

What if I suspend my studies?

If you have to suspend studies (for example, due to illness), then you are still classed as a student. Provided that you remain enrolled on your course, you will continue to fall within the definition of a full-time student.

What happens if I don't pay my council tax?

If you don't pay your council tax, the council can begin legal proceedings against you through the magistrates' court. Non-payers can go to prison. If you are threatened with legal action or receive a summons, seek advice immediately. **Do not ignore any letters you get regarding council tax** and always seek advice.

If you agree to pay by monthly installments and miss three payments, you will have to pay the whole amount of council tax due. For further information on council tax, please contact your local council.

What if I am an overseas student?

If you are a single person and you share with students, live alone, live in lodgings or in halls of residence, no Council Tax will be payable. If you live with your partner and they are **not** a British citizen, you won't have to pay Council Tax if you're the only occupiers of the property and are **unable** (by the terms of your leave) to take paid work or claim state benefits. Don't try to claim any state benefits as you may prejudice your application for further leave to remain in the UK. Always seek advice first.

Useful contacts

Southampton City Council
Tel: 023 8083 3009
Email: council.tax@southampton.gov.uk
www.southampton.gov.uk

Eastleigh Borough Council
Tel: 023 8068 8470
Email: revbens@eastleigh.gov.uk
www.eastleigh.gov.uk

Winchester City Council
Tel: 01962 840222
www.winchester.gov.uk

New Forest District Council
Tel: 023 8028 5000
www.newforest.gov.uk



Southampton
SOLENT
University

Students and Council Tax

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Student Funding Team

Student Hub (RM050)

Tel: 023 82013427

Email: student.funding@solent.ac.uk

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What is Council Tax?

Council Tax is a property-based tax for public services provided by the local council. There is one charge per property: a house, flat or caravan. The charge is issued to the liable person(s) who must pay the charge and collect any contributions from residents.

Do full-time students have to pay council tax?

Not if you live in university halls, or if everybody living in the house is a full-time student.

How do I tell the council I am exempt?

You can collect your 'Council Tax Exemption Certificate' from the Student Hub (RM050) once you are enrolled. Currently Solent University provides the council with a list of their students. (You will be included on this list providing you agreed for the University to share your data at the time you enrolled).

What is the definition of 'student' for council tax purposes?

You are usually considered a full-time student if:

- you attend a university or college course lasting for at least one academic year and as long as you attend for at least 24 weeks out of the year and study for at least 21 hours per week during term time.

- You continue to be a student until your course ends or you leave it (withdraw)
- You are repeating a full-time course on a part-time basis or have temporarily suspended your studies. This also applies to students on a placement year
- You won't be considered a full-time student if you're doing a course related to your job - such as day release

What if I live with people who aren't students?

If there's someone in your household who's not a full-time student, the household will receive a bill but may qualify for a Council Tax Reduction. The amount of Council Tax Reduction depends on your particular circumstances and is controlled by your local authority.

For information on Council Tax Reduction in Southampton please go to the following web page: www.southampton.gov.uk/housing-council-tax/council-tax/discounts-exemptions/student-council-tax-exemption.aspx

If you're a full-time student sharing with the owner-occupier or you live in a 'House of Multiple Occupation' (HMO*), you won't be liable for Council Tax. In these cases, responsibility for Council Tax lies with the owner(s). They may pass the costs on through your rent but they cannot pass on the Council Tax bill.

If there's a mix of students and non-students, the council can only legally pursue non full-time students for payment of Council Tax as long as the students provide their exemption certificate.

If you live and share basic facilities with your landlord (that is, bathroom, kitchen) it will be their responsibility to pay the Council Tax. However, some landlords include the amount within your rent to meet this cost.

* 'HMO' is a house with separate households and the tenants have individual tenancies. The tenants may share some facilities but live separately.

What about during the summer?

Any summer vacations during the course are still classed as exempt, even if you take up full-time work. However, you become liable for Council Tax at the end of your course or between two different courses, for example, degree to postgraduate.

What if I own my house?

If you own your own house and rent it out to non-students, you may be liable to pay Council Tax.

What if I withdraw from my course?

You will then become liable to pay Council Tax during the months you stay in your property; for example, if you leave your course in November but stay in your house until February, you are liable for Council Tax for the period November to February. Always seek advice as you may be able to claim a reduction.