This document is an overview of student leave processes for School staff, including template resources to assist in fulfilling requirements. This is not intended as the main source of information for all areas of leave process but as a supporting guide - please see links in this document for full information.

For further queries related to leavers, please contact studentrecords@adm.leeds.ac.uk.
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Overview

Types of Student Leaver
There are three different types of student leaver:
Temporary - Permanent - Presumed (permanent)
The School has different responsibilities to each group. The SES pages titled "when a student leaves" are our web based resource for leave processes.

While Schools may submit temporary leave applications for taught students to studentrecords@adm.leeds.ac.uk or Student Cases (as described below), Postgraduate Researchers should apply for suspension of studies under a procedure managed by the Postgraduate Research team (see staff link at end of document).

What is leave?
Students are required to attend all aspects of study expected by their programme and School. Absences lasting under four weeks are dealt with at School process level.

If a student needs to be absent for more than four weeks, they must have permission to take what is referred to as “temporary leave” from their studies. Unexplained absence of this duration may otherwise end in permanent withdrawal through the “presumed permanently withdrawn” process. Temporary leave is not the same as, but could lead to, permanent leave/withdrawal, where the student permanently leaves their programme (and usually the university).

Importantly, there are academic, financial and often visa implications of temporary leave. Temporary leave must not be granted without ensuring the student has taken full consideration of all implications.

Why might a student request leave?
The University understands there may be times when a student needs to request leave. These include exceptional events that may have a significantly disruptive effect on a student’s ability to study; these events may be outside of the student’s control. Often the reasons are very similar to those provided in mitigating circumstances requests.

When can leave be requested for?
Leave requests should be submitted as soon as possible, and at most by 10 working days of the commencement of leave. Leave requests cannot be backdated.

How do leave requests affect student fees?
The student commits to a year’s fees on registration. It is only in exceptionally agreed circumstances we will not require payment of full fees. While the student can request a change in status, the Programmes and Assessment team decide when the change in status is approved. As mentioned, leave requests cannot be backdated and Schools should not make requests for such.
The leavers process for Schools

What process should I use for requesting leave?

**Leave that meets standard guidelines (see below)**…
can be requested by the parent School using the Taught Student Leavers form scanned to Operations, and will generally be granted by Operations without further requests.

**Where leave is slightly more unusual**…
a Taught Student Leavers form can be scanned to Operations, however Operations may ask the School for explicit confirmation of certain details.

*For example, where a standard academic year student leaves in February to return the next September, Operations may request confirmation that the Chair of the School Cases Committee has approved the leave and/or that the student has been made aware of the implications of leave and the circumstances of their return.*

**Where leave does not meet standard guidelines**…
this must be requested from and approved by the Student Cases Team (please visit the Secretariat SharePoint site for forms and further guidance).

********** Important points to note **********
- The student commits to a year’s fees on registration.
- In exceptional circumstances we will not require payment of full fees.
- The student can request a change in status.
- Operations/Student Cases decide when the change in status is approved.
- Schools should not be requesting that Operations/Student Cases back date.

What are the standard guidelines of leave for sending a request to Operations?
Temporary leave has more stringent regulations than permanent leave, as the student remains on programme and as such is still subject to University requirements whilst on leave and upon return. Schools should only request:

- a leave date within 10 working days of submission – backdating leave beyond this is not allowed (please alert Operations to requests near this 10 day limit)
- from one month up to 12 months of temporary leave at a time
- maximum extending study two years beyond the standard duration of the course
- leave with reason “health” where the school has seen satisfactory medical evidence
- leave with reason “financial” or “employment” for permanent leave only (see later)
Permanent Leavers details

When a student is considering permanent withdrawal, the appropriate member of staff in the School should meet with the student to advise them on their decision including discussion of the possible impact on finance and/or visa, and to direct them to further resources.

Temporary Leavers details

How much temporary leave can be taken?

Taught students are expected to complete their study within the time allotted for their programme. A student can *if needed* take a maximum of two years beyond the duration of the course to complete all aspects of their studies, including any resits. Schools can request up to one year uninterrupted temporary leave at any one time, so long as the student will remain able to complete their course within the maximum time allowed of two years beyond the duration of their course. Absences lasting under four weeks can be approved at School level by Head of School (or nominee). Students should be advised of the maximum time period for completion and that they need to plan to return to complete within this period.

Temporary leave timelines (week 8 ruling)

After the eighth week of teaching in a semester (marking the bulk of teaching being completed), students are ordinarily expected to sit the assessments for the semester. Standard leave requests therefore only cover submissions requesting leave in the first 8 weeks. For example, a student considering temporary leave in December would not be expected to standardly start leave until middle January.

Between semester week 9 and the start of the next semester, please consider Student Cases mitigating circumstances if examinations cannot be completed. A leave request can be submitted alongside a mitigating circumstances request, which could either be a Student Cases leave request for a time starting between semester week 9 and the next semester, or a standard Operations leave request to commence at the start of the next semester.

If a programme does not follow typical assessment patterns, please send Operations a request for exception to the above week 8 ruling (with alternative time limits).
**When is temporary leave not appropriate?**

It is not appropriate to approve temporary leave where:

…there is a risk that a student will not be able to complete their course within the maximum time allowed: other alternatives should be discussed with students, such as changes to their programme of study or the possibility of fall-back awards.

…it is requested to avoid taking assessments or examinations: a student who applies for temporary leave after the eighth week of teaching in a semester is ordinarily expected to sit the assessments for the semester, unless otherwise allowed to defer through their School’s mitigating circumstances procedures.

…it is requested for financial reasons: caution should be exercised before granting temporary leave on this basis, and the student should gain advice from Leeds University Union Student Advice. It is not appropriate to grant temporary leave when it is clear this will put a student into a worse off financial position than the one they are looking to avoid. Permanent withdrawal from studies should be considered.

…it is requested for employment reasons: a student should consider switching programme to the 4 year industrial version where available and remain a registered student. In exceptional circumstance the Head of School may grant permission.

**When temporary leave does not meet standard guidelines**

If temporary leave is requested…

- after week eight of teaching, or…
- more than one year's continuous temporary leave is required, or…
- the maximum time period for a programme is likely to be exceeded…

…then temporary leave must usually be approved by the Student Cases Team in the Secretariat. Please visit the Secretariat SharePoint for further guidance.

**Are any programmes exempt from these guidelines?**

For programmes that do not follow standard University teaching dates/semesters including distance learning programmes, contact the Student Cases team for advice.
Leave request flowchart

Step 1: student conversation

- Build picture of the student's scenario
- Explain impact of leave and/or signpost resources on key factors (fees, funding, accommodation, course offering, visa & immigration - see links section)
- Email student with summary of conversation
- Ask student to return next day/shortly after conversation to give them thinking time

Step 2: administration

- Complete Operations leavers' form/student cases form (including evidence required). For temporary leave, ensure conditions of return are established (conditions of return form available to complete for School/Student records only).
- Scan relevant form **WITHIN MAXIMUM TWO WEEKS OF LEAVE DATE...**
  - **NB** - delays to form submission may impact student funding.
  - **Attachment name:** [Student surname] [ID] [Short description e.g. PermWDForm]
  - **Subject:** [Student surname] [ID] [Short description e.g. Temp/perm leave request]
- For Operations: to studentrecords@adm.leeds.ac.uk
- For Student Cases: to studentcases@leeds.ac.uk
- Students not going on/ not completing a Year Abroad: please include Study Abroad office on outgoingstudyabroad@leeds.ac.uk when submitting a student’s leave request (non-standard Student Loans Company processes need to be checked)
- For Operations requests only: update SWATSLF on Banner
- Update any School specific records and complete any School specific requirements
- Outline next steps to student

Step 3 (temporary leave only): Contact for return

- Outline next steps to student ready for return
- **1-2 months prior to expected return:** it is the School's responsibility to email student (see return email template)
- **1-4 weeks prior to return/September returns to be returned in April * (later only if necessary):** email confirmation of return to studentrecords@adm.leeds.ac.uk (to prepare record, response will confirm registration open). Complete Fees change form if required (see returners and reduced fees guidance). Check modules correct on record and notify student when registration available
- Complete any School specific requirements

*NB in order to complete module enrolment in May for the following academic year, those on temporary leave must have been confirmed as returned prior to module enrolment opening i.e. by the start of May.*
Further resources

The below pages contain resources, these are not in themselves a requirement of the process of taking leave. These are here to help follow the previous flowchart.

Further downloads
Taught student leavers form download page is here.
Temporary leave “conditions of return” form download page is here

Staff links
1. When a student leaves (overview) (SES site)
2. Completing leave processes - temporary leave (SES site)
   Completing leave processes - permanent leave (SES site)
3. Student Cases applications (Secretariat site)
4. Mitigating Circumstances (SES site)
5. Fees liability (SES site)
   Funding (SES site)
6. Record Keeping Handbook Banner 8 - p38 on completing Banner forms (Workspace IT site)
7. Research student suspension and extension processes (SES site)

Student links
1. The impact of leave (inc. links to funding, fees, & accommodation) (Students site)
2. Finance links for:
   Fees liability (Students site)
   Funding “Changes in circumstances” (Students site)
3. Mitigating circumstances (Students site)
4. LUU Support and Advice (LUU site)
5. University support and advice (Students site)
6. Wellbeing recommended resources and self-help (Students site)
7. International Student Office (Students site)
8. Accom. – withdrawing from University (Accommodation site)
9. Disability services (Students site)
## Leave regulations notes for staff (for staff-student conversations)

This is intended to provide reference for staff on important factors to consider when discussing potential leave.

### Important to note:
- The student commits to a year’s fees on registration.
- In exceptional circumstances we will not require payment of full fees.
- The student can request a change in status.
- Operations/Student Cases decide when the change in status is approved.
- Schools should not be requesting that Operations/Student Cases back date

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<th>Question to student</th>
<th>Student information notes</th>
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<td>Contact previously made</td>
<td>Who have you spoken to about taking leave?</td>
<td>The student should speak at least one member of staff about their leave, School specific requirements may vary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for leave</td>
<td>What is your reason for taking leave?</td>
<td>See leave form for categories. If leaving part way through term, will need to complete “mitigating circumstances” form for decision on fees and retake of year. (temporary only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason is Illness</td>
<td>…where reason is illness, have we (the School) got a verifiable medical note for this?</td>
<td>Medical note needed to go on temporary leave. Fit to return note will also be required before return. If long term physical or mental health condition, liaison with Disability Services will also be required before return.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Already taken leave?</td>
<td>Staff check: student previously taken leave? If so, how long? (temporary only)</td>
<td>If the leave proposed plus previous leave means that the student exceeds the maximum study period of study the application goes to the Student Cases Team. (temporary only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start/return date of leave</td>
<td>We need to enter your leave start (and return) date(s). This includes working out how long your leave is and the impact on resuming studies if returning.</td>
<td>If leaving after 8th week of teaching examinations impact – see below. Fee liability dates link to this – if past a certain date, will need to pay a certain amount of fees. Check if course will be running at point of return in the same format. If student returns in semester 2 of a given year or requires a reduced fee – see fees impact (temporary only). Temporary leave cannot be standardly requested for more than one year of continuous leave. Any request for further leave can be made at the end of the one year period, but this is only available in exceptional circumstances and students are expected to complete all aspects of study (including re-sits) within 24 months of the normal completion date for their programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations &amp; progression impact</td>
<td>This space is to note the impact of your leave examinations &amp; course progression.</td>
<td>If leaving after 8th week of teaching, student is expected to complete any assessments and/or exams for that semester, unless you are granted exception from them through the mitigating circumstances process – see staff link 4. Check the course will still be available on return. Students are expected to complete all aspects of study, including re-sits within 24 months of the normal completion date for their programme, they need to be aware of this. (temporary only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees impact</td>
<td>You need to be aware of the impact on fees (this academic year and when you return). If this</td>
<td>Fees liability points determine broadly the amount of fees charged. These change on specific dates, these vary depending on student type. See student link 2 and staff link 5.</td>
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| Funding impact     | hasn’t been clarified, we will discuss this now.                                      | UG UK students will be charged for the full term if they have been registered for 1 working day of it. The first day of term is based on the Secretariat calendar. **This may not be the first day of teaching**, e.g. in January 2019 the first day of Term 2 was 14th January 2019.  
If student returns and requires a reduced fee (e.g. Charge for semester 2 only), the relevant form should be submitted before a student returns to reduce their fee (see reduced fees guidance on staff link 5). (temporary only). If students do not want to come to the SSC counter Student Fees Advisors are happy to answer specific queries over the telephone or by email, contact details can be found at the bottom of fees page student link 2. |
| Tier 4 Visa?       | Do you have a Tier 4 Visa? If so, do you know what you need to do if taking leave?   | Students with a T4 visa will need to be aware of requirements (including need to apply for new visa before return if temporary), so are advised to speak to the International Student Office about this (student link 7).                                     |
| Accommodation      | Are you confident you know what to do or who to ask for your tenancy agreement/accommodation requirements? | Students in university accommodation will need to contact accommodation team to arrange when their contract can be terminated. Students are liable for an eight week notice period from when they notify the Accommodation Office that they are leaving the University, and usually an administration charge of £40. See student link 8 for current information. Students may not be entitled to accommodation on their return if temporary – please make this clear. |
| School specific    | We need to let you know about School specific requirements                           | Some Schools have keys, uniforms, badges, resources, ID card etc. to return – notify the student of these.                                                                                                               |
| Resources provided to student | What do you want to know more about or follow up? Note resources here. | Provide resources as outlined in “Links” section as appropriate.                                                                                                           |
Taught leaver’s submission: SWATSLF

Schools are to submit SWATSLF alongside scanning a taught student leavers form to studentrecords@adm.leeds.ac.uk. SWATSLF cannot be updated for students who have already had leave processed within the academic year (so just scan).

**TEMP LEAVE REGS:**
- Not more than 1 yr leave;
- Moves end date no more than 2yrs beyond course duration;
- If returning to a semester already completed, must provide additional confirmation of chair of SCC approval.
- All cases after week 8 teaching (and where the above not met) must submit a form from Student Cases Sharepoint site, who will send notification to Operations if approved.

**REASONS FOR LEAVE**
03 – Transfer to another inst
04 – health reasons *
06 - financial reasons (PERM ONLY^)
07 – other (include personal, family, maternity)
10 – Employment (PERM ONLY^)

^Must provide additional confirmation that satisfactory medical evidence has been seen^

^see leavers guide for staff for further information
Example email: Temporary leave student notification

Dear ____
ID _______

Thank you for completing your temporary leavers form. This will be processed according to our temporary leavers’ regulations. Here is a summary of information that you will need for your return:

- Expected return date:
- When we will contact you about your return:
- Requirements before you return:
- How we will contact you:
- How you can contact us:

Kind regards,
________

Example email: return contact (1-2 months before return)

Dear ____,
ID _______

Our records state you are expected to return to the university on ______. Please can you confirm whether you intend to do so by responding to this email?

Once you have confirmed this, we can request your student record is prepared for you to be able to register once more for your studies.

If you have taken temporary leave for medical reasons, we will need a signed “fit to return” medical note to show you are fit to return to your studies.

If you have a long term health condition you are asked to liaise with Disability Services to discuss support for your needs prior to your return.

If you do not return to your studies within four weeks of the commencement of teaching (by _____) it will be presumed that you have withdrawn from your studies and your candidature will terminate.

Kind regards,

An example of a permanent leave template email provided by a School can be considered if we have enough interest and input – please let us know.