Higher Degree Research Leave of Absence Information

Overview

(1) These guidelines outline the expectations for HDR candidates who wish to take leave during their research candidature.

(2) The primary responsibility for approving or denying periods of leave rests with the Principal Supervisor and Head of School per the HDR Candidature Rules Clause 24, 25, 26, 27.

(3) Research Services will provide HDR candidates, Research Supervisors, HDR Coordinators and Heads of School with information and specialist advice about the types of leave available, how to request leave, the types of documentation required and the impact of taking leave on research candidature.

(4) These guidelines apply to all HDR candidates enrolled in higher degree research programs at the University of New England.

(5) To apply for a leave of absence, HDR candidates should complete the appropriate forms available on the HDR My Study webpage.

General

(6) HDR candidates may apply for a total of twelve months leave of absence through their candidature. This does not include sick or parental leave.

(7) Leave of absence will be granted in the first six months only in exceptional circumstances.

(8) In special circumstances, an additional twelve months leave may be granted but this is at the discretion of the Head of School.

(9) HDR candidates must nominate the dates on which the leave will start and finish.

(10) Any Leave of Absence must be requested at least two weeks in advance. Retrospective leave will normally not be approved for candidature or scholarships.

(11) The time period of any leave of absence or special leave of absence is not counted as part of candidature, taking leave will necessarily result in an extension of the thesis submission date.

(12) While on leave, a candidate’s regular privileges - access to a supervisor, office space, library, laboratory and computer access may not be available.

(13) HDR candidates who undertake research activities while on a leave of absence, such as travel, field work or experimental work, may not be covered by University insurance.

(14) Normally, the provisions for leave of absence would not be used to extend the maximum submission date.

(15) In such cases, a candidate should apply to extend their candidature.

(16) An application for a leave of absence may not be approved once a candidate has exceeded their maximum period of candidature.

(17) Candidates enrolled in coursework as part of their higher degree research program will need to abide by the coursework rules for adding or withdrawing from courses.

International Candidates

(18) International HDR candidates will need to ensure that they abide by the conditions of their student visa in relation to any periods of leave of absence.
Applications for leave of absence submitted by International candidates will be processed in consultation with UNE International.

Scholarship payments will generally be suspended during periods of approved leave. Normally the period of leave will be added to the end of the scholarship, thus extending the original termination date of the scholarship.

Not all scholarship conditions are the same, so candidates should ensure they are familiar with the conditions of their particular scholarship prior to applying for any period of leave.

**Sick Leave**

Sick leave may be granted for a total of three months over the entire candidature

a. Candidates have 10 days sick leave per year, which accumulates over the period of candidature, but which cannot be used to extend candidature.

b. Periods of sick leave longer than 10 continuous days may be granted, but only on the presentation of a medical certificate.

c. Sick leave is a temporary cessation of candidature, which results in an extension of the maximum submission date for the equivalent period.

d. Paid sick leave will only be available to applicants who have paid sick leave provisions in their scholarship conditions.

**Parental Leave (unpaid)**

Candidates who are pregnant, or the partners of pregnant women, may be granted parental leave.

Candidates who are adoptive parents may also apply for parental leave.

Any provision for parental leave will be made based on the following:

a. The usual practice of the University of New England in relation to parental leave;

b. The specific conditions of the candidature of the applicant.

c. Parental leave cannot be claimed in retrospect.

**Parental Leave (paid)**

The provision of paid parental leave will depend entirely upon the conditions of any scholarship held by the candidate.

Where there is a provision for paid parental leave, provision will be made based on:

a. The usual practice of the University of New England in relation to parental leave;

b. The specific conditions of the candidature of the applicant;

c. The specific conditions of the scholarship held by the applicant.

d. Paid parental leave cannot be claimed in retrospect.

**Recreation Leave**

Full-time HDR candidates accrue four weeks recreation leave per annum, part-time candidates accrue annual leave on a pro-rata basis.

All higher degree research candidates are encouraged to take their recreational leave.

Leave should be taken with the agreement of the Principal Supervisor.

Candidates do not need to notify Research Services when they take recreational leave.