



US Federal Aid Leave of Absence Policy 2024-25

The policy that describes the circumstances in which we can agree to a student being granted a 'leave of absence' from their course for the purposes of Title IV Federal Student Aid.

Overview

A 'Leave of Absence' from a program of study, for the purposes of Title IV Federal Student Aid, can only be allowed in very specific situations. This policy describes the situations in which we will apply a leave of absence, the implications for the Federal Student Aid of a student on a leave of absence, and the implications for Federal Student Aid of a student temporarily halting their studies when they are not eligible for a leave of absence.

The Leave of Absence Policy

A student wishing to be granted a Leave of Absence for Title IV Federal Student Aid purposes must request this in writing. This request must clearly state the reason for the request, and be signed and dated by the student. There is a standard form that students should use in order to request a leave of absence. This form is available on the University website.

A Leave of Absence for the purposes of Title IV Federal Student Aid is distinct from, and in addition to any academic permission to suspend study/research.

A Leave of Absence can only be granted if ALL THREE of the following conditions apply:

- The student is enrolled on a postgraduate research course (i.e. an MPhil/PhD).
- There is a reasonable expectation that the student will resume their studies within 180 calendar days (including any public holidays and University closure days) of taking the Leave of Absence.
- On returning from a Leave of Absence the student will resume their study from exactly the point at which they left it at the start of the Leave of Absence.
 - Because of this, a Leave of Absence is not normally an option for students on taught programs. It is normally only a feasible option for MPhil/PhD students

If a student has a Leave of Absence granted:

- An administrator will complete the Leave of Absence Request form and store it in the student's file.

- An administrator will inform the student of the details of the agreed Leave of Absence, including details of the consequences of failure to resume study at the approved time.
- The University will inform the Department of Education of the student's change in status, using an 'A' code on the NSLDS system.
- The student will earn no Federal Student Aid entitlement for the period of absence, but will simply resume earning entitlement on their return from leave.
- The student will remain 'in-school' for the purposes of Title IV Federal Student Aid repayment throughout the Leave of Absence period.
- A student failing to resume their studies from an authorised Leave of Absence will be reported to the Department of Education as withdrawn from studies, using a 'W' code on the NSLDS system. The date of withdrawal will be the date of the first absence from study, but the date on which this will be reported will be no earlier than 180 calendar days from the start of the absence.

If a student does not have a Leave of Absence granted:

- If a student takes a leave of absence that is not authorised for Title IV Federal Student Aid purposes, they will be reported to the Department of Education as withdrawn from studies, using a 'W' code on the NSLDS system. The date of withdrawal will be the date of the first absence from study.

The University publishes this policy and procedure on the website.

