

The funding implications of
**Suspending, Leaving,
Changing or Repeating**
your course

Student Funding Team

Student Hub, RM050

Tel: 023 8201 5200

Email: student.funding@solent.ac.uk

Last updated: Aug 2021

Review date: Aug 2022

Contents	Page
Previous Study	3
What does it mean to ‘withdraw’ or ‘suspend’?	3-4
Can I get funding whilst I’m suspended?	4-5
Overpayments due to suspending	5
I’m suspending my studies due to personal issues (<i>Compelling Personal Reasons</i>)	6
Can I claim benefits whilst suspended?	6
Do I still have to pay my tuition fees?	7-8
What funding can I get if I change or repeat my course?	8-9
Full-time study on a ‘part-time basis’	9
Academic Progression	9
Useful contact details	10
Notes	

IMPORTANT

The moment you enrol onto a higher education course Student Finance will assess you as using one year of your funding entitlement, even if you leave the next day. **Therefore, it is essential you choose the right course for you before you enrol.**

Previous study

If you have previously started a course in Higher Education (including overseas) whether funded or not, and you did **not** finish the course/or gain your qualification, this *could* be taken into account and will reduce your funding entitlement for a new course. However, you could still be eligible for *some* funding.

If you already have a degree qualification from a UK or overseas Institution, you are **unlikely** to get any funding for your new degree course. Please always check with a Student Funding Adviser before you start another course in Higher Education.

What does it mean to 'withdraw' or 'suspend'?

WITHDRAWING (leaving) from your course - means all the following:

- You have permanently ceased your studies at Solent University.
- You have left higher education (HE) and are no longer eligible for student funding.
- You become liable to repay your student loans and pay council tax.
- You can work or claim state benefits.
- If you return to university later, you will be assessed under any new funding regulations and your funding entitlement may be reduced.
- If you are an EU student who wishes to leave and later return to a new course from 2021 you will no longer be eligible for any UK funding. More information can be found on [our webpages](#).

IMPORTANT

- Students wishing to withdraw from a course should seek guidance from their Course Leader, a tutor, or speak to someone in the Student Hub.
- If you have made a final decision to withdraw, you must inform the Student Hub (student.hub@solent.ac.uk) as soon as possible. Failure to do so will mean you remain liable for your full fees.
- If you applied for a tuition fee loan, the relevant percentage of this will still be paid to the University.
- Students should also contact a Student Funding Adviser to discuss the funding implications of withdrawing.
- Contact the accommodation office if you are in university halls. You may still be liable for accommodation costs if you are in rented housing.

SUSPENDING - means all the following:

- A suspension is regarded as a temporary break in study, with the intention being to return to study the following academic year.
- You have **not** left university and are still classed as a student.
- You cannot claim benefits (*unless you are a lone parent or claim a disability benefit*)
- If you are full time you continue to be exempt from paying council tax.
- If you are an EU student who suspends and later returns to the same course after 2021, you may continue to be eligible for UK funding for that course provided you have settled or pre-settled status.

You must always inform the university (via the Student Hub) of your wish to suspend or withdraw from your course.

Can I get funding whilst I'm suspended?

When you suspend your studies your funding payments should stop. There is no automatic entitlement to student funds during a period of suspension. If you continue to receive any payments after your suspension date you could have an overpayment which would be deducted from your funding the following year (unless you have suspended due to Compelling Personal Reasons (CPR)). See our leaflet on '[Applying for Compelling Personal Reasons](#)'.

However, in some *exceptional* cases, where this causes financial hardship, you can write to Student Finance England (SFE) to request they consider ‘Funding through a period of suspension’. This is known as ‘*discretionary payment*’. You may need to fill in a ‘*financial hardship form*’ and return it to SFE (other funding bodies may have their own form).

Please see our leaflet on ‘*Applying for Compelling Personal Reasons and discretionary payments*’ for what evidence is needed and how to prepare your application.

Overpayments due to suspending

If you continue to receive any funding payments after your suspension date you could have an overpayment and will have to repay the money to the Student Loans Company. Students will receive a letter to say they have been overpaid and can repay immediately if they wish to do so.

The Student Loans Company may add any new overpayments to your overall student debt if you have finished university or they may deduct it from your next year’s funding if you are continuing.

If you suspend due to CPR, and you get the ‘60 days’ continuous funding, (see section ‘*I’m suspending my studies due to ‘compelling personal reasons*’) any payments received *after* the 60 days will have to be repaid - unless you are successful for a ‘discretionary payment’.

Don’t delay in dealing with any overpayments and if you are worried get advice from a Student Funding Adviser at the university as soon as possible. You should also contact the Student Loans Company to discuss any overpayments.

I'm suspending my studies due to personal issues (Compelling Personal Reasons*)

Student Finance can use discretion to extend your funding entitlement should you have 'compelling personal reasons' (CPR*) for repeating a period of study. This discretion can be applied for each occasion you are unable to complete a year due to CPR.

Common reasons for applying for an extra year include:

- mental health
- illness
- bereavement
- pregnancy
- a caring responsibility

For more information on claiming CPR please read our leaflet '[Applying for Compelling Personal Reasons and Discretionary payments](#)'.

You must always inform the university (via the student.hub@solent.ac.uk) of your wish to suspend and state on the suspension form it is for 'personal or medical/health' reasons. If you do this you should continue to get your student funding for *up to 60 days* from the date you suspended and you may also be able apply to the **university's Support Grant**.

Can I claim benefits whilst suspended?

Students who suspend their studies due to illness or caring responsibilities for more than 28 weeks and are required to wait until they re-join their course, may be able to claim Universal Credit: www.gov.uk/universal-credit.

If your local authority hasn't switched over to universal credit yet, you can try and claim the individual benefits as before. Benefits can only be claimed from when you recover from illness or your caring duties end and until the day before you re-join your course, but not exceeding one year.

Universal Credit (or other benefits) can only be paid subject to you satisfying the normal criteria for receipt of that benefit. If you are a student who is eligible to claim benefits whilst studying, such as lone parents or someone with a disability or ongoing ill-health, your claim should continue during your period of suspension.

Further information is available from your [local Job Centre Plus](#) or the benefits office.

Do I still have to pay my tuition fees?

This depends on when you leave (withdraw) or suspend from your course. If you:

- Attend a course lasting less than one academic year, payment must be paid in full prior to registration on the course. You remain liable for the full fee regardless of the date of withdrawal.
- If you attend a course that lasts *at least* one academic year you will remain liable for the full tuition fees except where:
 - New students are entitled to withdraw from their course within 14 calendar days of the course start date without charge.
 - *Before* you start your course, you may get a full refund of fees - providing that prior to the commencement of the course, written notification of withdrawal has been received by the University

If you applied for a tuition fee loan, the relevant percentage of this will still be paid to the University if you suspend or leave:

- Within the first term you will be charged 25% of fees
- During the second (spring) term you will be charged 50% of fees
- During the third (summer) term you will be charged full fees.

Full details of the tuition fees are at:

www.solent.ac.uk/finance/tuition-fees

Tuition fees charged at the time of suspension are calculated in line with the withdrawal charges.

Returning onto the same course will result in tuition fees being calculated on a pro-rata basis. Returning to an alternative course (subject to approval) would result in the total tuition fee being charged for that year of study.

IMPORTANT

If you transfer/change course to a *different* university *within the same academic year*, a percentage of your tuition fee loan could stay with your original university to pay for the term(s) you started in. The remaining loan will be remitted to the institution you are transferring to.

If you transfer to another university and fees are paid by another method other than a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company (SLC), Solent University will treat this as a withdrawal, and any fees owing will be calculated in accordance with the withdrawals and suspensions policy (full details are at: www.solent.ac.uk/finance/tuition-fees)

What funding can I get if I change or repeat my course?

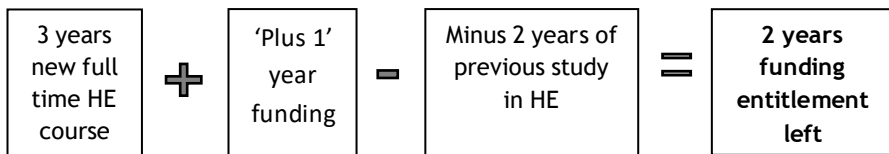
Funding is usually available to cover the length of your current course 'plus' one year. For example, if you do a three-year degree course you can have up to four years funding entitlement (3 '+1').

If you are on a foundation year of a degree and it is directly linked, then this becomes five years (4'+1') as the foundation year is included in the calculation.

If you have to repeat a year (either first, second or final) of a course or have repeat units you *may* receive funding for that 'extra year' of study (the 'plus one'). You can only use this 'plus one' **once** during your studies unless you have a case for CPR*.

Student Finance will want to check any previous study against your current funding entitlement.

Therefore, if you return to university to do a new **three**-year course and have already done **two** years previously at university.....anywhere in the world, you would only get:



The 2 years entitlement would only be for your 2nd and 3rd year of the course. So, in **year 1** of your new course **you** would have to pay your own tuition fees (no fee loan) but you would still be entitled to:

- ✓ A maintenance loan (including the income-assessed element)
- ✓ Supplementary grants i.e. if you have dependents

Full-time study on a 'part-time basis'

If you are studying a year of your course split over two years e.g. your final year (usually due to personal/medical reasons) you are still eligible for funding as a **full-time student** provided you haven't used up all your funding entitlement. If you had to ever repeat or suspend etc. due to personal reasons you could have a case for CPR. You should be assessed as a full-time student by Student Finance (but studying on a 'part time' basis). **You should not be assessed as a part time student.** You **must** be studying for at least ten weeks in order to still receive your student funding.

Academic Progression

You must always seek advice if you have any issues with your academic progression. This is essential if you have repeat units. For information and advice on your academic position please go to the Student Hub, in RM050 or email student.hub@solent.ac.uk .

Always get advice before you make any decision that could affect your future funding / study.

Useful contact details

- **The Student Funding Team;**
Tel: 023 82 01 5200
Email: student.funding@solent.ac.uk
Visit: The Student Hub, RM050
- **The Income Team;** Tel: 023 8201 3970
Email: income.team@solent.ac.uk
- **The Student Hub, RM050;**
Tel: 023 8201 5200
Email: student.hub@solent.ac.uk
For suspension/withdrawal forms/academic advice
- **Solent Futures - to help with career options**
Tel: 023 8201 3883
Email: solent.futures@solent.ac.uk or Careers@solent.ac.uk
Visit: RM001, Ground Floor Reginald Mitchell building (*next to the shop*).
- **The Accommodation Office (if in halls)**
Tel: 023 8201 5040
Email: accommodation@solent.ac.uk

Student funding bodies:

- **Student Finance England (SFE);**
Tel: 0300 100 0607
www.gov.uk/studentfinance
- **Scotland (SAAS),**
www.saas.gov.uk/,
Tel: 0300 555 0505
- **Student Finance Wales (SFW),**
www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/,
Tel: 0300 200 4050
- **Student Finance N. Ireland (SFNi),**
www.studentfinanceni.co.uk/,
Tel: 0300 100 0077

NOTES