

**Authorised Absence Application Form (Student route visa holders only)**

This form should be completed by **Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) holding Student Route visas** who wish to take a period of Authorised Absence that does not exceed 60 days. Please refer to Appendix 1 for further information about the University’s Authorised Absence Policy. Supporting evidence should be supplied with the application form.

Under some circumstances, the University can allow a Student Route visa holder to take a short break from their studies for a period **not exceeding 60 days** without having to withdraw sponsorship for their visa.

Where a PGR is not eligible for Authorised Absence, a period of intermission can be applied for. This would result in a withdrawal of sponsorship and curtailment by UKVI of the Student Route visa. PGRs should contact an International Advisors via the [Student Hub – Support for international students](#) if considering Intermission.

During a period of Authorised Absence, the work restrictions that apply during term-time also apply i.e. you must not work more than 20 hours per week. For more information please see the Student Hub page [Working while studying](#).

Please note if you are in receipt of a United States Federal Direct Loan, this request may have an impact on your funds. Please seek advice from the Financial Aid Office before proceeding ([usfinancialaid@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:usfinancialaid@sussex.ac.uk)).

**SECTION A – To be completed by the PGR (PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY)**

|  |   |  |          |   |  |
|--|---|--|----------|---|--|
| Name   | : |  | Reg. No. | : |  |
| Degree Programme   | : |  | School   | : |  |
| Address during authorised absence (PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY) | : |  |          |   |  |
| Previous authorised absence granted (please provide details)     | : |  |          |   |  |

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Start date of authorised absence |  |
| End date of authorised absence   |  |

Reason for authorised absence:

- Health     
  Personal / Bereavement     
  Maternity     
  Paternity     
  Adoption leave

Please provide a short statement detailing the reason for taking an authorised absence and provide medical evidence where required (refer to Appendix 1):

Funding Status:

- Self-funded                     
  Funded

Please check one box:  
(please note if a box is not checked, this request cannot be approved)

- I am in receipt of, or have been in receipt of, a United States Federal Direct Loan during my PhD/MPhil  
 I **am not** in receipt of, and have not been in receipt of a United States Federal Direct Loan during my PhD/MPhil

I confirm that the period of Authorised Absence has been discussed and agreed between the University and myself.

I understand that I will not be granted a visa extension to my studies as a result of this absence.

I understand that I am required to contact my School ten working days before I am due to return from the authorised leave of absence to confirm whether I will be resuming my studies as expected or if I need additional time which requires me to temporarily withdraw.

I confirm I will provide medical evidence to the School, which confirms I am fit to return to my studies.

If I fail to return by the date expected, the University reserves the right to initiate an interruption of study – they will withdraw sponsorship, I will be reported to the UK Visas and Immigration and I will be required to leave the UK.

|        |   |  |      |   |  |
|--------|---|--|------|---|--|
| Signed | : |  | Date | : |  |
|--------|---|--|------|---|--|

(PGR)

**SECTION B – To be completed by the lead supervisor**

I confirm the dates of the authorised absence provided by the PGR are accurate and that the supervisory team supports this request. I am satisfied that on their return the PGR will be able to complete their studies by their maximum date of registration.

I recommend the Authorised Absence for the period stated:

|        |   |  |      |   |  |
|--------|---|--|------|---|--|
| Signed | : |  | Date | : |  |
|--------|---|--|------|---|--|

(Main Supervisor)

**SECTION C – To be completed by the Director for PGRs**

I confirm the dates of the Authorised Absence provided by the student are accurate and that the School supports this request. I am satisfied that on their return the student will be able to complete their studies by their maximum date of registration.

I approve this application for a period of Authorised Absence as above:

|        |   |  |      |   |  |
|--------|---|--|------|---|--|
| Signed | : |  | Date | : |  |
|--------|---|--|------|---|--|

*(Director for PGRs or equivalent/delegate)*

*Once completed, please return to the UKVI Compliance team on [pgr-visas@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:pgr-visas@sussex.ac.uk)*

## **Appendix - Authorised Absence policy – Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs)**

In order to register and retain international students (including PGRs) UK Universities must comply with the terms of their UKVI sponsor license. This document sets the policy for Authorised Absence.

### **1. What is an Authorised Absence?**

UKVI policy allows the University to continue sponsoring Student Route students (including PGRs) who need to take a short break from studies for a period not exceeding 60 days. Acceptable reasons for Authorised Absence are as follows:

- To receive medical treatment (medical certificate required)
- To take maternity/paternity leave (birth certificate or official medical certificate required)
- Illness which would not ordinarily result in an absence exceeding 60 days (medical certificate required)
- Illness of a close family member/dependent (medical certificate)

Authorised Absences cannot be used to undertake employment, and the reason a leave of absence is required should not be so great that a PGR would be required to suspend their registration.

Authorised Absences will only be permitted where we, as the sponsor, can assure ourselves it will not have any negative impact on the PGR's academic progression. Registration will not be extended by the length of the absence and the PGR must be able to complete their degree within their current leave to remain.

Like intermissions, retrospective applications are not permitted. If a PGR cannot return to studies after a period of Authorised Absence the PGR will be required to intermit and the University will withdraw sponsorship, which may result in the curtailment of the Student visa. It is only in very exceptional circumstances that the University can continue sponsoring a PGR for more than 60 days

Where a PGR is not eligible for Authorised Absence, or they require an absence exceeding 60 days, they will be required to apply for an intermission. Please refer to the [website](#) and the [Policy on Research Degrees](#) for more information.

### **2. Application and approval process.**

This application form must be approved by the lead supervisor and Director for PGRs. Where PGRs are requesting Authorised Absences on medical grounds, they must provide medical evidence to support their application and prior to returning to their studies medical evidence which confirms they are fit to return to studies must be provided. We encourage PGRs who are experiencing personal difficulties to seek [advice and support](#) from the University's wellbeing team or [International Advisors](#).

Authorised Absence will be logged on the student record and the PGR will receive confirmation that it has been approved from the UKVI Compliance team.

### **3. Responsibilities during Authorised Absence.**

During an Authorised Absence, PGRs must continue to meet the conditions of their visa and maintain contact with the University via the main supervisor; this includes keeping contact details up-to-date in Sussex Direct.

### **4. Fees and end dates.**

Research Student fees will continue during the permitted period of Authorised Absence.

## **5. Right to work during Authorised Absence.**

The restrictions on work that apply during term-time also apply during an Authorised Absence, i.e. the PGR must not work more than 20 hours per week.

## **6. Returning from Authorised Absence.**

Ten working days before the PGR is due to return from their absence, they should contact the School to confirm they will be returning on the expected date or they need additional time and need to request temporary withdrawal. If the PGR travelled abroad during their Authorised Absence they should submit evidence to the UKVI Compliance team confirming their return to the UK.