



Student  
Services

Funding & Advice



# Interrupting Your Studies:

Paramedic, Nursing  
and Midwifery Courses  
(with registration)



Everything you need to know about  
how this impacts your funding.

## Intro to Interruption

An Authorised Interruption of Study means you temporarily suspend your study for an agreed period of time. It's different from withdrawing as you will resume your studies on the date agreed with the University. It's a more formal and pro-active approach to taking time away from your studies that makes sure you aren't negatively impacted by non-attendance or missing assessments.

## Length

There are no fixed timescales for interrupting, but there may be a limit to the total period of interruption that you are allowed during the course. These courses are very structured and must be completed within 5 years of your start date, so it is important to talk to your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead who will be able to advise you about your options, taking into account the stage you are at on your course, your circumstances, and the best course of action for you.

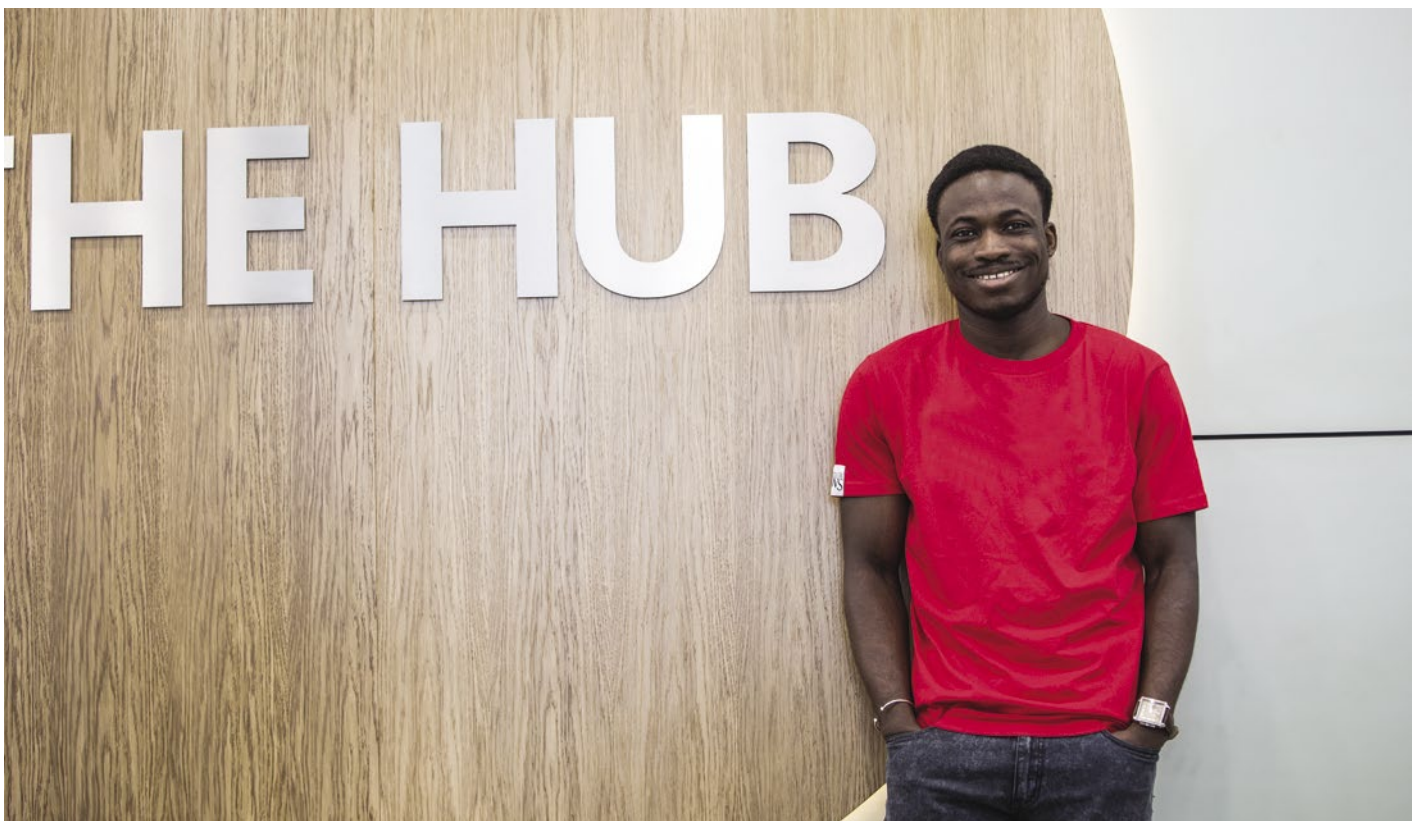
Please note that, although you may feel ready to return, you may need to wait to recommence the course at a date agreed by your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead.

## Reasons

Taking a period of interruption can be because of...

- Long term ill health
- Caring difficulties
- Bereavement
- Ill health related to pregnancy/childbirth
- Other issues related to pregnancy/childbirth
- Any other compassionate circumstances

This list is not exhaustive, and there may be other situations which apply



## Impact

Taking an Authorised Interruption of Study may have an impact on your student funding for the current academic year, but you will also need to consider your entitlement for student funding when you are ready to return. This guidance document will explain this in detail, but you can also ask the **Funding & Advice Team** for tailored guidance to ensure that you make an informed decision.

## Application Process

You should discuss your circumstances with your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead and get any advice you need before making your decision. This includes considering the impact this might have on your student funding entitlements (see section below).

An application for an Authorised Interruption of Study is made through your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead. They will help ensure any paperwork is completed and will support you through the process. You should try and arrange this in advance where possible, or as soon as practical after any problem has emerged.

You should also keep in touch with your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead during your interruption.

## Returning to university

You will usually agree a return date when you arrange an interruption, but it's a good idea to liaise with your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead in advance to ensure this happens smoothly. Your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead will need to complete a recommencement form, which leads to Registry updating your student record. It's also important to apply for any student funding in advance of your return, so this is in place for you without any delay.

## What this means for your student funding

Any change in your student status can impact your eligibility for student funding.

There are several types of interruption, and your circumstances will determine which type of interruption you are taking. Depending on the type of interruption you are taking, your student funding in the current year can be impacted in different ways.

Remember that your entitlement to student funding (tuition and living cost bursary) is limited. If you continue to receive student funding while taking a break from your studies, the overall entitlement remaining available to you when you return, will reduce. If you are unsure about your remaining entitlement, please contact SAAS. In some circumstances, you may be able to apply for an extension of funding. This is arranged through the school.

**Personal Interruption:** This is where you are taking a break from your studies due to personal reasons. This needs to be discussed and agreed with your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead. Your bursary is not paid to you during a personal interruption.

**Medical Interruption:** This is where you are taking a break from your studies due to health reasons. This needs to be discussed and agreed with your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead. There is a maximum number of weeks that the bursary can be paid during a medical interruption, so consideration will be given to your circumstances to identify if the bursary can be paid to you during a medical interruption. If it can, you will need to submit medical evidence to cover the duration of your interruption.

**NB:** If you are on an approved absence and retaining student funding from SAAS, they have an expectation that, as you are unable to attend your course, you are also unable to work in paid employment.

The bursary payments stop once you are fit to return to the course. If you become fit to resume the course, but have to wait for an appropriate date to re-join, you may be able to claim benefits during the time, and should seek advice from the Funding and Advice Team.

**Pregnancy/Maternity Leave:** If you are taking a break from your studies due to pregnancy/maternity leave, your bursary can normally be extended for up to 45 weeks. Most students begin this leave 4-6 weeks before their expected due date, but you can begin this leave as early as 11 weeks before. You should discuss this with your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead, who can help you plan your leave, and identify a return date.

If your pregnancy/maternity leave ends (including the bursary payments), but you have to wait for an appropriate date to re-join, you may be able to claim benefits during the time and should seek advice from the Funding and Advice Team.

While the bursary may be paid during pregnancy/maternity leave, the SAAS Childcare Allowance that you might be receiving for another child will stop.

**Academic Suspension:** This is where you are unable to progress on your course as a result of incomplete modules and/or assessments. You may need to take a period of academic interruption in order to complete the outstanding modules and/or assessments, and recommence the course at a later date. Your bursary is not paid to you during an academic interruption.

**If you are funded by SFE, SFNI or SFW,** they refer to this as suspending your studies, and may also allow you to receive **some funding** where the reasons for suspending your studies are due to illness, bereavement etc. While the University will report the change in your student status, you will need to contact your funding body directly to claim any funding you might be eligible for, as this will not happen automatically. You will likely need to provide supporting evidence.

Your funding body will reassess your award based on your new circumstances. This will result in a new award letter, showing your reduced entitlement and any overpayment that you might need to repay. In the case of over-payments, these are not subject to the original terms of your loan agreement and must be repaid as soon as possible or they are deducted from future entitlements. The same is true of grant over-payments. It is therefore very important that you contact your funding body with your plans and ensure that any overpayment is repaid as soon as possible.



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

**Enrolment:** You must continue to enrol on your course, even during a period of interruption. If you are unsure when you should complete this process, talk to your Personal Tutor, Year or Course Lead.

**SAAS Funding Application:** You must apply to SAAS each year for your student funding. This still applies during a period of interruption, whether a bursary extension has been approved or not. This will ensure your bursary continues as you expect. SAAS applications open on their website in April each year.

**Overpayment of Bursary:** Where your period of interruption results in a bursary overpayment, this may mean that your future bursary payments are reduced. You should plan ahead for this.

**Impact on benefits:** You are still regarded as a full-time student during a period of interruption as you are intending to return to the course. This is the case whether your bursary is being paid during the interruption or not.

Any entitlement to benefits will be based on your status as a full-time student, so please do not assume that you can access benefits in the absence of your bursary.

If you would like more information on this, you should seek advice from the Funding and Advice Team.

**UWS Childcare Funding:** Your eligibility for the UWS Childcare Fund will change during a period of interruption. You should contact us immediately at [fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk) and we will reassess your application and stop payments for the duration of your interruption. You can also talk to us about any extenuating circumstances that we should consider before making changes to your childcare award.

**Council Tax Exemption:** You will still be considered eligible for the council tax exemption as you are still enrolled and are intending to return to the course. As you are now expected to be on your course longer than originally planned, you may be asked by your Council to provide further proof of your student status.

**Paramedic, Nursing and Midwifery Discretionary Funds:** Discretionary Funds can provide additional financial support to top up the support you receive from SAAS, They cannot usually be accessed during a period of interruption from your studies. However, you can talk to us about any extenuating circumstances you may be experiencing.

You can find out more about the funds, including eligibility criteria and how to apply, by visiting <https://www.uws.ac.uk/money-fees-funding/other-financial-support/discretionary-childcare-funds/>

**Other Support:** You can still access the various support services available at UWS during a period of interruption. You can find out more about the services available at [www.uws.ac.uk/current-students](http://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students)



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