Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health Sciences
School of Population Health

Leave of Absence/
Course Discontinuation Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with University Council Statute 5.4.10, Statute 11.1, and Statute 11.2 and is not intended in any way as a substitute for Council approved Statutes. (Statutes can be accessed via: http://www.unimelb.edu.au/Statutes/)

1. Leave of Absence

1.1 Definition of Leave of Absence
An interruption of a student’s course of study that has been formally approved by the appropriate School or Faculty.

1.2 Parameters of Leave of Absence
Leave of Absence requests will be considered only from students who have completed a minimum of two subjects (25 points). Absence from the course is granted for a maximum period of 2 semesters and only in exceptional cases will this period be extended.

1.3 Procedure for Application for Leave of Absence
A Request for Leave of Absence form is available from the School of Population Health Academic Programs office or the SPH website at: http://www.sph.unimelb.edu.au/postgrad/current/forms.html
Before submitting this form, students should check that they comply with the parameters of Leave of Absence conditions and obtain the relevant Course Coordinator’s signature on the form.

1.4 The Formalisation of Leave of Absence
Students will be notified in writing of the approval of their Leave of Absence application.

1.5 Leave of Absence for International Students
International students considering a Leave of Absence should note that this is only approved in exceptional circumstances. Student should read the Information Sheet on Leave of Absence for International Students (available at http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/international/publications/index.html#infosheets) and contact the University's International Student Services for further advice.

1.6 Return to Study
Students on Leave of Absence are required to inform the Academic Programs Office in writing of their intention to resume their course by 31 October (if on leave until the end of second semester) or by 30 June (if on leave until the end of first semester only). Failure to do so will be interpreted as termination of the course.

1.7 Extension of Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances
An appeal to extend the maximum period of 2 semesters of Leave of Absence will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Students may appeal in writing to the School of Population Health’s Postgraduate Studies Committee (PGSC), detailing their circumstances. Any supporting documents must also be attached. The Committee will make a decision based on the student’s circumstances and students will be notified of the decision in writing.
2. Discontinuation from a Course

Any student intending to discontinue from their course must notify the Academic Programs Office in writing or by completing an “Application to Withdraw Form” available from the Academic Programs Office or the SPH website: http://www.sph.unimelb.edu.au/postgrad/current/forms.html

2.1 Maximum Time for Completion of a Degree

All students commencing a degree must complete their course within ten years, which includes any Leave of Absence periods. Credit points for a degree may only be accumulated for a maximum of ten years. Students enrolled beyond ten years will lose points as subjects taken early in the degree progressively exceed their credit date before degree completion.

2.2 Students Resuming a Degree After a Break (Termination or Abandonment)

Students resuming a discontinued degree will be subject to the current degree requirements and fee structure. Students who resume a degree that they had discontinued will be awarded credit where appropriate. Note that a ten year credit rule applies; all study contributing to a degree must be completed within a ten year time period.