

## **Study Break Policy**

### **1.0 Introduction and background**

- 1.1 This Policy provides further information on study breaks and should be read alongside the Academic and Student Regulations.
- 1.2 Existing procedures are in place for circumstances where a student has difficulty in submitting items of assessment, in particular those set out in the Mitigating Circumstances policy and procedure around requests for short extensions or deferral of assessment. Study Breaks should be considered where such procedures are not appropriate.
- 1.3 The University also has a policy regarding actions that may be appropriate where there are concerns regarding a student's health, wellbeing and fitness to study.

### **2.0 Purpose and scope**

- 2.1 This policy seeks to provide a study break option for students who wish to take time away from studies, including those with long-term medical problems or illnesses, or students whose personal circumstances result in their temporary inability to continue on their programme of study.
- 2.2 It applies to all taught students studying for an award of the University of Northampton, including those who are studying at Partnership Institutions.

### **3.0 Definitions**

- 3.1 For the purposes of this policy, where an individual role is named this refers to that role or a nominee.

### **4.0 Key principles**

- 4.1 A student enrolled on a programme of study is entitled to request a break from study for reasons of ill-health, maternity or paternity leave, financial reasons or in order to pursue career interests. If circumstances such as illness or personal circumstances are causing severe disruption to a student's studies then a study break may be recommended.
- 4.2 Study breaks cannot be used in order to gain additional time complete dissertations or any other outstanding assessments.

- 4.3 Study break periods count towards the maximum registration period a student has to complete his/her programme, as defined in the Regulations.
- 4.4 Evidence of extenuating circumstances is required in order for a break from studies to be approved for Postgraduate students who have enrolled on their principle module.
- 4.5 A study break is normally for a maximum period of one year. If students are not able to return at the end of this time they will be required to withdraw. Return to study may be facilitated at a later date via the Admissions Team, subject to meeting the requirement stated above (4.3).
- 4.6 Students are encouraged to return at the start of the semester or trimester within which they took the study break, subject to confirmation from any bodies providing bursaries that this is acceptable.
- 4.7 All credit and grades including pass, failure, non-submissions and approved mitigating circumstances up to the start of the study break will be carried forward to the point of return to study.
- 4.8 During a study break a student will not engage with his/her programme, for example will not receive academic support and will not have access to any University facilities. However, immediately prior to return from a study break students are encouraged to engage with the University's Student Support and Advice Team and their Personal Academic Tutor to facilitate a smooth return to study.
- 4.9 An application for a study break must be made in advance and prior to the relevant academic year end-date. Normally, applications will not be considered retrospectively. This may be waived for certain types of circumstances on agreement of the Academic Registrar. Responsibility for this is devolved to the Academic Advisers.
- 4.10 Normally only one study break per programme of study can be taken. This may be waived for certain types of circumstances on agreement of the Academic Registrar. Responsibility for this is devolved to the Academic Advisers.
- 4.11 Students requesting a study break should obtain approval from their Programme Leader. A study break form must be completed fully and then submitted to Academic Advisers for consideration. Final details will be confirmed only once a study break has been approved.
- 4.12 International students on a Student Visa who wish to take a study break must first consult with the International Student Support Services team so that the impact of such a move on their visa terms and conditions can be considered and discussed.
- 4.13 Students who take a study break are responsible for managing the financial implications of this; students are advised to seek guidance on the financial implications prior to finalising the study break.

## **5.0 Key responsibilities**

- 5.1 Students – apply for a study break using the appropriate form in the required timescales. Engage with Programme Leader and Student Support and Advice Team in the run-up to return from a study break, including completing pre-enrolment.
- 5.2 Programme Leader – provides guidance on feasibility of study break from an academic perspective. Including, but not limited to, module enrolment upon return from study break.
- 5.3 Academic Adviser – provides guidance on a student’s options, including options other than a study break, and advises on the impact of a study break. Makes final decision on study break request.
- 5.3 International Student Support Team – provides guidance to students on a Student Visa on the impact of a study break and any other options.

## **6.0 Links to related UON Policies/Guidance/Regulations**

- 6.1 Academic and Student Regulations
- 6.2 Mitigating Circumstances Policy
- 6.3 Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Policy

## **7.0 Links to related external documents (e.g. QAA)**

- 7.1 n/a

## **8.0 Appendices**

- 8.1 Summary Sheet

## Summary Sheet:

<b>Policy Title:</b>	
Study Breaks	
<b>Purpose of Policy and to whom it applies (please specify cohorts):</b>	
<p>To provide a study break option for students with long-term medical problems or illnesses, including those that develop during studies, or students whose personal circumstances result in their temporary inability to continue on their programme of study.</p> <p>This policy applies to all taught students studying on an award of the University of Northampton, including those studying via Education with Others</p>	
<b>Owner and Department:</b>	
Academic Registrar (SAS)	
<b>Principal contact:</b>	
Anna Quinn- Student Support and Advice Manager	
<b>Dissemination and implementation plan:</b>	
Via SECs and SSECs Onto Web	
<b>Date of initial committee approval (state committee name):</b>	SEC (June 2014)
<b>Date of Senate approval:</b>	July 2014
<b>Date for implementation and cohorts to which it applies:</b>	September 2014 to all new and continuing students
<b>Proposed date of annual update:</b>	June 2022
<b>Date of last annual update:</b>	June 2023
<b>Proposed date of full review:</b>	June 2024
<b>Date of last full review:</b>	June 2018
<b>Version number and date:</b>	1.0