



Funding for students who interrupt their studies

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact Funding and Financial Support:

+44 (0)115 823 2071

financialsupport@nottingham.ac.uk

This factsheet provides financial information for UK 'home' undergraduate students during the period they have opted to take a voluntary interruption of their studies or whose studies have been interrupted for some other reason (Student Finance may refer to this as a period of 'suspension').

A student can ask to interrupt their course for a specified period for a number of reasons including: ill health, pregnancy, financial reasons, academic reasons, caring responsibilities or may have to interrupt their studies to resit exams without attendance (external resits).

NB The period of interruption has to be agreed with the relevant School or Department.

What does this mean for me?

If you interrupt for a full academic year, then you do not register with the University for that period. If you interrupt for a semester or term you register with the University at the start of the semester when you return to carry on with your course.

During the period of interruption you will not usually receive any statutory support from the Government via the Student Loans Company (SLC), unless you are interrupting due to ill health or pregnancy. In that case you may receive funding for 60 days from the date the period of interruption commenced as long as you interrupt after commencing the year.

If you interrupt part way through the academic year and you have received financial support via a loan and/or grant, you may be asked to repay any overpayment the SLC have made you. You should be aware that part year funding will count as a full year's funding when the SLC calculate your years of entitlement. (see page 3 and our 'Previous Study' factsheet for more information.)

The University will not pay you any Bursary and/or Scholarship while you are within a period of interruption.

What about tuition fees?

If you interrupt part way through the year then you may still have to pay part or full tuition fee. Your eligibility for the fee loan will depend on when you interrupt your course, and whether or not you intend to return to study within the same academic year.

- At Nottingham you will not be charged any fee if you are a **NEW** student and interrupt within the first three weeks of the academic year **and** you do not return to your course until the following academic year. **Continuing** students become liable for 25% of the fee on Term 1, day 1.
- If you interrupt your course during the academic year there are key points where you become liable for a percentage of the fee, and if eligible, you will be able to have a tuition fee loan to cover the appropriate fee:
 - Term 1, day 1 (or see new students above) – 25% of the fee
 - Term 2, day 1 – 50% of the fee
 - Term 3, day 1 – 100% of the fee

(See www.nottingham.ac.uk/fees for full fee tables.)



How can I fund my living costs while I am on a period of interruption?

You will need to find a source of income for the relevant period. The majority of students find work; some return home to live and manage with family support.

Whilst there is no automatic access to student loans or grants during a period of interruption (beyond the 60 days where interruption is for health reasons), in cases where there are compelling personal reasons which caused the interruption, and where the absence of funds will cause financial hardship, you can contact Student Finance to ask if you are eligible to be considered '**for extra financial help**'. For Student Finance England, please call +44 (0)300 100 0607

Further information can be found at [Student finance if you suspend or leave your course: Getting student finance while you suspend your studies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Student Finance will then consider your request and will ask you to complete a hardship form and provide supporting documents. Once an assessment has been carried out Student Finance will advise you of the outcome.

Students are **NOT** usually entitled to any state benefits unless they have dependants, a disability or long term medical condition. However, if you are not able to return to your studies straight away after a period of illness or caring responsibilities, you may be able to claim Universal Credit until your agreed date of return to your course, or one year after you interrupt your studies (whichever is sooner). If you remain ill for more than 28 weeks you may be able to claim Employment and Support Allowance/Universal Credit. Further information is available from the Student Advice Centre on +44 (0)115 84 68730, your local Jobcentre Plus or Housing Benefit office.

What happens when I return to University?

When you interrupt your course you still need to make an application for student funding for the following academic year. If you return at the start of Semester 1 the standard processes carried out by the University should release your maintenance funding as usual. If, however, you return at the beginning of Semester 2 the University has to send a different advice to the SLC. This can delay the payment of your maintenance support, so we would advise ensuring you have access to funds for the first couple of weeks.

Already signed a housing contract for the period of interruption?

If you have signed a contract for a room/house then you are legally bound to pay rent as agreed. If you are successful in finding work, or have sufficient family financial support, then this may not be a problem.

If you know that you are going to struggle to pay the rent try to find a replacement tenant as soon as possible. If you can, talk to your housemates and explain what is happening; they may know of someone who would be happy to move in.

To discuss this further, visit an Advisor in the Student Union's Advice Centre, Portland Building or telephone +44 (0)115 84 68730 for advice.

Do I need to pay council tax?

If the period of interruption is within the start and expected completion date of your course, then you may be able to continue to claim council tax exemption. You will need an exemption certificate to send to your local council which can be ordered from the University's Online Store.

Financial difficulties?

The Funding & Financial Support Team may be able to help. We offer support and advice to students, can make referrals to other support services and can advise on the availability of support/hardship funds. (For full contact details see Useful Contacts)



Will this impact on my eligibility for funding for future years of study?

Every eligible student is entitled to funding for the length of their course plus a year to use for a period of repeat study. This extra year is sometimes referred to as a 'Gift Year'.

All years of study, even if self-funded, are deducted from this entitlement. Any part-year attendance is counted as a full year within the entitlement calculation so, if you interrupt your studies a few days after the start of the academic year, you will still have used one year of your funding entitlement.

If you haven't completed any other previous study, and this is your first and only course interruption, the remaining years of your course should be funded as usual because you have access to the gift year. If you have already used the gift year funding, due to a previous interruption or previous study on a different course, you may have to self-fund part or all of the remainder of your course.

If self-funding you would not be eligible for Maintenance Grant (for pre 2016 starters) or the Tuition Fee Loan but you would be eligible to apply for the Maintenance Loan (which can still be means-tested), DSA support and supplementary grants such as Parents Learning Allowance, Adult Dependant Grant and Childcare Grant (if applicable).

If you have a means-tested assessment carried out by Student Finance, you may also be eligible to apply for the University Core Bursary.

If you have already used your gift year of funding, and are repeating a period of study due to 'Compelling Personal Reasons' (CPR) - e.g. ill health, disability, you may be able to apply to Student Finance to be funded for more than your standard entitlement. For more information, please refer to our CPR factsheet.

If you are studying on a NHS-funded course your entitlement to funding will not be the same as if you were funded by Student Finance. Please contact the NHS Bursaries team for clarification on +44 (0)300 330 1345

If you are considering interrupting your course, speak to the Funding & Financial Support Team. We can give help and advice on student finance and funding - See Useful Contacts



Useful contacts

National contacts

Gov.UK

Advice and information on all aspects of student finance including eligibility, entitlements and how to apply for the Student Loan via Student Finance England.

www.gov.uk/studentfinance

Student Loans Company

Information relating to Student Loans.

www.slc.co.uk

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

Information on tax credits eligibility and application procedures.

www.hmrc.gov.uk

National Union of Students (NUS)

Advice and guidance on all aspects of student life.

www.nus.org.uk

University contacts

Funding & Financial Support, Student Services

Advice on all aspects of student finance including Student Loans, Government grants, University scholarships, bursaries and support funds.

+44 (0)115 82 32071

Student Enquiry Centre

www.nottingham.ac.uk/financialsupport

Accessibility, Student Services

Study support, support for students with dyslexia, dyspraxia and other specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

+44 (0)115 82 32070 **or**

+44 (0)115 95 15992

dyslexia-support@nottingham.ac.uk **or** disability-support@nottingham.ac.uk

www.nottingham.ac.uk/student-services

The University of Nottingham Students' Union Advice Centre

A confidential service available to all University of Nottingham students, giving advice and information on a range of matters, such as housing, money and academic issues.

+44 (0)115 84 68730

SUAdvice@nottingham.ac.uk

www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/advice

School Welfare

www.nottingham.ac.uk/student-services/services/support-and-wellbeing-officers.aspx

All information was correct at the time of writing and is based on data from Gov.UK, The University of Nottingham, and the Department for Education (DfE).

We make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information we provide, however it can only give general guidance. We would always advise you to contact the relevant funding bodies referenced in relation to your specific circumstances.

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