

# Leave of Absence Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) Leave of absence provides a mechanism for students to interrupt their studies in response to various external circumstances that may affect their capacity to undertake their studies.

(2) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the procedural information provided on the [HiQ website](#) (QUT staff and student access only).

## Section 2 - Application

(3) This Policy applies to domestic and international students, postgraduate and undergraduate coursework students and award courses.

(4) International students are strictly limited in the circumstances in which they can apply for leave of absence, and are required to meet conditions other than those specifically described in this Policy.

## Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
University Academic Board	Specifies the circumstances in which a student may take leave of absence from an award course.
Vice-President (Administration) and University Registrar	Determines the student's application for leave of absence.
Director, Student Administration	Manages the leave of absence process on behalf of the Vice-President (Administration) and University Registrar.
Deputy Dean (may be delegated)	Provides advice on applications for leave that exceed one year.
Students	Ensure they: 1. maintain satisfactory academic progression to ensure completion of their course within specified time limits; and 2. apply for leave of absence when not enrolling in a teaching period. In the case of international students, the student must also comply with any requirements for enrolment or study at the University specified in the <a href="#">Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</a> .

## Section 4 - Determining Applications

### General Conditions for Leave of Absence

(5) Leave will not be approved if the student will breach the maximum time limits for completing an award course in the [Time Limits for Completion of an Award Course Policy](#).

(6) Any period of deferment of commencement of study ([Admission of Students Policy](#)) is not taken into account in determining whether the conditions described in this Policy for approval of leave of absence have been met.

(7) A student may need to return before the end of a period of approved leave in order to meet professional accreditation or recognition associated with their course of study. The relevant faculty will advise students of this requirement.

(8) Leave of absence applications from undergraduate and postgraduate students will normally be approved without referral to faculty where:

- a. the student is enrolled in an undergraduate or postgraduate award course; and
- b. the student is applying for leave of absence for a period of no more than one year; and
- c. the student has completed at least one teaching period of enrolment in the award course; and
- d. the leave period requested, when combined with earlier periods of leave in the same course, does not exceed one year.

### **Leave of Absence after Commencement of Studies but Prior to Completion of First Teaching Period of Enrolment**

(9) If the student has commenced studies, but has not completed at least one teaching period of enrolment in the award course, leave of absence may be approved if the student has demonstrated exceptional circumstance for taking the leave. All other conditions listed in General Conditions for Leave of Absence above must be met before leave may be approved. Depending on the time of application, commencement of the student's course may be delayed, or financial and/or academic penalties may apply.

### **Approval of Leave of Absence in other Circumstances**

(10) Other circumstances include:

- a. for leave in excess of one year; or
- b. where the leave period in the application combined with earlier periods of leave in the same course exceeds one year.

(11) If the student seeks leave of absence they must demonstrate that exceptional circumstances exist which necessitate taking the leave. In these cases, the application will be referred to the faculty for review.

## **Section 5 - Consequences of Taking Leave of Absence**

(12) Where leave of absence is approved:

- a. students are invited to re-enrol in the place that has been held for them at the end of the period;
- b. a student will return to the version of the course they were enrolled in prior to leave but may be required to return to a new version or replacement course for professional accreditation or recognition requirements;
- c. the enrolment program followed by a student on return may be impacted by professional accreditation or recognition requirements associated with their course of study;
- d. a student is deemed to have withdrawn from enrolment in all units. In cases where leave of absence is granted after the published withdrawal date for the relevant teaching period, failing grades are assigned unless the student demonstrates exceptional circumstances for the proposed period of leave ([Enrolment Policy](#), [Withdrawing from units](#));

e. the applicant has an admitted student status at the university for the approved period of absence.

(13) Students will be provided with support during leave of absence and on return to study.

(14) Where the student fails to re-enrol at the conclusion of an approved leave of absence the student must apply to return to study in a subsequent period. Students returning to study may be admitted to an alternative course and may need to complete additional units to meet course requirements ([Admission of Students Policy](#), Readmission).

## Section 6 - Definitions

Term	Definition
Award Course	Means a program of study leading to the award of a degree, diploma or certificate accredited by QUT's <a href="#">Award Courses Policy</a> . Undergraduate includes students enrolled in QUT College Certificate and Diploma award courses.
Deferment Period	Means domestic applicants offered admission to an undergraduate award course may apply to defer the commencement of their studies for one year and after the first year request, for up to a further 12 months ( <a href="#">Admission of Students Policy</a> ).
Enrolment	Means the units which define a program of study, the amount and timing of that study and the fees and charges that will be applied.
International Student	Has the same meaning as "overseas student" in the <a href="#">Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)</a> .
Leave of Absence	Means a place in the course will be held for the student for the approved period.
Time Limit	Means the maximum amount of time to complete a course.

## Section 7 - Delegations

(15) Refer to [Register of Authorities and Delegations](#) (C115) (QUT staff access only).

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
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<b>Policy Owner</b>	Cindy Meyers Director, Student Administration
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