

# **Interruption, Withdrawal and Transfer Policy**

**for students on taught programmes**

**With effect from September 2021**

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## INTRODUCTION

It may be necessary for you to interrupt, withdraw or transfer out from your studies at the University of Greenwich. If you choose to interrupt, withdraw or transfer you should make sure that you seek advice from the appropriate sources and are aware of the consequences of your decision.

You are strongly encouraged to discuss this decision with the GSU Advice Centre or the Retention and Success Officer in your Faculty before you begin the process.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Interruption** – An interruption of study is where you normally take a break from your current programme of study with a view to returning in the next academic year.
- **Withdrawal** – A withdrawal is where you have decided to leave the University and are therefore no longer a student at the University of Greenwich.
- **Transfer** – A transfer is where you want to move your studies from the University of Greenwich to a programme at another university or college.

## INTERRUPTION OF STUDY

### What is interruption of study?

An interruption of study is the formal procedure which allows you to request a break from your studies for the remainder of the current academic year. You will normally be required to return to study at the beginning of the following academic year.

It may be appropriate for you to interrupt your studies for a period of time due to personal circumstances. Examples of where an interruption of study may be appropriate include, but are not limited to:

- Pregnancy or new parenthood, where this cannot be otherwise managed through the University's [pregnancy and maternity policy](#)
- Medical or health reasons
- Bereavement
- Work
- Family commitments
- Financial commitments

If you need to take time away from your studies for personal reasons, we will normally suspend your fee liability and temporarily pause our consideration of your results and academic progress. If you are on an apprenticeship programme it is important that you discuss the return date with your employer and programme lead.

When considering interrupting from your studies, you should note that where there remain any unresolved cases of investigation against you, the case will be re-opened and the investigation concluded upon your return which may have an impact on your continued registration on the programme.

## How do I interrupt my studies?

It is very important that you do more than simply stop attending. To request to interrupt from your studies, you should complete the appropriate process:

- If you are studying at one of the main campuses (Greenwich, Medway, Avery Hill) you will need to complete the [online interruption of studies request form](#)
- If you are studying at a Partner College/Network College/Collaborative partner college you will need to use the [appropriate interruption of study form](#) for your circumstances

Once the request is received the Retention and Success Officer for your Faculty (or someone from your partner institution) will contact you to discuss the additional factors associated to the decision to interrupt.

## Information for International Students

If you are an international student studying on a student visa then an interruption of your studies has serious implications for your immigration status. You are not permitted to remain in the UK if you are no longer studying and so interrupting will mean you should return home and only return when you are due to start your studies again.

If you do interrupt your studies the University is required to inform the Home Office and your visa to study in the UK will be cancelled.

You are strongly recommended to discuss your circumstances with the International Office before making a decision.

## Information for Higher and Degree Apprentices

### **Please note that employers may use terminology 'pause' instead of 'interruption'**

If you are registered as a learner on a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship programme then you will need to discuss the decision to interrupt with your employer and your programme lead as early as possible. Interrupting from your studies may impact your ability to complete the programme, end point assessment and your funding eligibility.

The Education Skills & Funding Agency (ESFA) will not repeat funding. If it is decided that you return to repeat teaching/assessment then you must discuss this with your employer and programme lead prior to agreeing your return date. This may have direct funding implications on the employer.

If you fail to return to your studies as expected, and do not speak to us to discuss this, then you may be withdrawn from your programme. If you wish to discuss extending your period of interruption then you should speak to your employer and programme lead as soon as possible. If you fail to request and have approved an extension to your return date and fail to re-register then you will be withdrawn from the University.

## Important information

### Timings and deadlines

A request to interrupt your studies must take place no later than 7 months after the start of your academic session. Interruptions will not normally be granted just before the start of the main assessment/examinations period as a way of avoiding (or postponing) possible failure in a module(s), or where the request is made once the Progression and Awards Board (PAB) has met. You must use the [Extenuating Circumstances](#) process if you are unable to undertake your assessment(s) by the deadline.

The university requires all students to complete their programme within a set period from initial registration. External bodies or individual programme specifications may also impose other timeframes which you should be aware of and consider when making a request to interrupt. Depending on the length of your programme and how long you have been studying, we may not be able to allow you to interrupt your studies if it would then be impossible for you to complete your studies within the appropriate timeframe. If this is the case, then we will fully explain to you the reasons and provide you with other alternatives.

A period of interruption will normally run for the remainder of the academic year within which the request is made. You will normally be expected to return to your studies at the start of the next academic year for your programme. Only in exceptional circumstances will we consider requests for an interruption of studies in two consecutive years.

### Funding and student finance (not relevant to Apprentices)

- Undergraduate students:

If you interrupt your studies and return to repeat module(s) then you will be charged the appropriate tuition fee for the repeat period of study.

When you interrupt your studies, we will send notification to your funding provider (e.g. Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or Student Awards Agency Scotland), notifying them of your last date of attendance. Normally, all funding is suspended from that date.

When you return to your studies, we will notify your funding provider that you have returned.

You are advised to speak to our [Student Finance Team](#) to understand how this will impact you.

You should also contact your funding body directly to find out how your interruption will be managed, particularly if your interruption of study is due to health reasons or your interruption results in financial hardship as you may be entitled to an amount of additional funding.

- Postgraduate taught students:

If you are receiving a Postgraduate Master's Loan from Student Finance and take an interruption of study, no further loan payments will be given to you during your period of interruption.

If you resume your studies from the point you left in the previous academic year, your funding will re-start and you will have your remaining entitlement intact. You cannot receive Postgraduate Master's Loan or Postgraduate Doctoral Loan funding for any repeat periods of study.

#### Access to facilities and contact whilst interrupted

During your period of interruption, your access to Moodle will be suspended as you will not be expected to engage with your studies at this time. You will still be able to access the support services of the University and access the library. You should not engage with your programme, attend classes, submit assessments, attend placement(s) or conduct research during any period of interruption. Upon your return to study your access to Moodle will be reinstated and access re-opened.

You may find it helpful to stay in contact during your interruption with an appropriate person in your school such as your Retention and Success Officer (RSO) and/or a member of the Student Engagement Team. This is not compulsory but we recommend you keep in touch with us as this can help you settle in more quickly when you return.

In order to support your return to studies, we will contact you prior to your return date to discuss the practical details and to put in place any support services you may need.

#### Accommodation and council tax (not relevant to Apprentices)

The implications of your interruption will depend on your accommodation provider and your immigration status.

- **University student accommodation:**

If you are in university student accommodation and proceed with an interruption then you will not be permitted to live in Halls of Residence. To be released from your contract you must complete the Leaving Early request form via the link in the Amendments and Cancellations section of the Accommodation Portal. You will be given a 28-day notice period from the date the form is completed providing you are formally withdrawn or interrupted from study. You will be liable for the fees on the room for the full 28 days and must arrange to move out no later than your licence end date. If you have any questions then please contact your campus Accommodation Service team via the links at the bottom of the [accommodation web page](#). Please note that if you do not complete the form and/or notify the Accommodation Service you have vacated halls, you may remain liable for the fees on the room for the duration of the licence period. If you need any advice or guidance in regard to alternative housing options, please contact the Accommodation Service team.

- **Private accommodation:**

If you live in private accommodation, it is unlikely there will be an obligation for you to leave following a change to your student status unless you are an international student studying on a student visa. However, you may choose to or be required to return home in which case you must consider the terms of your tenancy agreement and what this means for you. If you decide to stay in your private accommodation, it is important to note that as you are no longer a full-time student, you may be required to pay Council Tax.

If you are on a student visa, you will not be able to remain in the UK during the period of your interruption and as such you will need to consider the terms of your tenancy agreement and what this means for you.

### Returning to your studies

Prior to returning to your studies we will notify you of the start of term. You will need to confirm your intention to return and you will need to re-register and pay any fees due within the prescribed deadline.

If you fail to return to your studies as expected, and do not speak to us to discuss this, then you may be withdrawn from your programme. If you wish to discuss extending your period of interruption then you should notify the Retention and Success Officer (RSO) in your Faculty as soon as possible. If you fail to request and have approved an extension to your return date and fail to re-register then you will be withdrawn from the University.

If you are an international student and require a student visa, please note that the process will take much longer. You will need to make a new student visa application when you are ready to re-commence your studies. You should ask us for a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) before you apply for a new student visa by contacting the [International Student Advice](#) team.

You will join a new cohort when you restart your studies and the regulations applying to that cohort will also apply to you. If the programme content or structure has changed, you will be required to follow the new arrangements.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDIES**

### **What is withdrawal from study?**

If there are circumstances significantly impacting your ability to continue studying on your current programme, then it may be appropriate for you to notify the University that you wish to withdraw from your programme. The decision to withdraw is final and once completed, you cannot be reinstated. Should you wish to return to undertake a programme of study then you will be required to complete the appropriate admissions process.

Your reasons for considering withdrawal may be because a break from your studies will not be sufficient because you cannot commit to return in the following academic year.

Where there are any unresolved cases of investigation against you, we may need to share this information with any other University you later chose to study with.

### **How do I withdraw from my studies?**

To request to withdraw from your studies, you should complete the appropriate process:

- If you are studying at one of the main campuses (Greenwich, Medway, Avery Hill) you will need to complete the online [withdrawal request form](#)
- If you are studying at a Partner College/Network College/Collaborative partner college you will need to use the appropriate [withdrawal form](#) for your circumstances

Once the request is received the Retention and Success Officer for your Faculty (or someone from your partner institution) will contact you to discuss the additional factors associated with your decision to withdraw.

Once you have withdrawn, you will no longer be considered a student. If you decide you would like to return to your programme, you must apply to re-join within two years from your date of withdrawal – this is at the discretion of the university, it is not automatic. If it is more than two years after the date of withdrawal, you will not be permitted to return to your original programme but you may follow the admissions process for any alternative programme of choice.

### **Information for International Students**

If you are an international student with a student visa then a withdrawal of your studies has serious implications for your immigration status. You are not permitted to remain in the UK if you are no longer studying.

If you do withdraw from your studies the University is required to inform the Home Office and your visa to study in the UK will be cancelled.

You are strongly recommended to discuss your circumstances with the International Advice Team before making a decision.

### **Information for Higher and Degree Apprentices**

If you are registered as a learner on a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship programme then you will need to discuss the decision to withdraw with your employer and your programme lead as early as possible. Withdrawing from your studies may impact your ability to continue your employment.

### **Important information**

#### Fee liability (not relevant to Apprentices)

Depending on when you withdraw, you may still be liable to pay a portion of your tuition fees.

For information regarding any costs you may incur relating to your fees should you chose to withdraw, then please refer to the Charging & Refund Policy which can be found [here](#).

#### Accommodation and council tax

The implications of your withdrawal will depend on your accommodation provider and your immigration status.

If you withdraw from your studies you are not permitted to live in Halls of Residence. To be released from your contract you must complete the Leaving Early request form via the link in the Amendments and Cancellations section of the Accommodation Portal. You will be given a 28-day notice period from the date the form is completed providing you are formally withdrawn or interrupted from study. You will be liable for the fees on the room for the full 28 days and must arrange to move out no later than your licence end date. If you have any questions then please contact your campus Accommodation Service team via the links at the bottom of the [accommodation web page](#).

Please note that if you do not complete the form and/or notify the Accommodation Service you have vacated halls, you may remain liable for the fees on the room for the duration of the licence period. If you need any advice or guidance in regard to alternative housing options, please contact the Accommodation Service team.

If you live in private accommodation, it is unlikely there will be an obligation for you to leave following a change to your student status unless you are an international student studying on a student visa. However, you may choose to leave and return home, in which case, you must consider the terms of your tenancy agreement and what this means for you. If you decide to stay in your private accommodation, it is important to note that as you are no longer a full-time student, you may be required to pay Council Tax.

### Exit awards and credit gained

If you withdraw, you will normally be entitled to have any full completed modules and associated credit that you completed prior to your withdrawal awarded to you at the next available Progression and Award Board (PAB) for your programme. Where your total credit achieved meets the requirements for an exit award, you will be awarded this at the next available PAB. We will not take partially completed modules to a PAB for the award of credit. Only those modules fully completed prior to withdrawal will be considered.

## **TRANSFERRING YOUR STUDIES**

### **What is transferring?**

Transferring means you are considering moving to another University. You may wish to take credit you have gained with us to another University or you may wish to transfer elsewhere to begin a new course.

Changing university can be a big decision, which you should consider carefully. Having considered your options, if transferring to another University is the right decision for you, you will need to apply to your chosen University and follow their admissions procedures. We are unable to complete any applications for you or advise on the procedures of another institution.

Transferring to a new University may affect how your final award is classified so you need to check your new University's academic regulations. It is also unlikely that you will be able to transfer and start your new programme at your new university part way through an academic year and you may find that you will need to wait until the start of the next academic year to start your new programme.

### **How do I transfer my studies?**

If you do decide to transfer to another university, you will need to permanently withdraw from the University of Greenwich by completing the appropriate process:

- If you are studying at one of the main campuses (Greenwich, Medway, Avery Hill) you will need to complete the online [withdrawal request form](#)
- If you are studying at a Partner College/Network College/Collaborative partner college you will need to use the appropriate [withdrawal form](#) for your circumstances

Once the request is received the Retention and Success Officer for your Faculty (or someone from your partner institution) will contact you to discuss the additional factors associated with your decision to transfer your studies.

### **Information for International students**

If you are an international student with a student visa and you are transferring your studies to another University, you will need to notify us of your intention to withdraw from your current programme of study.

As you will be withdrawing from your studies with the University of Greenwich it will mean that you are not permitted to remain in the UK.

You should discuss your intention to transfer with the International Student Advice Team who can advise you on how to make a new application for leave.

### **Information for Higher and Degree Apprentices**

If you are an apprentice you should speak to your employer and programme lead as soon as possible, there may be funding implications. You may wish to take credit you have gained with us to another University or you may wish to transfer elsewhere to begin a new course.

### **Important information**

#### Fee liability (not relevant to Apprentices)

You should contact Student Finance to discuss your fee liability. It is also important that you understand what the fee charge will be at your new University before you transfer. Your eligibility and entitlement for future funding may be affected if the new course has a different duration to your current course or if you have to repeat years.

#### Accommodation and council tax

The implications of your withdrawal will depend on your accommodation provider and your immigration status.

If you withdraw from your studies you are not permitted to live in Halls of Residence. To be released from your contract you must complete the Leaving Early request form via the link in the Amendments and Cancellations section of the Accommodation Portal. You will be given a 28-day notice period from the date the form is completed providing you are formally withdrawn or interrupted from study. You will be liable for the fees on the room for the full 28 days and must arrange to move out no later than your licence end date. If you have any questions then please contact your campus Accommodation Service team via the links at the bottom of the [accommodation web page](#).

Please note that if you do not complete the form and/or notify the Accommodation Service you have vacated halls, you may remain liable for the fees on the room for the duration of the licence period. If you need any advice or guidance in regard to alternative housing options, please contact the Accommodation Service team.

If you live in private accommodation, it is unlikely there will be an obligation for you to leave following a change to your student status unless you are an international student studying on a student visa. However, you may choose to

leave and return home, in which case, you must consider the terms of your tenancy agreement and what this means for you. If you decide to stay in your private accommodation, it is important to note that as you are no longer a full-time student, you may be required to pay Council Tax.

#### Exit awards and credit gained

If you decide to transfer out of the University of Greenwich then you will normally be entitled to have any full completed modules and associated credit that you completed prior to your transfer awarded to you at the next available Progression and Award Board (PAB) for your programme. Where your total credit achieved meets the requirements for an exit award, you will be awarded this at the next available PAB. If you are eligible for an exit award, you may be able to use this to transfer into a higher level of a degree programme as part of the Recognition of Prior Learning process. Please note that this is not always possible and you should check with the specific institution that you wish to transfer to.

### **ADVICE AND SUPPORT**

Free independent advice and advocacy is available from the University of Greenwich Students' Union:

Email: [suadvice@gre.ac.uk](mailto:suadvice@gre.ac.uk)

Web: [www.greenwichsu.co.uk/advice](http://www.greenwichsu.co.uk/advice)

Online contact form: [www.greenwichsu.co.uk/advice/triageform](http://www.greenwichsu.co.uk/advice/triageform)

For students at Medway, please visit: [www.greenwichsu.co.uk/medway/advice](http://www.greenwichsu.co.uk/medway/advice)