**IV Funds Refunds Policy**

Liverpool Hope University will follow the requirements of the Federal Student Aid programme “Return of Title IV Funds” regulations. In some cases these requirements may differ from the University’s standard procedures. Therefore, policies stated below will apply to all US Federal Loan Aid recipients when the University is dealing with a student’s Federal Loan funds. Students may receive a copy of the University’s Title IV Refund Policy from the Finance Office. This policy statement should be read in conjunction with Liverpool Hope University's Federal Loan Programme “Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy,” which is also available from the Finance Office.

Requirements for Title IV programme funds when students withdraw are separate from any refund policy that the University has.

The student may therefore still owe funds to the University to cover unpaid institutional charges. Liverpool Hope University may also collect from the student any Title IV programme funds owed to the University that it was required to return to the funding source.

Return of Title IV Fund calculations will be made within 30 days from date of determination. In calculating Return of Title IV funds the Finance Office will use worksheets and software provided by the US Department of Education. All such funds must be returned to the lender within 45 days of the date when the University determined that a student withdrew from studies or Interrupted studies. Students who have questions about their Title IV funds can phone the Federal Student Aid Information Centre at 1-800-4-FEDAID (1-800-433-3243). Information is also available on [Student Aid](https://studentaid.gov/)

It is also important to note that if students take an approved scheduled break from study of 5 or more consecutive days then these days are excluded from the numerator and denominator of the R2T4 calculation. Scheduled breaks of less than 5 consecutive days are included in the R2T4 calculation. The dates of institutional scheduled breaks of more than 5 days vary each year due to the differing vacation dates but the relevant academic calendar will detail this information and they can be found at <https://www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/academiccalendars/>

Title IV funds will be returned in the following order:

1. Unsubsidized Federal loans
2. Subsidized Federal loans
3. PLUS Loan funds

**Official Withdrawal from Studies**

A student wishing to withdraw from the University should normally complete a Liverpool Hope University “Withdrawal from Studies Form”. It should be submitted to the Student Administration office either via the Help Desk in the foyer of the Gateway Building or via email: administration@hope.ac.uk

If possible the Liverpool Hope University “Withdrawal from Studies Form” should also be completed, even if written notification has been given. Should the student fail to file the Withdrawal Form or there is a lag between the written notification and the filing of the form, the last date of engagement will be used to calculate the Return of Title IV funds.

Liverpool Hope is an attendance taking institution and for US students with federal loans the date of withdrawal used for return of funds to the US Department of Education and to inform NSLDS, will be the last date of recorded attendance.

The amount of assistance earned (i.e. the amount owed to the University) is determined on a pro rata basis.

If a US student who has successfully enrolled in a semester does not attend any classes at all then in this instance an RT24 calculation will not take place due to the student not meeting the eligibility requirements of attending classes. The financial aid award would also be cancelled and the entire award amount returned back to the US Department of Education.

The payment period is the semester period for which the loan was certified. For example, if the student completes 30% of the payment period or period of enrolment, the student has earned 30% of the assistance they were originally scheduled to receive. Once the student has completed more that 60% of the payment period or period of enrolment, all the assistance that the student was scheduled to receive for the period is considered to have been earned (i.e. owed to the University).

When a student withdraws from the University, they usually become ineligible to receive further disbursements of US financial aid. However, there are some cases where any funds earned prior to withdrawal can be offered to the student through a post-withdrawal disbursement (PWD). When the total amount of Title IV loan funds earned as of the official withdrawal date is more than the amount that was disbursed to the student, the difference between the two amounts will be treated as post-withdrawal disbursement.

If the student is eligible, or after an approved leave of absence of more than 180 days, the University will send a notification within 30 days of the action required for the student to either accept or decline a portion or all of the late disbursement. This notification will be to confirm if any funds need to be repaid, as well as any funds that will need to be returned to the US Department of Education. Furthermore, this disbursement cannot be a second or subsequent disbursement, and the University is unable to make a late disbursement if the student was a first year or first time borrower (unless the student completed the first 30 days of the programme). However, if the student does not respond within 2 weeks of notification, the post-withdrawal disbursement award will be cancelled.

First-time, first-year undergraduates who do not complete the first 30 days of their programme before withdrawal will not earn any loan funds that he or she would have received had the student remained enrolled past the 30th day. If the student receives (or the university receives on behalf of the student) excess Title IV programme funds that must be returned, the university must return a portion of the excess equal to the lesser of:

1. The institutional charges multiplied by the unearned percentage of the funds,or
2. The entire amount of excess funds.

**Interruption of Studies: (Leave of Absence)**

Students are allowed to interrupt their studies only after receiving formal approval from the University. Interruption of Study will normally only be granted for medical reasons, family bereavement or other serious non-academic circumstances outside the student’s control. Any student wishing to interrupt their studies should make an appointment with a Senior Academic Advisor in their Faculty (Academic Division) and complete an “Interruption of Study Form”. (See Liverpool Hope University’s “[Satisfactory Academic Progress](http://www.hope.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/usa/feesandsemesterdates/fundingforusstudents/satisfactoryacademicprogresssappolicy/)” policy for completion time-frames.)

If students have an Interruption of study, they have to return to their studies within 180 days. Otherwise it will be considered a withdrawal.

An Interrupting student will be charged for all Liverpool Hope University fees owed up to the approval date on the Liverpool Hope University “Interruption of Study Form”. Otherwise, the same Refund Rules apply as for Office Withdrawal From Studies (see above p. 2). Students receiving US Federal Loan aid may be liable for the return of a portion of those funds, depending on the effective date of the Interruption. Any student considering Interruption of Study is strongly advised to seek advice from the Liverpool Hope University Finance Office before making their decision. Otherwise, during an approved Interruption of Study period the student continues in their LHU registered student status. For US Federal Loan recipients this means “in-school” status For repayment purposes you will not have to begin repayment of loan funds. However, if you do not return to study at the approved date, the Last Day of Attendance for start of repayment calculation will be the date the Interruption of Study was effective (i.e. **the date it began**), and you may have already used up your allowed grace period.

A student granted an official Interruption of Study that meets the criteria stated above is not considered to have withdrawn and no Return calculation is required. Upon the student’s return, he or she continues to earn the Federal Student Aid previously awarded for the period.

If a student fails to return to their studies at the approved date, they will be deemed to have Withdrawn from Studies and the University must report their change of status to the loan holder. In this situation Title IV regulations stipulate that the student’s withdrawal date is the date the student began the Interruption of Study, not their stated return date.

**Unofficial Interruption of Study**

Any student who interrupts their studies without University approval by completing the Liverpool Hope University “Interruption of Study Form” will remain registered on all their modules and will be liable for all Liverpool Hope University fees. No Refunds to the student are allowed. For Title IV purposes an unofficial Interruption of Study will be treated as a Withdrawal from Studies. The University must report the student’s status to the loan holder as soon as the University recognises that the student is no longer attending their classes.

**Leaves of Absence (LOA) and withdrawals**

**Definitions**

**Official Withdrawal**

In order to officially Withdraw from the University, a student must complete the Liverpool Hope University “Withdrawal from Studies Form” (undergraduate or postgraduate form as appropriate). It should be submitted to the Student Administration office either via the Help Desk in the foyer of the Gateway Building or via email: administration@hope.ac.uk. The student will be liable for all Liverpool Hope University fees up to the date on their completed Withdrawal form. When a student withdraws from the University they will receive a transcript of all attempted and completed credits, course credits and grades achieved for each course, if they request one. However, they are deemed to have left the University and must reapply as a new student if they wish to return. Any previous academic credits and grades will only be accepted if they are deemed applicable to the academic programme for which the student is applying. Degree classifications do not apply to students who leave before becoming entitled to the full degree. Therefore, no overall equivalent of the Grade Point Average is calculated for such students. However, their transcripts will indicate the mark, grade and credit value for each completed course.

**Unofficial Withdrawals**

Any student who leaves their Liverpool Hope University course without completing the official Liverpool Hope University “Withdrawal from Studies Form,” will be liable for all Liverpool Hope University fees for the academic year in question. The last date of attendance will be used for calculation of the amount of federal financial aid a student has earned as of the student's withdrawal date.  It is the student’s responsibility to officially Withdraw, not the University’s to eventually discover the student is no longer attending their classes.

**Failing units on courses and failure to attend classes**

Students who fail to attend class will be dealt with as detailed for unofficial withdrawals; the R2T4 calculation will be based on the student’s last date of attendance. However for engaged students (in attendance) who fail their assessment components and therefore fail to achieve any credits no calculation will be required.

**Approved Leaves of Absence (LOA)**

An LOA is a temporary interruption in a student’s programme of study. LOA refers to the specific time period during a programme when a student is not in attendance and will return to complete the programme. Students returning from a LOA are not required to re-apply for admission but must re-register for their courses. Any student wishing to interrupt their studies should make an appointment with a Senior Academic Advisor in their Faculty (Academic Division) and complete an “Interruption of Study Form”. The form must be signed by a Senior Academic Advisor.

**Unapproved leaves of absence**

 A school may grant a student an LOA that does not meet the conditions to be an approved LOA for Title IV purposes (for example for academic reasons). However any LOA that does not meet all of the conditions for an approved LOA is considered a withdrawal for Title IV purposes.

**Approved LOA’s**

An LOA must meet certain conditions to be counted as a temporary interruption in a student’s education instead of being counted as a withdrawal requiring Liverpool Hope University to perform a return calculation. If an LOA does not meet the conditions the student is considered to have ceased attendance and to have withdrawn from Liverpool hope University and we are required to perform a return calculation.

In order for an LOA to qualify as an approved LOA

1. All requests for LOA’s to be submitted in writing to the Programme Director by completing an interruption of study form and include the reason for the student’s request. The form must be signed and dated by the student and specify the date the student wants the LOA to begin and end.
2. Student must apply in advance for an LOA unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from doing so
3. The situation described for the reason for the LOA must be generally non-academic in nature and must be one that leads to a reasonable expectation that the student will return from the LOA within the allowed time frame.
4. The LOA together with any additional leave of absence must not exceed a total of 180 days in any 12 month period including days in which Liverpool Hope University is not in session.

All requests for LOA’s will be reviewed by the Programme Director, the University Registrar and the Director of financial aid. The student will be notified in writing by the Programme Director of the University’s decision.

During the LOA Liverpool Hope University will not assess the student for any additional charges, the student’s financial need will not increase and therefore the student will not be eligible for any additional disbursements of Federal Student Aid.

If the student is a Stafford Loan recipient Liverpool Hope University will explain to the student, prior to granting the LOA the effects that the student’s failure to return from an LOA may have on the student’s loan repayment terms including the expiration of the student’s grace period.

A student granted an LOA that meets the criteria stated above is not considered to have withdrawn and no return calculation is required. Upon the student’s return from the leave he or she continues to earn the Federal Student Aid previously awarded for the period.

**Completion of coursework upon return.**

In as much as approved leaves of absence are viewed as temporary interruptions in a student’s attendance and since the academic programme at Liverpool Hope University are considered semester-based programmes where the repayment period is the semester, a student returning from an LOA must do so at a time when he or she can complete the semester in order to complete the payment period and be eligible to receive a second or subsequent disbursement. Therefore, for students enrolled in credit hour semester programmes in order for an LOA to be an LOA the school must allow a student returning from an LOA to complete the coursework that he or she began prior to the LOA

**Students who return earlier than anticipated**

The school, in exceptional, circumstances may permit a student to return to class before the expiration of the student’s LOA in order to review materials previously covered. However until the student has resumed the academic programme at the point where he or she began the LOA, the student is considered to still be on the approved LOA. The days the student spends in class before the course reaches the point at which the student begins his or her LOA must be counted in the 180 days maximum for an approved leave of absence. A student repeating coursework while on LOA must reach the point at which he or she interrupted training within the 180 days of the start of the student’s LOA.

**Student who fails to return from LOA’s**

If a student does not return to the school at the expiration of an approved LOA (or a student takes an unapproved LOA) the student’s withdrawal date is the date the student began the LOA.

**Explanation of consequence of withdrawal to loan recipients**

A student who is granted an approved LOA is considered to remain in an in-school status for Title IV loan repayment purposes. If a student on an approved LOA fails to return the school must report to the loan holder the student’s change in enrolment status as of the withdrawal date. One possible consequence of not returning from an LOA is that a student’s grace period for a Title IV programme loan might be exhausted. Therefore in order for a LOA to be an approved LOA, prior to granting a leave of absence a school must inform a student who is a Title IV loan recipient of the possible consequences a withdrawal may have on the student’s loan repayment terms including the exhaustion of the student’s grace period.

**Unapproved LOA’s**

A school may grant a student an LOA that does not meet the conditions to be an approved LOA for Title IV purposes (for example for academic reasons). However any LOA that does not meet all of the conditions for an approved LOA is considered a withdrawal for Title IV purposes. The student’s withdrawal date is the date the student begins the LOA. An unapproved LOA may be treated as an official withdrawal since the school would have previously granted an LOA. Therefore the school would know immediately that the student had ceased attendance for Title IV purposes and must use the specified withdrawal date in the return calculation.