



# Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Student Guidance

**Scope:**

All taught programmes leading to an award of City St George's University London.

**Senate Regulations:**

Part of Senate Regulation 19 - Assessment Regulations

**Summary:**

To support students in requesting an interruption of studies or withdrawal from studies in line with the University's Assessment Regulations.

**Date approved/re-approved:**

September 2022

**Date for review:**

2025

**Effective from:**

September 2022

**To be read in conjunction with:**

- Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Policy
- INT1, INT2 & INT3 form
- Any relevant School/PSRB guidance

**Equality and Diversity Statement**

City St George's, University of London is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all its activities, processes, and culture, under its Public Sector Equality Duties and the Equality Act 2010. This includes promoting equality and diversity for all, irrespective of any protected characteristic, working pattern, family circumstance, socio-economic background, political belief or other irrelevant distinction.

Where relevant to the policy, decision-making panels will ensure a reasonable gender balance (with at least one man and one woman) and will actively consider representation of other protected groups.

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## 1. Student Guidance

From time to time you may experience personal difficulties that affect your studies. The University has a range of student services available to support you throughout your time at City St George's and you can seek support from your Personal Tutor or contact one of our specialist services directly for advice.

Our advisers can provide you with guidance on financial, health, disability and other matters, as well as access to student counselling and mental health support. You can find details of the services available and how to contact them through the [Student Hub](#).

If your preparation for an assessment or performance during the assessment itself has been affected by ill-health, bereavement, or other personal issues which were unexpected and out of your control, you can submit an extenuating circumstances application (no later than seven calendar days after the assessment). If your application is accepted you may be able to have a further attempt at the assessment. Details of how to make an application can be found on the [Student Hub](#).

If your difficulties continue to affect your ability to study, you may decide that the best option is to have a break, or interrupt your studies, or in exceptional cases to withdraw from your programme of study.

Interruption – an interruption of study is where you take a break from your current programme of study with a view to returning in the near future.

Withdrawal – a withdrawal is where you decide to leave your current programme of study and are therefore no longer a student of City St George's, University of London.

### 1.1. Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal – the first steps

If you are experiencing long-term personal, financial or health problems, and this directly affects your ability to study, the University will work with you to review and assess your situation. You should make an appointment with your Programme Director/Course Director, Personal Tutor or one of our support advisors to discuss your personal circumstances or concerns.

You can find information about the different support services available on the [Student Hub](#).

There are also a number of policies in place to ensure you receive the support you need:

- Significant, short-term, unforeseen adverse circumstances are covered by the Extenuating Circumstances Policy.
- Long-term, chronic conditions and disabilities are covered by the Reasonable Adjustments, Fitness to Study, and/or Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Policies.

- Support for students as parents is covered by the Maternity, Paternity Adoption and Student Parent Guidance.

If you notify members of University staff about your issues, they will treat your personal information in accordance with the University's confidentiality policies. Where appropriate, they will do their best to direct you to the relevant team to discuss any concerns further. In some cases the University may make a recommendation to you to initiate an interruption in your studies. This is so that you can have some time to deal with the issues you are experiencing and can return to complete your studies once they have improved.

If there are circumstances significantly impacting your ability to continue studying on your current programme, and an interruption of studies is not appropriate, then you may choose to notify the University that you wish to withdraw from your programme. This is different to being withdrawn from your programme due to academic failure or misconduct, for example, and is an active choice being made by you. The decision to withdraw is final and once completed, you are no longer considered a student of the University. You are strongly advised to discuss this with the University in advance as there may be other options and support available.

If you are an international student, you should speak to the International Student Advice Team, located in the Student Centre, before applying for an interruption or choosing to withdraw. The Team will advise you on the implications on your Student Visa.

## **1.2. Notifying the University**

If you decide that you wish to interrupt your studies, you will need to seek permission from the School you are enrolled in. If you decide that you wish to withdraw from your programme of study, you will need to have this confirmed by the School you are enrolled in (so that our systems can be correctly updated for you). You should arrange a meeting with your Programme/Course Director and/or Personal Tutor to discuss your reasons for requesting to interrupt your current studies, or withdraw from your programme, whether this is the best option for you, and if interrupting, when would be the best time to return. You should complete your application to interrupt your studies or withdraw and collect the relevant supporting evidence before the final assessment period of term.

Interruption of Studies *only*:

At the meeting with your Programme/Course Director and/or Personal Tutor, and if you decide that an interruption is the best way forward, you should begin to draft and agree a 'return to studies action plan' found in the INT1 form. The action plan will help you identify which student support services should be consulted to help you resolve your circumstances and how you should manage your return to the University following the interruption period. The 'return to studies action plan' will be included on the Interruption of Studies Form (INT1) that you will complete after this initial meeting and it will be used again when you return to studies. Please note that there is a specific 'INT1 (MBBS Students only)' form for Medicine students.

If you interrupt your studies after teaching has been completed but before the final assessment period of the term, you could apply to attempt your assessment(s) during the period of interruption. This will only be possible when you and your Programme/ Course Director agree the interruption will not affect your academic performance and all assessments must be attempted for those modules.

Once you have met with your Programme/Course Director/Personal Tutor and other relevant student support services, you will need to complete the [Interruption of Studies Form \(INT1\)](#) to initiate the formal process. MBBS students should complete the [Interruption of Studies Form \(INT1 - MBBS Students Only\)](#).

The fully completed form should be signed by you and the Programme Director or their Deputy before you submit it to the Course Office. If you need help with completing the sections on assessment and modules for next term/year, please contact your Course Officer or Programme /Course Director. If you are on an apprenticeship programmes, you will also need to notify the Apprenticeship Hub [apprenticeships@citystgeorges.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@citystgeorges.ac.uk) as to not do so may impact upon future funding for your programme.

Please note that whilst the Programme/ Course Director may have decided to endorse your application, the final decision will be taken by the University.

You will normally be informed of the outcome of your interruption request within one week of submitting the completed Interruption of Studies Form to the Course Office.

The Course Officer will log the details provided in your Interruption of Studies Form in compliance with the University's Data Protection Policy and the Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Staff Guidance notes.

Withdrawal from Studies *only*:

At the meeting with your Programme/Course Director you will discuss the implications of withdrawing, including how it may impact you returning to study in the future (at City St George's or elsewhere). It may also be decided, depending on your circumstance, that an interruption would be more appropriate.

You should ensure that you provide the School with the information it needs to process your withdrawal request. Whilst the School will update you, you should ensure that your request has been formally approved. Failure to formally withdraw from your Programme will mean that later assessments will be recorded as not attempted and therefore failed. This may negatively impact upon your ability to return to study at a later date.

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 Assessment Board for your programme. Where you meet the requirements for an exit award (see your programme specification), you will be awarded this at the next available Assessment Board.

Once your Programme /Course Director and other relevant student support services have confirmed that withdrawing from your studies is the best way forward, you will need to complete the [Withdrawal from Studies Form \(INT3\)](#) to initiate the formal process.

The fully completed form should be signed by you before you submit it to the Course Office. If you need help with completing the form, please contact your Course Officer or Programme /Course Director. If you are on an apprenticeship programmes, you will also need to notify the Apprenticeship Hub [apprenticeships@citystgeorges.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@citystgeorges.ac.uk).

You will normally be informed of the outcome of your interruption request within one week of submitting the completed Withdrawal from Studies Form to the Course Office.

The Course Officer will log the details provided in your Withdrawal from Studies Form in compliance with the University's Data Protection Policy and the Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Staff Guidance notes.

### **1.3. Returning from an interruption of studies**

You will be required to complete the [Return to Studies \(INT2\) Form](#) at least six weeks before you are due to return to studies.

It is important that you complete and return this form because the information you provide will enable the University to complete the appropriate processes in preparation for your return to studies. You should also ensure that your contact details remain up to date and that the University is notified of any change in your circumstances as soon as possible.

When you are due to return to studies as outlined in the approved agreement with your Programme /Course Director and approval at School level, your return will normally be at the beginning of an academic term. This is so that you do not miss any taught sessions. It may be possible for you to return to studies mid-term but only where you have resit assessment(s) without attendance to complete and if there is sufficient time for the resit assessment(s) to be completed.

The University will work with you to make appropriate arrangements for your return to studies. This will include a re-induction meeting with your Programme/ Course Director and may include attending sessions to update your knowledge, including to tell you about any changes to the programme and how this might affect you, relevant changes to the University or School structures and any other relevant changes that may impact on your studies. Depending on the extent of change, you may need to return on a 'Special Scheme of Studies' to complete your programme.

If you interrupt your studies for health reasons, you may be required to provide a statement of wellbeing issued by the relevant health practitioner and meet with a member of student support staff before resuming your programme.

If you have not completed the INT2 form three weeks prior to your agreed return date, you will normally be sent a second reminder to complete the form.

If you have not returned the completed form and responded to the reminders from the University before the agreed return date, you will be withdrawn from the programme of study.

#### **1.4. Returning from a withdrawal from studies**

The decision to withdraw is final and once completed, you cannot be automatically reinstated onto your programme of study. Should you wish to return at a later date, then you will be required to complete the appropriate admissions process at the time and subject to any provisions in the University's Assessment Regulations (there may be allowance for you to return and 'top up' to a higher award, for example). Your Course Office can advise more.

Alternatively, you may be able to use any awarded credit and/or exit award to transfer into a higher level of a degree programme at another university as part of its 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.

#### **1.5. Students on Apprenticeship Programmes**

If you are registered on a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship programme, and wish to interrupt, you will need to additionally apply for a Break in Learning to comply with Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rules. You will need to discuss the decision to interrupt with your employer and your Programme Director and/or Personal Tutor as early as possible. Interrupting from your studies may impact your ability to complete the programme, end point assessment and your funding eligibility.

If you are registered on a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship programme, and wish to withdraw, you will need to discuss the decision to withdraw with your employer and Programme Director/Personal Tutor as early as possible. Withdrawing from your studies may impact your ability to continue your employment.

## **2. Financial implications**

### **2.1. Funding**

Where you have concerns about financial support during your Interruption of Studies period, or should you choose to withdraw, you should contact the Student Funding Team in the Student Centre for information about any help you may be eligible to receive. The Students' Union also offers Union Support Services, who may be able to offer some advice and guidance.

### **2.2. Fees and Refunds**

If your tuition fees are paid by the Student Loan Company (SLC) or any other means such as the US Financial Aid scheme, the paying authority must be informed about your

interruption of studies or withdrawal. If you are an SLC student, you are able to notify the 'change in circumstances' through your online account normally before the start of the academic year. During the year, the University will notify the relevant authority of the change. This notification from the University will be generated by Student and Academic Services once the interruption of studies or withdrawal commences.

Please note that the University's Student Records Team only notify the Student Loans Company/Student Finance England when an NTW (Notification of Transfer or Withdrawal) has been processed and submitted by the School. The University does not routinely notify other funding authorities.

You should expect your funding to be suspended during an interruption of studies and it will cease should you withdraw. Please contact the [University's Finance Office](#) for more details.

Before resuming your studies, you should make contact with your paying authority to notify them that you are ready to return. This should be done well in advance of your return so that the payment is issued to you before your return to the University.

Your tuition fee may change when you resume your studies. For more information, please contact your Course Officer who will ask the Finance Team on your behalf.

You can find details on paying fees and refunds on [Finance webpages](#).

### **2.3. Bursaries and Scholarships**

If you are in receipt of a bursary or scholarship, please contact your bursary or scholarship provider to discuss the implications of your interruption of studies or withdrawal. Your award letter should include details of how to make contact. If you need assistance, please ask at the Student Centre for advice.

### **2.4. Maintenance Grants and Maintenance Loans**

During a period of interruption and after a withdrawal, you will not normally receive any maintenance grant or loans. However, in some cases, there may be an exception applied. For example, a health related interruption may entitle you to continue to receive the grant or loan.

At the time of interruption or withdrawal, you might find yourself in a situation where your grant or loan has been overpaid. This may occur:

- If the interruption of studies occurs part way through the term, as maintenance grants and loans paid in advance for the entire term would have been overpaid.
- If the interruption of studies is backdated, due to exceptional circumstance, there will have been an overpayment as the maintenance grant or loan would have been paid for the time you are not in attendance
- If the interruption is close to the SLC payment date, you might still receive payment although the SLC was notified.

For health related interruption of studies, the SLC may agree to extend the Student Loans eligibility period. You should contact the SLC for details and advice.

## **2.5. Council Tax**

You should check with your local Council whether you will continue to be eligible for Council tax exemptions during your interruption. It is unlikely that you would be eligible after withdrawal but you should check with and update your local Council.

## **2.6. Student Accommodation**

Once your Course Officer confirms that your request, you will need to notify your accommodation provider about your interruption or withdrawal as soon as possible.

## **2.7. Student Oyster Cards**

As part of the University's terms and conditions with Transport for London (TfL), if you are on an interruption or choose to withdraw, we must advise TfL about this. This may mean that you may lose the right to use the Student Oyster Card during the period of interruption. For more information on your Student Oyster Card, please visit TfL website.

## **2.8. TOTUM and National Railcard**

During an interruption of studies or after withdrawal, you should not cancel your NUS Extra Card or National Railcard. You are able to use the cards as normal. However, applications for new cards may not be possible as confirmation of attendance may be requested from the University at the time of application. You will incur additional charges if you want a new card upon your return to study.

## **3. Immigration implications**

If you hold a Tier 4/Student Visa there will be implications for your visa if you wish to interrupt or withdraw from your studies.

### **3.1. Tier 4/Student Visa implications during interruption of studies**

If you hold a City St George's, University of London Tier 4/Student Visa and you interrupt your studies, the University will be required to report this to UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) which will result in your visa being curtailed (cancelled). The report to the UKVI will be actioned by the Visa Compliance Team within 10 days of the interruption of studies being confirmed. When you wish to return to studies on a sponsored student visa, you will need to be issued with a new Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) and make a new Student Visa application before you can re-commence your studies.

If you are a Tier 4/Student Visa bearing student wishing to interrupt or are returning after an interruption, please contact the International Visa Advice Team ([visaadvice@citystgeorges.ac.uk](mailto:visaadvice@citystgeorges.ac.uk)) for further information and support.

### **3.2. Student Visa implications after withdrawing from studies**

If you hold a City St George's, University of London Tier 4/Student Visa and you withdraw from your studies, the University will be required to report this to UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) which will result in your visa being curtailed (cancelled). The report to the UKVI will be actioned by the Visa Compliance Team within 10 days of the withdrawal from studies being confirmed. If you wish to return to studies on a sponsored student visa, either at City St George's or elsewhere, you will need to be issued with a new CAS and make a new Student Visa application before you can re-commence your studies.

If you are a Tier 4/Student Visa bearing student wishing to withdraw from your studies, please contact the International Visa Advice Team ([visaadvice@citystgeorges.ac.uk](mailto:visaadvice@citystgeorges.ac.uk)) for further information and support.

## **4. Student support and services available to you during an approved interruption of studies**

The University understands that it is important that you are able to keep in contact with us during your interruption of studies. You will be able to have limited access to support and services to maintain contact and make preparations for your return as explained below:

### **4.1. School and Academic Staff**

During the interruption period, you will have limited contact with the School and staff members. This is so that you are able to focus on resolving the issues that have caused the interruption. Some students may be worried about keeping in touch- please discuss a plan with your Programme/Course Director on keeping in touch and the way this would work best for you both so that you can prepare for your return.

### **4.2. Library**

During your interruption of studies, your access to the University Library services will change to a non-student member. This will mean you will not have access to the library facilities. However, if you are completing an assessment whilst on an interruption of studies, you will be able to have full access for the relevant period.

### **4.3. IT Services**

Your IT Services should not normally cease during your period of interruption and you should continue to have access to Moodle and your University email. However, if you have difficulties in accessing one or more of the IT services, please contact the Information Services Team to get this resolved.

### **4.4. Support for students with a disability**

If you have disability needs, you can contact the Disability Team during your period of interruption to discuss matters you may need support with.

## Appendix 1 – Access to Student Support and Services

The following table highlights the type of access you may have to specific departments whilst you are away.

Access to	What you are entitled to during an interruption of studies
Academic staff	You can have limited access but only to make preparations for return to studies.
Accommodation	You will need to liaise with the accommodation provider about your rental agreement. If you need advice, you may contact the Accommodation Team.
University e-mail	Your e-mail account will remain 'live'. All students are reminded to access this account on a regular basis or set up auto-forwarding to a regularly used personal account.
Library	You can have external borrower status - further details can be obtained from library helpdesk. If you are completing assessments, you will have full online access.
Counselling, Disability Support, Careers and Employability Service & Multi-faith Chaplaincy	You can access these services for support and advice where relevant to your interruption and return to studies, provided you registered with the service prior to the interruption. If you have any other requests, the support available will depend on the department's capacity to fulfil additional requests.
Visa Advice Team	You can access support and advice. Please note that international students who have interrupted or suspended their studies are not normally entitled to remain in the country.
Course Office	You can contact your Course Officer in relation to suspension, return or transfer.
Student Centre	You can access the Centre for support and advice, including issues with tuition fees and Student Finance England.
Students' Union facilities	You can continue to join and be part of teams and societies.
Students' Union Advice Centre	You can access the Centre for support and advice.