

SUSPENSION, WITHDRAWAL, RESUMPTION OF STUDIES & OVERPAYMENT



Student Finance England (SFE) relates to English domiciled students studying higher education courses at universities or colleges in the UK

During the academic year a student may decide to leave their studies, either temporarily or permanently. Depending on their circumstances, this may be classed as a withdrawal, transfer or suspension.

If the student is expected to return to study, this will be classed as either a transfer or **suspension**. If the university or college are not expecting the student to return, they'll submit a **withdrawal** notice.

Please note, even if a student suspends or withdraws from their course during the summer months, this could still impact their student finance and any steps they need to take.

Transfer of Study

A transfer of study would be required to move a student to a different course at the same Higher Education Provider or transferring a student to your HEP.

HEPs will need to issue a transfer COC and acknowledge the transfer via SIS. They should also make the student aware that their funding could be impacted e.g. if there is a change to the length of course.

Withdrawal from Study

Students who have withdrawn from their studies have left their Higher Education Provider and are not expected to return to study.

- The student's HEP will inform SLC of this by sending an electronic withdrawal CoC. Once processed, all future payments will be cancelled, and the student's entitlement will be re-calculated which may result in a loan and/or grant overpayment.
- If the student has a grant and/or loan overpayment, as a result of the withdrawal, they will be contacted by SLC to make arrangements to repay.
- Students who resume their study after a withdrawal will need to re-apply as a new student and therefore re-establish their eligibility.

Types of withdrawal:

Non-Attendance: If students have not attended their course, these applications are 'zero assessed' and will not be counted as previous study.

Cooling off: If the student has attended but withdrawn during the 'cooling off' period, then these applications will be processed in the same way as a normal withdrawal. Therefore, previous study will be taken into account for future periods of study.

Health: If the student can evidence that their withdrawal is due to health reasons then Compelling Personal Reasons can be taken into consideration for future study.

Suspending Studies

Students who have suspended from their studies have paused their Higher Education and are expected to return to study.

Suspending Studies due to Medical Reasons

Students who have had to suspend their studies due to ill health may be able to have their entitlement (maintenance and GFDs) extended by 60 days after the date they left their studies.

The student's HEP will need to notify SLC that the student has suspended due to health reasons.

To award support after 60 days or throughout the period of suspension SLC will need to see evidence of:

- The reasons for the suspension
- Length of suspension
- Financial Hardship

All suspensions are counted as a year of study. The only exception to this is if the continuing student has suspended for health reasons on the first day of their course and 60 days support was awarded - this is not classed as a year of previous study. For returning students who are continuing their studies, the suspension should be dated before the start of Term 1 for the 60 days to be calculated from the 1st day.

In certain circumstances we may be able to continue to provide funding to the student on the basis of financial hardship.

Resuming Studies after suspension / withdrawal

Student suspends / withdraws and resumes study within same AY

If a student suspends/withdraws and then resumes their studies within the same AY at the same HEP, SLC would require a resumption CoC from the HEP. This allows SLC to reassess the application and re-calculate the correct entitlement for the student based on the dates they will be attendance*.

* If a student has been withdrawn through the auto-withdrawal process for non-attendance SLC can accept a CO1 form to change the application.

If we receive a resumption CoC from the HEP with a future resumption date on it, SLC are unable to action this until that date in the future

Student Suspends in one AY and resumes at the start of next

If a student suspends their studies in one AY and resumes their studies at the start of the next AY, SLC would initially need a suspension CoC from the HEP. For the following AY the student is required to submit a returning student application (PR1). No resumption CoC is required as they aren't resuming in the same AY.

The HEP will be able to send Confirmation of Registration/Confirmation of Attendance when the student resumes at the start of the next AY in order to release their payments.

Student suspends in one AY and resumes part way through a different AY

When a student suspends their studies in one AY and resumes part way through another, the student needs to reapply on a PR1 form for their funding to be assessed. The new application will be suspended up until the date the student is due to resume, using the return date provided on the original HEP suspension task.

The HEP need to submit a resumption CoC when the student returns to make sure that the correct funding is awarded.

If the HEP submit a resumption CoC with a future resumption date on it, SLC are unable to action this until that date in the future.

Student suspends their studies at the end of the AY and takes a 1-year break before resuming at the start of the next AY

When the student suspends their studies at the end of the AY, the HEP will need to provide a suspension CoC. The 1-year break would be classed as a gap year. On returning to their studies at the start of the following AY, the student will need to speak with their HEP to find out if they are classing them as a new student or a returning student to ensure the student applies using the correct application form.

HEP's can ask to extend funding to prevent removal of support, otherwise a suspension often costs them funding over the summer period (when getting grants). Submitting a suspension also prompts us to amend the end date of the current application and allowing students to apply correctly as returners with correct repayment dates.

Overpayment:

An overpayment of a loan or grant can happen as a result of a student withdrawing or suspending their studies and could impact their future entitlement i.e. we will seek to deduct any overpaid Maintenance Loan and Maintenance Grant from future entitlement, unless the student can provide evidence that this would cause them financial hardship. If required, students should contact their relevant funding domicile to discuss any impacts to their future entitlement.

You can find more information via our Practitioner websites and our HE Services website:

SFE Practitioner's: www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/

SFW Practitioner's: www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/Practitioners

HE Services: www.heinfo.slc.co.uk/