International Students

Having a break from or extending studies

Having a break from studies

Most courses follow the Australian academic year, which includes a few weeks’ break in winter and a longer break in summer, as well as short breaks during each semester. However, sometimes a student will need to take time off from studies during the semester for medical or personal reasons. In this case the student needs to apply for a Leave of Absence. Leave of Absence can be for up to six months.

Leave of Absence can only be approved in limited circumstances, and clear supporting evidence is always required. If you think you might need to apply for Leave of Absence, please contact the International Student Advisers (ISA) as early as possible. If you need to leave Australia urgently (such as in a family medical emergency overseas), and you are not able to contact ISAs before you leave, please contact them by email as soon as you can to explain the situation and receive advice.

What if a Leave of Absence is not approved?

If you do not have enough reason or supporting evidence for the University to approve a Leave of Absence, but you still want to take a break from your studies, you will need to withdraw from your course and apply to join it again in the next semester. This is not always possible, and can affect your student visa, so you must contact an International Student Adviser to discuss this first.

Extending your studies

Your student visa length is based on the length of your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), and you are required to complete your course within this period. If your CoE finishes before you have completed your course, you need to apply for an extension of your CoE. The University will only extend CoEs in limited circumstances. When assessing a CoE extension request, students’ academic record will be considered along with any other supporting evidence showing why the student has not been able to complete their course on time.

If your CoE is extended, you will need to apply for a new student visa before your current visa expires. Please see www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Stud/ for more information on this process.

If your CoE is not extended, you must talk to your College about options for completing your course. You may need to study part of your course by distance from outside Australia.

Graduate Research students

Students in a PhD or Master by Research program may have additional conditions that apply to Leave of Absence or extensions. If you are studying a graduate research program, the first step is to contact your Candidature Management Adviser. They will help you and your supervisor(s) work out what options are available, and will assist with the process of requesting approval as appropriate.