

Interrupting your studies

How to apply for a break from your studies, and your rights during interruption

What is interruption of studies?

Interruption of studies ("interruption") is an authorised break from your studies for a significant period. Short periods of absence (for illness, for example) should be reported via e:Vision. See <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/learning-and-teaching/students/the-basics/absence> for the university's guidance on absence reporting.

Interruption was previously known as "intercalation" and you may still see/hear the term.

This guide sets out:

- when you might need to consider interruption
- factors to consider before deciding to interrupt
- how to apply to interrupt your studies
- your rights during interruption.

Why interrupt?

The main reasons you may want or need to interrupt are:

- ill health
- family or personal issues
- pregnancy/childbirth
- financial difficulties
- to re-sit assessments in order to progress in your course.

What should I think about before deciding to interrupt?

Money matters

- You will not usually be entitled to student finance while you are interrupting. If you have received a loan instalment covering a period of interruption you may have to pay it back.
- In exceptional circumstances you may be able to receive discretionary funding from SFE while you are interrupting.
- If you are planning to interrupt and repeat a year, check whether you will be eligible for SFE funding for the repeat year. **advice(su)** or Student Support Services can help with this.

- You will usually not be liable for any tuition fees if you interrupt before the end of October, and may only be liable for reduced fees if you interrupt during the year. You can check fee liability dates at: [http://www.uea.ac.uk/calendar/section3/regs\(gen\)/fees-and-charges](http://www.uea.ac.uk/calendar/section3/regs(gen)/fees-and-charges).
- Any university bursary you receive may be reduced by a proportion depending on how far through the year your interruption takes effect.
- Most students are not entitled to benefits during periods of interruption but if you have a disability and receive DLA or PIP, or have young children, the situation may be different.
- If you have interrupted for health reasons and you recover, you may be able to claim Universal Credit/Jobseeker's Allowance until you are able to return to study.
- Most interrupting students either work to support themselves or rely on family support – or a combination of the two.

If you are uncertain about the financial implications, arrange to see an **advice(su)** worker to discuss your options.

Housing issues

- If you live in university accommodation, you will normally be expected to move out.
- Have you signed a tenancy agreement for a house share? If so, you will probably be responsible for paying rent for the rest of the year, even if you plan not to stay in Norwich during the break. Get your tenancy checked by an **advice(su)** worker who can talk through your options, such as finding a replacement tenant, with you.

Academic rights

- You will not be allowed to attend lectures and seminars, but you will be allowed to use most library facilities.
- You will continue to have access to your university email account.
- You can keep in touch with your personal adviser but not receive tuition or academic help from them.
- If you need to do resits before your return, talk to your School about whether you will be given access to revision or other learning materials online before resits.
- If you are on a professional course with a time limit for completing your studies, check that your period of interruption won't cause problems with completing your course in time.

International students (Non-EU)

- Before deciding to interrupt, check whether it will affect your immigration status.

Other rights

While you are interrupting, you:

- cannot use the Sportspark as a student or compete and represent UEA until you have returned from interruption but you will be able to continue to take part in club training (providing you have paid for membership and SAM)
- may continue to use facilities such as the University Medical Service, counselling service, and the services provided by the Student Support Services, such as Learning Enhancement.
- can keep your children in the university nursery, but you will not be able to apply for help from the Nursery Hardship fund.

Interrupting students can also access **advice(su)**. If you are away from Norwich during your period of interruption, we offer advice by email, phone and Skype, and you can also find useful information on the advice and student rights pages at:

<https://www.uea.su/advice-housing/>

For UEA's guidance, see:

[Notice to Students interrupting their period of study](#)

How do I apply to interrupt?

If you think interruption is the best option for you, you should discuss it with your academic adviser and then go to your Hub who can get the ball rolling. When you have decided to apply to interrupt, you will need to apply for approval via the Extenuating Circumstances process and supply supporting evidence. For more information about the EC process, see: <https://www.uea.su/advice-housing/academicadvice/>.

You can talk over interruption with an **advice(su)** advice worker at any stage of the process, but it is essential to get the university's agreement.

Returning to study

When you are ready to return, you will need to complete a return to study questionnaire (available from:

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/learningandteaching/students/forms>). Students on professional courses may need to have an occupational health assessment before returning.