

Student Finance (Full Time)
students who attend a full-time
course on a part-time basis
(spreading modules over 2
academic years)

UWE Bristol Student Money Service

Students who attend a full-time course on a part-time basis (spreading modules over 2 academic years). Full time students funded by Student Finance England and Wales

This information is for full-time undergraduates funded through [Student Finance England](#) and [Student Finance Wales](#).

If you are funded by [Student Finance Northern Ireland](#) or [Student Awards Agency for Scotland](#) please contact us or your funding provider as rules can differ.

Full-time SF (Student Finance) Undergraduates

If you are considering taking a year of your full-time course in a part-time mode of attendance over two academic years, it is important to check your funding entitlement before you register on your next year of study and incur fee liability. This is vital when it extends your course by an academic year.

This is a complex area, and the information below is only an overview. If you are not sure of your entitlement to funding, it is advisable to check it out with Student Finance or with a [UWE Student Money Adviser](#).

What does it mean to 'attend a full time course on a part time basis'?

This is requesting to take a particular academic year of your full time course in a part-time mode of attendance over two academic years.

For example deciding to study 60 credits of level 2 in one academic year, followed by the remaining 60 credits of level 2 in the next academic year.

When can this be done?

This could happen, for example, if you are unable to continue to attend full-time due to pregnancy or because of some unforeseen circumstance such as ill health. You might request to undertake the relevant year of your course in a part-time mode of attendance over two academic years.

How does it affect my funding?

The Student Finance (SF) standard entitlement rules are that a student is entitled to receive tuition fee loans for the standard length of a degree course plus one extra year, if needed. If you are on a three-year degree course, you will be entitled to (3+1=) 4 tuition fee loans. This '+1' is sometimes called a 'gift year'.

The 'gift year' of funding is often applied to a year of repeat study, a year of previous study or to a transfer from one course to another without academic progression.

If this is your first Higher Education (HE) course and you have never undertaken any previous HE study, transferred from a different course or repeated a year before, then it is likely you will have your 'gift year' funding available to use.

If you take a year of your course in a part-time mode of attendance, as long as you remain on a designated full-time course, you are still considered as a full-time student for funding purposes.

As you remain registered on your full-time course you are still exempt from Council Tax.

Example:

Anne is on a three year full-time course, after year 1 she decides to take year 2 over two years due to ill health. She has no previous study.

2019-20 Year 1 – Standard Funding

2020-21 Year 2 – 'Gift year'

2021-22 Year 2 – Standard Funding

2022-23 Year 3 – Standard Funding

As Anne hasn't previously used her 'gift year', she has enough funding entitlement to split her second year over 2 academic years and still be fully funded for the duration of her course.

What happens if I have used my gift year already?

If you have already used your 'gift year' (perhaps you have already repeated a year of your current course, or have previous study) you will not be able to access a Fee Loan for both academic years you decide to take in a part-time mode of attendance. SF will apply the Fee Loan to the second of those years. This will mean that you will have to pay the tuition fees yourself for the first half.

Example:

Judd is on a 3 year full-time course. He has decided to take his final year over 2 academic years due to ill health. Having failed year 1 Judd had to use his 'gift year' to repeat year 1. SF will calculate his funding entitlement as follows:

2018-19 year 1 – standard funding

2019-20 year 1 repeat – 'Gift year'

2020-21 year 2 – Standard Funding

2021-22 year 3 – Limited Funding – no Fee Loan, entitled to a Maintenance Loan

2022-23 year 3 – Standard Funding

As Judd does not have enough funding entitlement to receive a Fee Loan to cover an extended final year, he will have to self-fund his fees for the first half of year 3.

If your previous study, repeat years, or level transfer which used your 'gift year', were affected by extenuating circumstances beyond purely academic reasons, see the Compelling Personal Reasons section overleaf.

Living cost funding

The funding affected by taking a year of study in a part-time mode of attendance is the Tuition Fee Loan (and the Maintenance or Special Support Grant if you receive this).

You will usually remain entitled to your Maintenance Loan (and supplementary support such as DSAs, Grants for Dependents etc.) until you achieve an honours degree.

Compelling Personal Reasons (CPR)

Student Finance has the discretion to consider additional years of fee support if you have abandoned, or failed part of your course due to CPR (Compelling Personal Reasons). If, when your 'gift year' was used, you had failed the previous year(s) due to illness or there were significant personal problems that caused you to fail, or leave your previous course, you can provide evidence of this to Student Finance.

To request CPR, you need to provide full information about your circumstances, what they were and how they affected your studies. Supply documentary evidence of these circumstances and specifically request an additional year of funding.

Example:

Leah is on a three year full-time course. She had to repeat year 2 due to illness. She would now like to take her final year in a part-time mode of attendance. Leah applied to SF to request discretionary funding for her repeat year 2 on the basis of Compelling Personal Reasons. This was accepted by SF.

2018-19 year 1 – Standard Funding
2019-20 year 2 – Standard Funding
2020-21 year 2 repeat – Discretionary Funding (CPR)
2021-22 year 3 – 'Gift Year'
2022-23 year 3 – Standard Funding

This can be a very complex area, please contact a [UWE Student Money Adviser](#) to check your entitlement.

I wish to take more modules in one year than the other?

If you have your 'gift year' available, the way you spread your modules should not affect your funding. Contact a UWE Student Support Adviser to check how your modules may be split. Your entitlement to a tuition fee loan will be subject to the fee loan limits described above.

If you do not have your 'gift year' available to use, it will be crucial to check your entitlement with a [UWE Student Money Adviser](#).

If you will be without a fee loan for one of the years you may wish to explore taking fewer modules in that academic year to reduce the fee liability you will need to self-fund.

I have failed one of the years in which I was in part time attendance?

If you have failed due to non-academic reasons then see the CPR section above. If you have failed and do not have CPR, contact a [UWE Student Money Adviser](#) for advice.

I have used my 'gift year', I do not have CPR and I have to self-fund my fees

If you are intending to pay your own tuition fees, it is important that you have the money in place before you register for the new academic year. If you register and then have to leave due to lack of funds, it will count as a further year of study in the Student Finance calculation.

If you do have the money in place to cover the fees for your repeat year, you do not have to pay it all upfront. You can spread the cost over six monthly instalments. See [paying your fees](#) for further information.

I don't have a 'gift year' and am expecting to fund the first of the years in which I'm studying in part time attendance. SF have paid the University a Fee Loan, why?

As mentioned earlier, where entitlement is limited SF should apply the Fee loan to the second of the two years. SF only assess one year at a time and won't always be aware that you have opted to study a year part time over 2 academic years. Therefore they will often award the fee loan incorrectly to the first of those years.

If you have incorrectly received a Fee loan for the first of the years UWE will need to send a notification to SF to let them know that you have opted to study a year over 2 academic years so that SF apply to fee loan to the second of those years. Please contact a [UWE Student Money Adviser](#) if this is required.

If SF are not made aware that you have opted to study a year over 2 academic years it is likely they will claim the fee loan back the following year. You will need to ensure you have the funds in place to pay these fees.

I can't work out whether I will get a fee loan

If you have any questions about your funding, please contact a [UWE Student Money Adviser](#).

Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure that this fact sheet is as accurate as possible. The University cannot accept responsibility for errors or for changes affecting the contents that arise after December 2022.