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## **Introduction**

This procedure applies to students studying Pearson HNC/Ds or the Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training who wish to take a break from their programme of study. The process of interrupting a programme of study is called *a break in study*.

Students may only take a break in study with the permission of the College. Students must seek permission using the process outlined below and should continue to attend the programme of study until that permission has been granted. Failure to follow the procedures could result in a student being permanently withdrawn from the programme.

## **What is a break in study?**

A break in study is a temporary withdrawal that provides you with the opportunity to take a pause from your studies. Normally, this is for reasons beyond your control (e.g. health or personal problems) although other reasons are permitted. A break in study is approved for a defined period of time, after which you are expected to return to your studies.

## **Repeating after partial completion**

A student who has fully completed any units and wants achievement in those units to be considered by the Assessment Board, should request this when completing the form. The unit grades will then be formally recorded on the assessment tracking sheet, and the student will not need to register to complete those units again.

## **Thinking about a break in study**

You may be thinking about taking a break in study for various factors, such as: health, personal, or family reasons, or you feel you need a break from your studies for other reasons. Before deciding that a break in study is the best action for you, there are people at the College who can offer you information and advice. If you are considering taking a break in study, some of the practical things that you need to consider include:

- Academic issues
- Financial matters
- Support availability
- Tier 4 Visas

Please contact your Senior Curriculum Manager to discuss how these issues may affect you and whether support could be provided that will help you to continue your studies.

## **Applying for permission for a break in study**

If you wish to take a break in study, you must apply by completing the break in study form available on the website at <https://www.ncclondon.ac.uk/higher-education> providing acceptable reasons for your request. **If you have completed any units and want these to be considered at the assessment board, you should provide this information when you complete the form.**

The form should be sent to the Group Deputy Director: HE: Email [Higher.Education@ncclondon.ac.uk](mailto:Higher.Education@ncclondon.ac.uk)

The Group Deputy Director: HE will consider the request and decide whether or not to give permission for a break in study from the College and your programme of studies. The Group Deputy Director: HE may prescribe conditions which need to be fulfilled before you are permitted to resume your programme of study.

The Group Deputy Director: HE will advise you by email of the decision, the date when you will be expected to return to the College to resume your studies, and any conditions that may be attached. Units are subject to change and may not be timetabled for the same terms in subsequent years; this therefore may have consequences for the date of return to the programme of study. Requests for a break in study submitted after the published deadline date may be considered, provided an explanation is given of the reasons for the late application.

## **Registration status of students taking a break in study**

Once approval for a break in study has been given, you will no longer be entitled to attend classes or have access to College computing facilities or borrowing rights in the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). However, in certain circumstances, the College may allow you to use these services. You must make any request to do so in writing to the Group Deputy Director: HE.

### **Break in study - Keeping in touch while you are away**

You will continue to have access to your student (college) email account, and the College will use this to remain in contact with you. Therefore, keep an eye on your student e-mail account, as we will email you about aspects of your return to your studies. You are advised to ensure that you keep your own alternative copies of any essential documents stored on the College network. Any material stored on the College network will be held until the end of the academic year in which you take a break in study, after which time it will be removed.

If a student cannot login then the student needs to contact IT Services.

## **Getting ready to return**

Where necessary, you should ensure that the reasons for your break in study are addressed and resolved prior to your return, making use of Customer Services where appropriate and providing any evidence that may be required to meet conditions of return. Any medical evidence that may be required for return should be sent to [Higher.Education@ncclondon.ac.uk](mailto:Higher.Education@ncclondon.ac.uk) by Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

## **Maximum Period of Study**

Higher Education students have a maximum period in which to complete their studies. This is set at the point they register and is normally the length of their programme plus one additional year. This is to allow some flexibility in cases where students find they must take a break in study, or they fail a stage of study and must repeat it, or they want to transfer to a new course and must retake a stage of study. However, students must complete their studies within this maximum period.

Each of the following counts as one additional year. You will not be permitted to do any of these actions more than twice, or exceed two of these actions in any combination:

- Repeating a stage (whether by full or part-time attendance)
- Undertaking reassessment the following year without attendance
- Transferring to a new course and repeating a stage
- Taking a break in study for part or all of a year

If your break in study is due to serious extenuating circumstances, such as a severe medical condition, then the Group Deputy Director: HE can consider extending your maximum period of study by one year.

## **Financial Matters – Student Loans Company (SLC)**

These notes are for general guidance only, and the information, which is based on the Student Support Regulations, is subject to amendment from time to time. It is therefore essential that students contact the Student Loans Company directly to discuss their individual cases. Please visit

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/student-loans-company>

If it has been agreed by the College that a student can take a break from study, the Student Loans Company will normally suspend his/her award for up to one year and reinstate it when he/she returns. Students who repeat all or part of their first year of study are normally entitled to repeat funding, provided that they are repeating for the first time. Repeat funding for those repeating a second time is discretionary and is usually only granted by the Student Loans Company in exceptional circumstances, often involving severe medical or personal problems.

### **SLC Tuition fees**

Students will be liable for tuition fees, as per SLC payment dates when taking a break in study as follows:

Students who withdraw or take a break in study in the Autumn term (First Term)	25% of fees payable
Students who withdraw or take a break in study in the Spring term (Second Term)	50% of fees payable
Students who withdraw or take a break in the Summer term (Third Term)	100% of fees payable

### **Student Loans**

Students cannot apply for a loan while on a break from study. If he/she already has a Student Loan, he/she is not required to make any repayments while on a break in study. However, if the student decides to leave the programme permanently after the period of break in study rather than returning to study, he/she should contact the Student Loans Company so that they do not risk falling into arrears.