

ARDEN UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA 75

Leave of Absence Policy

1. Leave of Absence allows a student to temporarily suspend their studies for a specified period of time to avoid withdrawing due to challenging personal reasons which have a substantial impact on their ability to study (including, but not limited to medical, maternity, personal issues or financial issues).
2. For personal circumstances affecting a short period of one study block or assessment period, students should consider applying for a short authorised absence (blended learning only) or submit a claim for mitigation in accordance with **QA 41 Exceptional Mitigating Circumstances** rather than request a leave of absence.
3. For Blended Learning students, absences which occur before a Leave of Absence is approved will be managed through the attendance monitoring procedure.
4. It is recommended that prior to requesting a leave of absence that students seek guidance from their Student Support Co-ordinator or talk through the issues they are experiencing with their Programme Team Leader or Student Welfare Officer.
5. A successful application for a leave of absence may have implications for progression, future study intensity, student finance, visas, and other issues which are outside of Arden University's control. Arden University may not be able to advise on all of the potential implications, particularly with respect to student finance and visas. Students should discuss the possible implications with their Student Support Co-ordinator in the first instance and contact the relevant bodies prior to applying for a leave of absence to ensure they are aware of the consequences.
6. Wherever possible requests for leave of absence should be submitted to the Student Support Co-ordinator when the student becomes aware it will be necessary by completing the **Leave of Absence Request Form**.
7. Students will be counselled individually on the precise length of time of the leave of absence according to their individual circumstances and may apply for leave up to a maximum of 12 months. In exceptional circumstances extensions beyond the 12 month limit may be considered at the discretion of the Registrar.
8. The date of resumption of studies will be agreed between the student and Student Support Co-ordinator at the point of the application. An appropriate date in the academic calendar for resumption

will be determined and will always be the first day of the commencement of the next module to be studied irrespective of whether it was previously studied in part.

9. Requests for backdated leave of absences to cover previous assessment periods will not normally be considered. Where there are circumstances that have prevented a student from submitting an assessment or seriously affected their performance, students should submit a claim for mitigation in accordance with **QA 41 Exceptional Mitigating Circumstances**.
10. Leave of absence requests must be confirmed by the University and where possible students should continue to study until they have received confirmation that the leave of absence has been authorised by the Programme Team Leader.
11. Grades achieved prior to the start date of the leave of absence will be carried forward. If students have submitted an assessment component prior to their leave of absence but have not successfully completed the module, it may not be possible to carry forward individual module component marks if there are changes to the assessment requirements during the time of the leave of absence.
12. For students studying a flexible online distance learning programme, an approved leave of absence does NOT extend the maximum registration period on a programme. For students studying online programmes with a prescribed timetable or blended learning/degree apprenticeship programmes, a leave of absence may result in an extension to the planned programme completion date; individual timetables will be provided for students setting out the dates for the study of missed modules.
13. Students due to return from a Leave of Absence will be contacted by their Student Support Co-ordinator to confirm the details of their return.
14. Students that wish to return to their programme of study earlier than the agreed date should contact their Student Support Co-ordinator in the first instance. Where students request an early return from a leave of absence due to medical reasons, they may be required to provide a medical note confirming that they are fit to resume their programme of study.
15. Students that are unable to return from a leave of absence on the agreed date should contact their Student Support Co-ordinator for further advice.
16. Students that do not return from a Leave of Absence on the expected date and fail to inform the University will be deemed to have withdrawn and shall be presented for formal withdrawal at the next Progression and Awards Board.

Reviewed by	Quality and Standards Committee
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Date reviewed	May 2020
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