

# Study Break Policy for Higher Education programmes

## 1. What is a Study Break?

- 1.1 A Study Break is where you have an extended period of time away from your studies. A Study Break may apply in the following circumstances:
- i. **Breaking between modules (online programmes only):** you have completed one module and want to take a break before starting the next module. The opportunity to take a break is built into the programme design so the remainder of this Policy does not apply. The number and length of breaks permitted is limited by the maximum registration period as noted in your programme specification. You will not be able to take a break between every module. It is your responsibility to plan your studies so that you can complete your programme within this timeframe.
  - ii. **Significant personal circumstances while you are studying (online and on-campus programmes):** you are unable to continue with your studies for an extended period of time due to the impact of your personal circumstances. The opportunity to take a break in these circumstances is not built into the programme design and therefore the remainder of this Policy applies. The type of circumstances that may lead you to applying for a Study Break are set out in the Extenuating Circumstances Policy.
- 1.2 A Study Break is different to:
- i. When you apply for an extension for submitting an assessment because you have short-term personal circumstances (e.g. minor illness) which means you are unable to complete your work by the published deadline. The Extenuating Circumstances Policy provides more information.
  - ii. Leaving Walbrook and permanently withdrawing from your studies. The Student Withdrawal Policy provides more information.
  - iii. Where Walbrook may suspend your registration for a period of time due to disciplinary matters. The Student Disciplinary Policy provides more information.

## 2. Support

- 2.1 Your personal circumstances may mean that you have no choice but to take a Study Break. In other situations, it may be the case that a Study Break is not your only option and there may be different options to consider. Whatever your circumstances, taking a Study Break is a major decision. Walbrook staff are available to help you work through

that decision and we strongly advise you to speak with your Student Success Coordinator before making an application.

### 3. Implications of taking a Study Break

- 3.1 A Study Break means that your registration with us will be suspended for that period, and you will not have student status. Matters to consider and understand are listed below and your Student Support Coordinator is available to talk with you about these matters to help you understand their implications.
- i. **Studying on an international student visa:** The UK Home Office will allow up to 60 days between your last academic engagement with Walbrook and returning to study. If you need or are seeking to have a study break for over 60 days (or a combination of breaks that in total exceed 60 days), Walbrook is obliged to notify the UK Home Office that it is suspending its sponsorship of your visa, and you will need to return to your home country.
  - ii. **Financial support:** For students in receipt of Student Loans Company support, we are obliged to inform the Student Loans Company of your Study Break start and end dates and you will not receive payments during this time. This means that you will need to have alternative ways of supporting yourself financially while you are on a Study Break. If you receive other forms of financial support (e.g. bursaries, other loans), you will need to find out if these will be suspended while you are on a Study Break.
  - iii. **Tuition fees:** The Terms and Conditions set out the fees that you owe us at specific points in the academic year.
  - iv. **Budgeting and covering your costs:** You will need to consider how your finances and budgeting will work if you have been dependent on a Student Loan or other forms of financial support that will stop while you are on a Study Break. Additionally, as you will not hold student status while you are on a Study Break, you will not be eligible for financial exemptions such as Council Tax or student discounts on services and goods.
  - v. **Wellbeing support:** Unless otherwise stated, you will continue to be able to access Walbrook support services during your study break.
  - vi. **Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA):** Your entitlement to DSA will stop while on a Study Break.
  - vii. **Maximum period of registration:** Time taken out on Study Break will normally count towards the maximum period of registration for your programme. The maximum registration periods are set out in the Academic Regulations. Exceptionally, if there are strong and compelling circumstances which have impacted on a student's ability to complete within the maximum period of registration, these may be considered by the Provost.
  - viii. **Academic work:** the Academic Regulations set out the status of any credit you have achieved so far and the implications for any uncompleted modules. On your return, you will have the opportunity to re-engage in the teaching and learning from the start of the module (including attendance for on-campus students), but you will only be required to complete assessments that you have not yet taken.

## 4. Length of a Study Break

- 4.1 The Study Break length will depend on the nature of your circumstances and the impact of these on your studies. The length of break you need may be obvious in some situations and may not be as clear in others. The maximum Study Break available is determined by the period of time you have been registered so far (including any previous Study Breaks) and the maximum registration period for your programme. If you are studying on an international student visa, a total Study Break limit of 60 days (see Section 2) will also apply. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. significant illness) it may be possible to extend the maximum registration period for your programme.
- 4.2 A return date will normally be planned to enable you to pick up your studies at the most relevant point in the programme structure.
- 4.3 Please talk to your Student Support Coordinator if you need any support in determining the Study Break period you might need.

## 5. Completing and submitting a Study Break form

- 5.1 Once you have worked through your plans, you will need to complete and submit the [Study Break form](#). Your application will normally be considered by the Academic Dean and you will receive a decision within ten working days.
- 5.2 If we are unable to support your study break request, we will let you know why and will also provide the opportunity to meet with you to explain our decision. The Appeals Policy sets out the grounds upon which you can appeal our decision.

## 6. Actions we will take next

- 6.1 Where your Study Break is approved, we will record its start and end dates. The start will be recorded as the day that you reported as your last point of academic engagement (e.g. attending a class or engaging in an assessment) checked against attendance or engagement records. We will also:
  - i. Inform you of any outstanding money owed in relation to Tuition Fees or any other costs.
  - ii. Where relevant, inform the Student Loans Company of your Study Break start and end dates so that SLC can confirm arrangements with you about your student loan payments and repayments.
  - iii. Where relevant, inform the UK Home Office of your Study Break start and end dates and any actions that you will need to take about your residency.
  - iv. Suspend your access to Walbrook's provision unless any other arrangements have been agreed.

- v. Confirm the status of your marks and module completion in line with the Academic Regulations.
- vi. Update you during your Study Break if there are any changes to your programme.

## 7. Returning to Study

- 7.1 Your Student Success Coordinator will contact you in advance of your agreed return date to discuss your readiness to return.
- 7.2 If your personal circumstances mean that you are unable to return to your studies on the planned date, you must contact your Student Support Coordinator so that we can understand your circumstances and discuss a different plan with you.
- 7.3 The Academic Regulations relating to withdrawal may apply if you do not return on the planned date without good reason.

## 8. Any questions?

- 8.1 If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the Quality, Policy Regulation team.

## 9. Other Policies and Regulations

- 9.1 Please go to <https://www.walbrook.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-regulations/> to see other policies and regulations referenced in this document.

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