

Withdrawing or Pausing your Studies (Undergraduate)

How This Guide helps

This guide provides information for undergraduate students considering either leaving University or taking some time away from studying e.g. for health or bereavement reasons.

Contact Details



023 8059 2085



advice@susu.org



The Advice Centre - SUSU



susu.org/support

Wellbeing

It is important to recognise that it is normal and natural to feel some anxiety when you are following a formal process and that the University has support in place to help you with your wellbeing. You can contact the Universities Wellbeing Team on studenthub@soton.ac.uk or by calling **023 80 599 599**. They are available **24 hours a day, 7 days a week**.

What is the difference between a pause in study and withdrawing?

If you pause your studies, you are taking time out and will return later, usually the next academic year. You are still considered a student in most instances; however, student funding is not usually available. There are exceptions to this if you are pausing on medical grounds.

If you withdraw, you are leaving the University and your course altogether with no intention of returning later. You are no longer considered a student and student finance will not be available to you. If you wish to attend a different institution, you will need to begin the admissions process from scratch.

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees are paid in three instalments directly to the University.

- Term 1 = 25%
- Term 2 = 25%
- Term 3 = 50%

If you withdraw or pause your studies at any time during any term, you will be liable for that term's fees, but this should still be covered by Student Finance unless you are classed as a self-funded student.

Funding for Living Costs

If you withdraw, Student Finance is entitled to claim back maintenance funding overpayments immediately and will write requesting payment. If you pause your studies, Student Finance will usually claim back any unpaid loan overpayment by reducing future loan instalments when you return to your course, if not repaid previously. If you are pausing for health reasons, Student Finance will continue to pay your maintenance funding for a period of 60 days from the date you pause.

Once you withdraw you will be able to apply for jobseeker benefits if you are unable to find work. However, as a student taking a pause in study, you retain your student status and are unable to apply for benefits without underlying eligibility such as a disability or care of a child. This can make it difficult for students to manage financially if they are tied into a housing contract and is a factor to consider. It is possible to request additional funding from Student Finance during this period, but this is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Since you are still regarded as a student whilst you are enrolled at the University (even if not attending), you should not be liable for Council Tax whilst suspended. However, this is unfortunately not completely clear cut in current legislation. If you receive a Council Tax bill, please contact The Advice Centre.

Future funding

As a rule, you are entitled to have funding for the duration of your course plus 1 year (gift year). This means that if, for any reason, you need to pause your studies or retake a year, you can still have the remainder of your course funded. Please see The Advice Centre guide on repeating study should you require additional funding.

Postgraduate students

Student Finance rules are different for postgraduate students who pause or withdraw from a course and need funding for a repeat period of study. Please contact The Advice Centre for further information.

International students

If you are an International student, leaving your course will have implications on your visa.

It is very important that you understand the conditions of your visa and how it will be affected if you suspend or withdraw.

The University's Visa and Immigration Advice Service can be contacted by following this [link to visa and immigration page](#).

Disclaimer:

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Providing free, independent, and confidential advice and information.

 advice@susu.org
 **02380 592 085**

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