



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Trinity Off Books Guide



Navigating Off Books

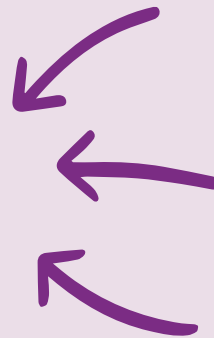
A Guide for Trinity Students

Introduction

Welcome to the comprehensive guide for Trinity students considering taking a break from their studies, also known as going '**Off Books**'.

This page is designed to provide valuable insights and practical advice on **three key phases**:

1. **Before going Off Books**
2. **During the Year Off Books**
3. **Transitioning Back into College**



We understand that making this decision is not easy, and we aim to support you in making an informed choice that aligns with your personal circumstances and goals.



1. **Before going Off Books**

Reflect on Your Reasons

Understand the specific reasons driving your decision. Whether it's for mental or general health, personal circumstances, academic reasons, a break, or financial concerns, knowing your motivations is crucial.

Pros and Cons

Evaluate the potential benefits and drawbacks. Consider academic momentum, potential loss of connections and support networks, and how you plan to utilise the break productively.

Communication with College Authorities

Reach out to your college tutor and faculty department to initiate the process. Obtain the necessary documentation and complete the required paperwork to familiarise yourself with your **Off Books** status. For **Postgraduate (PG) Students**, reach out to your Course Director, Research Supervisor, Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning or the Post Advisory Service to initiate the process.

Note: if you are a research student in receipt of a stipend, you will not be able to receive stipend payments while you are Off Books.

PROS

Enhanced mental and emotional wellbeing:

Focus on self-care and develop strategies.

Improved physical health:

Prioritise well-being without academic stress.

Personal growth and self-discovery:

Explore new interests and personal development.

Real-world experience:

Gain valuable experience and perspective.

Financial stability:

Work and save money for stability.

Re-evaluation and goal clarification:

Reassess academic and career goals.

CONS

Academic momentum loss:

Readjust to the academic environment.

Risk of not returning:

Re-establish your academic path.

Loss of connections and support networks:

Maintain important connections.

Delay in completing your degree:

Consider academic and financial implications.

Difficulty readjusting to college life:

Acclimate to new courses and faculty.

Potential knowledge and skill gaps:

Bridge any knowledge or skill gaps. There are also Visa implications for International Students.

2. During the Year Off Books



Prioritise Your Wellbeing

Focus on health and wellbeing. If you choose the break for health reasons, ensure you are taking care of yourself. Access counselling services if needed, stay connected with supportive individuals, and practice mindfulness or meditation. If you have taken a break for health reasons, you will be asked for evidence that you are well enough to return to your studies, so it is important to take the time you need to fully recover.

Engage in Productive Activities

Consider employment, volunteering, or hobbies. If possible, consider part-time employment to add structure to your week and gain valuable real-world experience. Alternatively, explore volunteer work or hobbies to create a meaningful routine. This might be an issue for international students - or at least the hours are limited for visa reasons.

Study with Purpose

Set clear goals and create a study plan. If you intend to continue studying during the break, set clear goals, create a study plan, and allocate time for self-care and breaks. Consider forming study groups or finding an accountability buddy to stay on track.

3. Transitioning Back into College



Reconnect with Campus

Familiarise yourself with the campus and meet friends. Before resuming your studies, familiarise yourself with the campus, meet friends, or consider participating in internships to ease your transition.

Review Academic Material

Review relevant course material. If you didn't study during the break, consider reviewing relevant course material to feel more prepared upon returning to college.

Communication with College Authorities

Contact your tutor, research supervisor, Course Director or Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning, and faculty department well in advance (early in Semester 2) to complete necessary documentation and inquire about any additional requirements.

Establish Support Systems

Identify someone you can regularly check in with for support and guidance. Address any problems promptly and ensure you have adequate support systems in place.

Conclusion

Taking a break from college is a significant decision that requires thoughtful consideration and planning. Remember that your well-being and academic success are essential, and Trinity provides various resources to support you throughout your journey. If you have any questions or need further assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to the Trinity College support services. We are here to help you every step of the way.

Student Services

These services comprise Academic Registry, Day Nursery, Disability Service, Health, Sport and Student Counselling.

Visit the [Student Services - Home Page](#)

Note: The information in this guide is designed to provide general guidance and information. For personalised advice or specific queries related to your situation, we encourage you to reach out to your college tutor or support services.

Important Information

It's important to consider these potential drawbacks and develop strategies to mitigate them. By planning ahead, staying connected with college resources, and being proactive in your academic journey, you can minimise the negative impact of taking a break and make a successful transition back into college life. Remember, taking a break is a personal decision, and there's no one-size-fits-all approach. It's essential to make choices that align with individual needs and long-term goals.

Document your Off Books Journey

Consider starting a blog, vlog, or journal about your experiences while you are **Off Books**. This can be a therapeutic way to process your experiences and share insights with others.



OBA / OBN and Student Cases



OBA / OBN

Off Books Taking assessment or OBA / OBN. The process for going 'Off Books'. Examples of this are permitting a student's name to come Off Books for a specified period of time or permitting the deferral of examinations. It's for students who are considering taking a break from their studies. Requests such as these are commonly referred to in College as 'student cases'.

Useful Links

Application for Off Books (OBA / OBN)

- [Undergraduate Off Books Form](#)
- [Off Books PG Student Cases Form](#)

Student Cases

- [Student Cases - Home Page](#)

Postgraduate Advisory Service (PAS)

- [PAS - Home Page](#)

Student Services

- [Student Services - Home Page](#)

Student Cases

Associated with Academic Registry, who are Trinity's central hub for student administrative services. Student Cases look after Off Books & Re-Admission. If you are a postgraduate student, you should contact your supervisor or course director who will on your behalf log a case with PG Student Cases via pgcases@tcd.ie.

Form - Application for Off Books (OBA/OBN)

Section A: Student's Details

Note: This is the 'Undergraduate Off Books form'



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

Application for Off-Books (OBA / OBN)

E-mail to: studcase@tcd.ie

Updated: May 2021

Section A: Student's Details

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Date of request: | <input type="text"/> |
| Student's Name: | <input type="text"/> |
| Student's ID: | <input type="text"/> |
| Course: | <input type="text"/> |
| Year of course: | <input type="text"/> |
| Current Status: | <input type="radio"/> On Books <input type="radio"/> Off Books <input checked="" type="radio"/> OBA (Off Books Taking Assessment) |
| Tutor's Name: | <input type="text"/> |
| Tutor's Email: | <input type="text"/> |
| Academic Unit Contact: | <input type="text"/> |
| Academic Unit Email: | <input type="text"/> |

OBA (Off Books Taking Assessment)

Going Off Books Taking Assessment is an alternative to repeating a year. **Note:** Going 'Off Books' implies the student is taking time off and intends to return to the same course in College. Examples of this are permitting a student's name to come Off Books for a specified period of time or permitting the deferral of examinations. It's for students who are considering taking a break from their studies.

Academic Unit Contact:

This refers to the contact in a particular school in the College. For example, the Academic Unit of Neurology (School of Medicine) would be the Academic Unit Contact, or the Professor of Neurology.

Section B: What is the student requesting (Section B - Part 2)

Has the student attempted any of the exams listed above?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please provide supporting details and evidence if required:

Have you included relevant supporting documentation?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Please select the reason for going off-books:

☐ Personal ☐ Financial ☐ Other
☐ Medical ☒ Ad misericordiam

Please provide supporting details and evidence if required:

This is asking the student to give additional information or documentation that can validate or support their request or claim. This could be in the form of written explanations, official documents, medical certificates, or any other relevant evidence. For example: If a student is requesting to go "Off Books" due to medical reasons, they might provide details like: "During the past semester, I was diagnosed with a medical condition that requires extensive treatment and rest. This has made it challenging for me to attend classes and complete assignments." For evidence, they might attach:

- A medical certificate from a doctor detailing the diagnosis and recommended treatment.

Ad misericordiam (Appeal)

This appeals policy provides information on the evidence required to submit an appeal to sympathy or on medical grounds if a student is unfit to sit an examination/assessment.

Quick Off Books Reminder

Before Going Off Books

- Reflect on Your Reasons
- Weigh the Pros and Cons
- Communicate with College Authorities



During the Year Off Books

- Prioritise Your Wellbeing
- Engage Constructively
- Study with Purpose



Transitioning Back to College

- Reconnect with the Campus
- Review Academic Material
- Communicate with College Authorities
- Establish Support Systems

