

Taking a break from your studies or withdrawing from your course

We understand that circumstances can change and you may need to take a break from your studies or leave your postgraduate Master's course.

Taking a break (suspending) or withdrawing from your studies can affect your student finance, so it's important you let us know straight away.



If you suspend your studies

If you suspend your studies your Postgraduate Loan payments will stop. If you get a payment after you have suspended you may be asked to repay this straight away, so it's important you let us know as soon as you suspend your studies.

As long as your university has agreed that you can suspend your studies, your Postgraduate Loan payments will resume when you return to your course. However, if you have suspended for two years or more during your course you'll only get further Postgraduate Loan payments if you can show you have compelling personal reasons for each period of suspension.



If you withdraw from your course

If you withdraw from your course your Postgraduate Loan payments will stop. If you get a payment after you have withdrawn you may be asked to repay this straight away, so it's important you let us know as soon as you withdraw from your course.

If you have compelling personal reasons for leaving your course you may be able to get another Postgraduate Loan for a new course. You can only get this once.



Repeating a year

Generally you can't get funding to repeat a year, or part of a year, of your course. Even if you haven't had all your Postgraduate Loan payments or you chose not to take the maximum amount of loan available to you.



Compelling personal reasons

If you suspend your studies or don't finish your course because of compelling personal reasons, such as illness or bereavement, you'll be asked to send evidence to support this. We'll look at each case individually. There's no definitive list of compelling personal reasons, but academic performance alone usually can't be classed as a compelling personal reason.



Claiming benefits

If you suspend or withdraw from your course you may be able to claim benefits in certain circumstances, for example, if you become ill or take on caring responsibilities. You should contact your local Jobcentre Plus for advice. You can also visit www.gov.uk to find out about the benefits that might be available to you.



Repaying your Postgraduate Loan

If you've been overpaid as a result of suspending or withdrawing from your course we'll contact you to let you know how to repay the amount you've been overpaid or reduce any future student finance you are entitled to by the amount we've overpaid. You should let us know as soon as you suspend or withdraw to reduce the chance of being overpaid.

If you haven't been overpaid, you'll repay your Postgraduate Loan as normal. You can find out more about repaying your Postgraduate Loan in SFE's student finance zone on The Student Room at www.thestudentroom.co.uk/studentfinance



For more information

If you need more information or your circumstances aren't covered here you can phone us on **0300 100 0031** between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

To tell us your circumstances have changed, go to www.gov.uk/postgraduateloan

You can find out more about Postgraduate Loans by visiting SFE's student finance zone on The Student Room at www.thestudentroom.co.uk/studentfinance

For regular updates, follow us on Twitter, like us on Facebook and watch our films on YouTube.



/SF_England



/SFEEngland



/SFEFILM