

This Guidance is to provide quick information for students and is not exhaustive. Please refer to the following policies for definitive information:

[Policy on Leave of Absence](#)

[Policy on Student Welfare and Support](#)

[Policy on Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Paternity and Adoption](#)

What to do when circumstances affect your ability to continue your programme and you need to undertake a Leave of Absence (LOA)

Talk to someone as soon as possible

Before making the decision to request a leave of absence, you should discuss your options with a relevant member of staff. People you can talk to include;

- Your Programme Director
- Your Personal Supervisor
- Student Life and Wellbeing Officer
- Postgraduate Office staff

Why do people take Leave of Absence?

As a School, we understand that various life challenges can occur, both planned (in the case of time off to travel or work) or in response to illness or personal problems which are affecting a student's ability to study effectively. In order to make it easier to apply for LOA, there are grounds on which you may apply. For each of these, evidence is required to submit the claim. Examples of this include:

| GROUND S | EVIDENCE |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Academic Conditions | Evidence from Programme Directors, Academic Lead, Thesis Supervisors Letter from an employer |
| Medical | Evidence from Doctor/Specialist/Counsellor Occupational Health Report |
| Compassionate | Independent third-party evidence (e.g., Open Door Team, Student Wellbeing Office). Death certificate or other dated evidence of bereavement |
| Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave | Evidence of pregnancy, MAT B1 Form etc., |
| Financial/Legal | Evidence of financial or legal requirements. Financial statement or written affidavit. |

I have decided that LOA is right for me. What do I do next?

You should complete the [form](#) at your earliest convenience. Your Programme Director will be available to guide you through this. All requests for leave of absence must be submitted with relevant supporting evidence as outlined above. You are able to submit scanned copies with your form. Please submit the completed form and evidence to postgraduate@hyms.ac.uk – due to security issues, you must send the documents from your Hull York Medical School email address.

If no evidence is submitted, your request will **not** be considered until the evidence is received and this may result in a delay. If you are unable to provide evidence, you must provide details as to why.

How long can I apply for LOA?

The length of your absence will inevitably depend on the circumstances, as well as the most appropriate date of return as agreed with your Programme Director. However, a leave of absence will normally be granted for a maximum of one year at a time and limited to a total of **two years for very exceptional circumstances**.

What date should I put as my LOA start date?

This should be discussed with your Programme Director when completing the form. However, you should submit requests for a leave of absence to the School, as far as possible, **before** the proposed start date.

We understand that there may be rare and exceptional cases, such as a medical or personal emergency, when a student might not be able to take the decision to request a leave of absence or look to apply retrospectively. Any retrospective leave of absence **must** be seen as exceptional, and you **must** provide clear evidence and a strong rationale for a retrospective leave of absence to be supported by the School. Leave of absence that is entirely retrospective will normally not be considered or approved.

I have previously undertaken a Leave of Absence, do I need to complete another form?

All Leave of Absence requests require submission of the form and supporting evidence. You must also capture the dates of your previous LOA to ensure that you are within the two year limit.

If you are applying for a continuation of a current leave of absence, you must include **recent** up-to-date evidence to support the new leave of absence request.

For students applying for a second LOA that is to run concurrently, this **must** be applied for in advance of the first LOA expiring, and new evidence provided as appropriate.

I am a Tier 4 visa student, will LOA affect my visa status?

Yes, LOA will have direct impact on your Tier 4 visa. Please contact the University Immigration Advisor before you consider applying for LOA.

Will LOA have impact on my tuition fees payment or scholarship?

Yes. When you're on LOA, your tuition fees payment will be paused. Depending on the grounds of your LOA, your scholarship may also be paused too and you will need to contact your funder. Please contact the University Fees Office for any questions about tuition fees. Please contact your scholarship provider or funder on any questions about your scholarship.

Why are there conditions for return attached to my LOA?

These conditions for return are to ensure that you receive appropriate academic and pastoral support to successfully return to the programme. You must fulfil these conditions, as otherwise you will not be allowed to return to study.