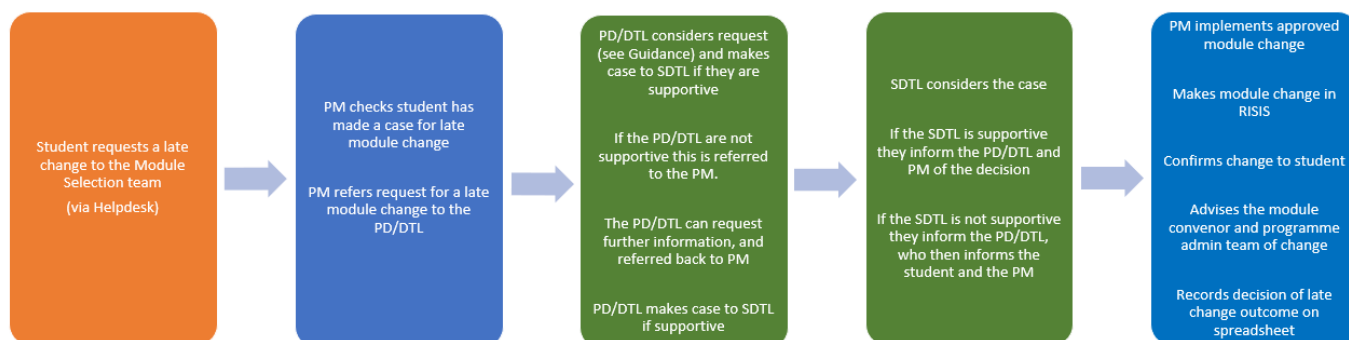


# Guidance for Programme Directors and School Directors of Teaching and Learning for students requesting a late change of optional modules

## Approval route



The decision to accept a late change to modules after the module selection deadline has passed is made by the School.

The student should submit any exceptional case for a late module change request to the Module Selection Team via the Helpdesk and the helpdesk call passed to the Programme Manager to take forward.

The Programme Manager should ensure that the student has provided a case which can then be presented to the Programme Director/DTL/SDTL.

The Programme Manager should in the first instance forward the request to the Programme Director/DTL who should consider the exceptional request case received from the student, asking for more information from the student if appropriate. After consulting with the relevant Module Convenor(s), D/SDTL of another Department/School and the Support Centre if appropriate, they should pass the case on to their School Director of Teaching and Learning (or their delegate), together with a statement about whether they support the request, and why. If requested, the Programme Manager will check whether the module(s) to be changed is permitted in the diet and whether the module has a cap and is full.

The School Director of Teaching and Learning (or their delegate) should then consider the request, consulting with their Teaching & Learning Dean if the case is not straightforward and/or if the case involves completed assessment. They should let the Programme Manager and Programme Director know their decision. If the request is approved, the Programme Manager will arrange for the module change to be actioned in RISIS, will notify the student and will notify others as appropriate (e.g. Module Convenors and if necessary, Programme Administrator, Timetabling and Exams). If the request is not approved, the Programme Director should notify the student.

The Support Centre will keep a record of late requests and their outcome.

### To Note:

1. Normally no changes should be considered after week 2 of the Spring term as this impacts on the production of the exam timetable.
2. It is important that those advising the student whether in Schools or Support Centres should manage a student's expectations; there is no automatic right to change modules.

## Programme Director Considerations

When considering a student's request for a change of optional module after the Autumn term deadline, a Programme Director should consider the areas below before passing the request on to the School Director of Teaching & Learning (or their delegate) for the School that owns the student's programme:

1. Reason given by the student for wanting to change and how reasonable this is.
2. What term(s) the module relates to.
3. Assessment for the module to be dropped (amount completed and/or in-train).
4. The impact of the change on the balance of modules between terms.
5. Are either of the modules owned by another School/Department.
6. Does the student understand the change will be final.
7. Whether there is groupwork and/or seminar groups which may see other students impacted by a late change.
8. Whether the change involves catching up on missed teaching.

If a case is not straightforward, or if there are any concerns, the School Director of Teaching and Learning (or delegate) should discuss it with their Teaching & Learning Dean before making a decision.

### What reason has the student given for wanting to change and is this reasonable?

You should check why the student was not able to submit their request by the deadline, as well as finding out why they want to change now. The reasons given should be based on academic grounds (though may be based on exceptional personal circumstances, if relevant). For example, it may be reasonable to want to change a module late where it has only just become clear that another module will benefit the student in terms of their dissertation, placement or future career or study plans, such as when a module is pre-requisite for others. It may also be reasonable to want to change a module late where a student has realised after the deadline that the module is too challenging for them, despite their efforts to engage with the module so far. This realisation may be as a result of receiving poor marks in an assignment that the student has nevertheless tried their best in. You may wish to look for evidence that student performance in the Autumn module is significantly out of line with their typical attainment (i.e. is there a real risk that the degree outcome will be distorted), and consider whether the module is in a discipline area that is not closely related to their subject. It is not reasonable to want to change a module late simply because a student has not engaged with a module, and normally requests should not be granted if there is evidence of non-engagement with the module. In such cases, the student may need a study plan instead, and you should liaise with the School/Departmental Director of Academic Tutoring about support for the student.

### What term(s) do the modules relate to?

Usually a late module request received prior to the week 2 deadline in Spring term will relate only to changing an Autumn or Autumn/Spring(/Summer) term module for a Spring(/Summer) or Summer term module only, given that the student has missed more than three weeks of teaching in the Autumn term. In exceptional circumstances only, a request can be made to the School Director of Teaching and Learning for a late change from an Autumn/Spring(/Summer) module to another Autumn/Spring(/Summer) module, where it is stated by the Module Convenor of the new module that the student would not have missed a significant amount of teaching, and where assessments have not been missed. (A late change to a module would not usually count as an exceptional

circumstance.) In such cases you will need to check that the student will have sufficient time to catch up on the missed teaching (this may be easier if the two modules have some overlap).

### Has the student completed any assessment for the module they are asking to drop?

If the request to change modules is granted, then the assessment marks for the previous module will be deleted from RISIS and may not be recoverable. If a student has completed a significant amount of the assessment for a module already, it may not be appropriate to consider a late change (bearing in mind fairness to other students who are taking modules that have most of the assessment occurring later in the academic year). In cases where assessment marks have already been returned to a student, the School Director of Teaching and Learning (or delegate) should consult their Teaching & Learning Dean before making a decision. Although completion of assessment is not in itself a reason for rejecting a request, a level of consistency in considering how much assessment can be waived is needed, to maintain fairness to all.

### Is the student currently completing any assessment for the module they are asking to drop?

Where the module that a student is asking to drop has coursework, you will need to check with the Module Convenor whether there is groupwork that is currently being completed or whether groups have been chosen/assigned already and consider in detail the impact on other students of allowing the student to change modules.

### What will be the impact of the change on the balance of module credits between terms?

You should check how the change will affect the balance of modules between terms, and whether the student is fully aware of the impact of this.

### Are either of the modules owned by another School / Department?

If the modules that a student wants to drop or pick up late are owned by your department, then you should have easy access to full details about them, including assessment and likely impact on the learning of other students due to the change, e.g. a changing seminar group. But where one or more of the modules is owned by another department or school, then you should consult first with the Module Convenor, and Departmental/School Director of Teaching and Learning for the other School, to seek their comments about the requested change.

### Does the student recognise that the change made will be final?

If a late change is accepted, the student will not be able to change back at a later stage. If they are unhappy with their new module choice, they will only be able to change it in line with the usual deadlines. If there will be no further possible change of optional modules (e.g. because the student will now be taking all possible Spring term modules available on their diet) then you should check that they are aware of this.

#### **School Director of Teaching & Learning sign off:**

The SDTL will consider the case made by the Programme Director and may liaise with other stakeholders (e.g. when module dropped or requested is owned by another school) where relevant.

- If the request is approved: email the Programme Manager asking them to implement the changes (with Programme Director in Cc).
- If the request is rejected: email the Programme Director asking them to notify the student (with Programme Manager in Cc).

Where requests have been approved the Programme Manager will

1. Make the module change on RISIS, and let the student know about this (along with any other information given by the School);
2. Inform the Module Convenors about the late changes (where the late change might impact assessments already taken and missed teaching; not relevant for modules which have not yet started);
3. Let the relevant Programme Administration team know of these late changes.
4. Record the request on the Student's record and late change spreadsheet.

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1	Student Services/ CQSD	As required	UBTLSE	25 January 2021	Autumn Term 2021