

## **Information for students considering applying to the University for permission to intermit**

During the course of your studies you may find that you are unable to continue because of physical or mental health issues or another serious reason. You can apply for permission to take time out (normally an academic or calendar year) in order to recover or to get your finances back on track; you should contact your tutor to discuss your situation, as they will need to apply on your behalf to the University for permission to take time out or 'disregard terms' in University language. You may also wish to consult the Students' Unions' Advice Service.

You should always take time to talk through your situation carefully with your Tutor as there are a number of potential academic or examination allowance options available from the University besides intermission. However, specifically regarding intermission there are several issues to bear in mind when considering this step. This could include, for instance:

- What are the implications for your studies when you return? Are there planned changes for courses (set texts or topics for instance)? Will the courses you would like to take be available in the year you return?
- If you are considering intermitting in the Easter term, it is more likely that the University will grant you an examination allowance based on good supervision reports, if your work up to this point in the year has been unaffected. This would be appropriate for someone who falls ill or has an accident shortly before exams, for instance, and might allow you to proceed to the next year of study without having to repeat part of the year.
- Have you explored other sources of support that might help you. Intermitting does involve some loss of momentum which might be an important issue to take into account.
- There may be financial issues for you to consider in intermitting; for instance, you will not be able to claim Council Tax exemption as a student while intermitting.
- If you are in Cambridge on a student visa, you will need to check the implications of intermitting with the Cambridge International Office.

The notes below are intended to give you important information about what is involved in applying for an allowance to intermit, and the procedure which must be followed on your return to the College after any period away.

You are asked to read these notes carefully, discuss with your Tutor and then to sign and return the form at the end of the notes to the Senior Tutor. These notes should be read in conjunction with the University Statutes and Ordinances, Chapter III: Examinations – Allowances to Candidates for Examinations:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/2015/chapter03-section2.html>

## **INTERMITTING: GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS**

### **1. What is involved?**

Intermitting is normally a mechanism used to disregard terms so that a candidate is in standing to take an examination. Leave to intermit allows all or part of an academic year to be disregarded; students are then allowed to take an examination in a subsequent year in which they would not otherwise have been eligible to take it. In certain circumstances this may involve permission to go out of residence or even a requirement to do so (unless the student's home is in Cambridge, not in College accommodation). The College applies to the Applications Committee of the University Council for the grant of leave to disregard terms for the purpose of being in standing to take examinations; such leave, when granted, is normally given for a complete academic or calendar year.

**The grounds for going out of residence to intermit are usually chronic or acute illness or similar grave cause**, which make it impossible for students to continue with their studies. In these circumstances, the Applications Committee requires medical evidence that the student is so seriously incapacitated as to be incapable of continuing with the course.

Such leave to intermit is thus intended **only** to relieve a candidate from disadvantage. It may not be used to allow a student to gain an advantage not available to others. Intermitting should not be regarded as a means of changing Triposes; students contemplating a change of Tripos should consult their Tutor.

It is inconsistent with this purpose, and also not in the interest of other students, for someone who is intermitting to return to the College to study or to receive extra tuition. It may occasionally be absolutely necessary for a student who is intermitting to return to the College to consult with Directors of Studies or Tutors or to meet with their Cambridge GP or a Counsellor in the University Counselling Service. A student who is intermitting does not have access to College or University facilities, although you may use the Students' Unions' Advice Service. Students should discuss with their Tutor the question of access to College to visit friends, particularly if their home is in Cambridge.

Very occasionally, there may be circumstances in which it is permissible for students to return to or to remain in Cambridge during a period for which they are allowed to be out of residence (for example the need to obtain specialist medical treatment of any kind).

### **2. Consultation within College**

The decision to apply for leave to intermit can be taken only after consultation with the Tutor, Director of Studies and/or Senior Tutor. The Director of Studies may need to give specific advice about regulations for a particular Tripos.

Tutors and the Senior Tutor may also want to discuss plans for a student's treatment and recovery during the period to be spent away from Cambridge, as well as plans for supporting their return. For most students intermitting on medical grounds, it will be important to plan for treatment of some kind, to maximize the chances of a good recovery and a successful return to their studies.

### **3. University Application to be allowed to intermit**

The actual application to intermit is made by the Tutor or Senior Tutor on the student's behalf to the Applications Committee of the University Council.

#### **4. Financial implications of intermitting**

Intermitting has considerable financial implications, and these must be taken into account when deciding whether or not to apply to intermit. Three components of student financial support are relevant: the University Composition Fee, the College Fee (for non Home/EU and ELQ status students) and Student Loan Company. The LEA is also involved as assessor of eligibility for the Student Loan.

If students go out of residence within 21 days of the start of term (that is, the first day they are required to be in residence for their particular course of study – which may not be equivalent to the first day of Full Term), they are not then liable for the University Composition Fee for that particular term, or thereafter during the period of absence from Cambridge. After the 21 days, students are liable for fees for the term or terms in which they have been in residence.

Students' entitlement to a Student Loan ceases for any term during which they intermit, but restarts when the course is resumed. Entitlement to help with university fees is limited, in total, to the number of terms of the original course plus one further year. Any Tuition fee loan entitlement remaining when the student intermits is transferred to the final terms of the extended course. Cambridge normally requires a student to return into residence from the start of an academic year.

#### **5. Returning to study**

Students will not be allowed to return into residence without medical evidence that they are fit to resume the course. This medical evidence should be supplied on the attached form. The form should be completed by the medically qualified person best able to comment on the student's current state of health. This should be the same person (wherever possible) who provided the medical evidence to support the original application. If it is someone different, the new practitioner should be provided with a copy of the original letter. The information on this form should be based on a medical assessment held not earlier than the following dates:

For Michaelmas return: assessment not earlier than 1<sup>st</sup> July; form to College normally by 10<sup>th</sup> August

For Lent return: assessment not earlier than 1<sup>st</sup> October; form to College normally by 10<sup>th</sup> November

For Easter return: assessment not earlier than 1<sup>st</sup> February; form to College normally by 10<sup>th</sup> March.

Both the College and the Applications Committee must be fully satisfied that the student has recovered or that the condition is satisfactorily controlled, with any appropriate support measures in place, and that the student is in a position to complete the course successfully. If necessary, the period out of residence can be extended by a further application to intermit. The medical professional completing the fitness to return form should be shown the Notes on Medical Evidence shown below. These Notes will explain what is required. The Applications Committee will need to see this form, and the leave to intermit will not be finally confirmed until they have done so. In addition, the College may require an academic assessment before permission to return is granted.

**To the Senior Tutor, Pembroke College**

I would like you to apply on my behalf for leave for me to intermit on medical grounds/other grave cause. I confirm that I have consulted with my Tutor and my Director of Studies.

This is to confirm that I have read and understood the College's guidance notes for intermitting. I am prepared to abide by their conditions during the period of my absence from Cambridge, and to follow the procedure outlined above when I am able to resume my studies.

Name
Date
Year of Study
Tripes
Tutor
Director of Studies
Proposed date of return to the College

## **NOTES ON MEDICAL EVIDENCE**

Please try to ensure that those people providing medical evidence give a clear diagnosis including both the nature and severity of the illness, and how the condition is likely to have affected the candidate's examination preparation and/or performance. If the candidate is seeking exceptional permission to go out of residence on medical grounds the evidence should also indicate when they are likely to be able to resume study and any measures that may be necessary when this happens. Specific questions to address include:

1. What is/are the medical reason (s) for the student to need to intermit her studies?
2. What was the date on which you first saw the student for this condition?
3. What treatment has the student been receiving for this condition?
4. Please give details of any further treatment or support the student may need before being able to resume their studies. If you know that there is a lengthy waiting list for such treatment, please indicate how long this is likely to be.
5. What is the prognosis for this condition and when is it likely that the student will be fit to resume?

### **Students returning into residence**

When a student has gone out of residence on medical grounds, a further application is required before returning into residence using the application forms which can be downloaded from the University's web-site. Medical evidence from a doctor, psychiatrist or counsellor must be provided and whenever possible it should be from the person who made the original diagnosis. The evidence should address the points made in the original diagnosis. The original report should be made available to the practitioner should there be a change of personnel. In the case of students undergoing psychiatric treatment, full details of any subsequent supervision or monitoring should be provided when applying to resume. The College may reserve the right to seek a further independent medical assessment. Specific questions to be addressed are:

1. What was the original diagnosis, which caused the student to intermit?
2. What treatment was given and has the student fully recovered or is ongoing treatment or support required?

3. In your opinion is the student fit to return to University Study? Is that fitness to return conditional on further support?

4. If further support is required please provide a prognosis and give details of what support or supervision is necessary for the student to study effectively (for example from academic advisers, College Nurse, etc). In the case of psychiatric treatment, full details of any subsequent supervision or monitoring should be given.