

Interruption of Studies Procedure

1. A student can apply for an Interruption of Studies (IoS) if, for personal reasons, they need to take a period away from studies (under General Regulations 4.13).
2. Under the General Regulations the Principal, Principal's nominee, appropriate Dean or, more usually, the Course Director (or nominee) can approve a student's application to interrupt their studies.
3. IoS for MBBS students must be managed according to the *SGUL Policy on Interruption of Study (IoS) for Students on MBBS Programmes*.
4. Circumstances in which an interruption of studies may be authorised include significant unforeseen personal events, this includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. injury or serious illness
 - b. ongoing health issues
 - c. maternity/paternity/adoption
 - d. an extra-curricular opportunity e.g. elite sport, arts or music related opportunities
5. An application to interrupt studies should be made in advance except in exceptional circumstances.
6. An IoS will not be used to avoid student procedures or assessment and cannot be approved on academic grounds alone.
 - a. An IoS will not be approved once teaching for the academic year has completed or between first sit and resit.
 - b. A short absence, which does not affect the student's ability to progress/complete their award within the academic year, can be approved by the Course Director under the *Attendance and Academic Engagement Policy*.
 - c. An application for Mitigating Circumstances can be made where a student feels their performance in assessment will be affected by unforeseen circumstances and when they are requesting a deferral until the next academic year.
 - d. If a student does not progress at the end of the academic year and is due to take resits at the next opportunity (which may be at the end of the following year) they do not need to apply for an IoS but will be treated as if on an interruption until the assessment opportunity (General Regulations 10.5). The student will be recorded on the student record system as 'Resit Only' for the new academic year. They will attend no teaching.
7. An IoS will usually be approved for up to 1 year. The return date will be agreed with the course team and will usually be at the start of the semester/term in which the student interrupted in the following academic year. A further interruption (for up to a year) can be approved by the Course Director. Any further interruption requested after this period will require a new application. Long interruptions may have implications for the currency of a student's learning.
8. Students on interruption will remain registered on their programme BUT NOT ENROLLED, they will remain bound by University Terms and Conditions.
9. Students will need to complete re-enrolment in order to recommence their studies after an IoS.
10. While a student is on an interruption of studies their studies are completely paused.
 - a. They will not attend any teaching, research, placement or other university activities and will not take assessments.
 - b. Student Finance, NHS bursaries, other funders will be informed. Tuition fees will be adjusted according to the *Tuition Fee Policy*.
 - c. Where relevant UKVI will be informed and this may have implications for any student visa or immigration status held under the EU Settlement Scheme, this should be discussed with the International Advising Team.
 - d. Occupational Health may be consulted.
 - e. There may be conditions placed on a student's return to study following an interruption.

- f. An interruption of studies (except where due to maternity reasons) will count towards the maximum period of registration and may mean that the student needs to apply for an extension to their period of registration, see [here](#).
 - g. If they are a resident in Halls, students on an IoS will usually be required to leave University accommodation.
11. Students will retain their SGUL email while they are on interruption and must ensure that they remain contactable. They must ensure that their contact details are up to date and continue to regularly check their SGUL email account.
 12. On return following an interruption, if applicable, students will generally resume their studies on any new Scheme of Assessment, Course Regulations and Curriculum which have been introduced in the meantime. By taking an IoS students are considering to be consenting to changes made to their programme in the meantime. Details will be discussed with the Course Team, students should be aware that some study may need to be repeated or replacement study undertaken and additional fees may be incurred in line with the *Tuition Fee Policy*.

Process

13. A student may wish to discuss an interruption of studies with their Personal Tutor in the first instance.
14. A request to interrupt should be submitted in writing to the Course Administrator or the Course Director.
15. The Course Director (or nominee) will usually be the person who approves an interruption.
16. Students should meet with an appropriate member of the course team, within 5 working days of their request to interrupt, to discuss the interruption and complete the form.
17. Ideally before this meeting the student should seek advice from the Student Finance Policy Officer regarding the implications of an IoS for Student Finance, NHS Bursary or other funding. Where relevant they should consult the International Advising Team regarding their Immigration status (e.g. student visa or settlement under the EU Settlement Scheme). This can be done after meeting with the course team, but may hold up approval of the IoS.
18. The discussion with the course team will cover:
 - a. The reason for the interruption and, where relevant, how the student will spend their time and retain their knowledge and skills.
 - b. Any evidence required.
 - c. Occupational Health requirements.
 - d. Teaching, placement and assessment completed and which will need to be completed on return.
 - e. Support and disability requirements including a Statement of Support Needs in place.
 - f. Return date.
 - g. Any conditions for return to study, including OH requirements.
 - h. Confirmation that the student has sought advice as appropriate from the Student Finance Policy Officer and the International Advising Team.
 - i. A reminder to the student that they should stay in contact with the course team, ensure the university has current contact details for them (which they can do via the e:Vision student portal) and continue to check their sgul email address and Canvas VLE.
 - j. A reminder that the student must have cleared all their outstanding fees before they are able to re-enrol to recommence their studies. Students with debt will continue to receive correspondence from Finance while they are on IoS.
19. Following the meeting the Course Director (or nominee) will decide whether to approve the interruption. If the Course Director declines to approve an interruption they must write to the student within 5 working days of the meeting setting out why the interruption is not appropriate.

20. The IoS form must be completed and signed by the student and Course Director (or nominee).
21. The approved interruption form must be circulated to the Course Administration for distribution to relevant teams. An electronic copy of the completed IoS form must be emailed to studentsystems@sgul.ac.uk and studentfinance@sgul.ac.uk within 10 working days of the start of the IoS.
22. Course Administration will liaise with the student to manage their return to study and will update the student's Personal Tutor.

Extending an Interruption of Study

23. If a student wishes to extend their interruption of study (for up to 1 further year) following their initial interruption, they must contact their Course Director (or nominee) to request this.
24. If a further interruption would prevent the student from completing within the maximum registration period approval for an extension to the maximum period of registration must be agreed prior to approval of the extended IoS.
25. The Course Director must communicate a further agreed interruption to the Course Administrator and to the Registry (Student Systems Team).
26. A new IoS application must be submitted to interrupt for more than two years.

Appealing the decision of the Course Director

27. If the IoS is not approved the student can appeal on one the following grounds only:
 - a. there is new evidence which could not reasonably have been brought previously
 - b. there has been a procedural irregularity inconsideration of the application
 - c. the decision of the Course Director (or nominee) was manifestly unreasonable.
28. The student must submit their case, identifying the grounds and providing relevant evidence, in writing to the Academic Registrar within 10 working days of the date of notification of the decision.
29. The Academic Registrar will convene a panel, including two senior academic colleagues, to consider the appeal.
30. The panel may decide to confirm the original decision or approve the IoS. The Academic Registrar will write to the student within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal.

Access to Services

31. A student on IoS will retain access to their sgul email, IT account, Canvas, their Personal Tutor, the Counselling Service and will retain physical access to buildings and to the Library.

Support

32. Students may wish to approach their Personal Tutor for a discussion if they are considering applying for an IoS.
33. Support can also be obtained from the Counselling Service: <https://www.sgul.ac.uk/for-students/student-support/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health/counselling-service> and the Students Union: <https://www.sgsu.org.uk/support/>
34. Students should discuss fees and finance implications with the Student Finance Policy Officer, studentfinance@sgul.ac.uk.
35. International students should discuss implications for their immigration status with the International Advising Team, student.immigration@sgul.ac.uk.
36. See [Student support A-Z \(sgul.ac.uk\)](#) for links to support.

Academic Registrar

Feb 2023