



Guide on completing the leave of absence application form

Students considering a leave of absence are advised that the sooner they contact their Programme/School Office, the more options their Programme Board/Graduate School Board will have to support them in completing their programme.

1. Introduction

UCD recognises that in order for a student to successfully complete a programme of study they may need to take a leave of absence from the programme. A leave of absence is an approved extended period of time away from the programme e.g. a student may not take a leave of absence in order to remediate failed modules.

A leave of absence is one of a range of options available to Programme Boards/Graduate School Boards in supporting the academic welfare of their students. UCD has a policy and procedure to consider leave of absence applications. This Guide is designed to support students requesting a leave of absence in completing the form.

2. Application Process

Before you make an application for a leave of absence it is important that you seek guidance and advice in order to find the best option for you so that you may successfully complete your programme.

Where the right option for you is a leave of absence, you should make your application on the official University form **in advance** of your requested leave of absence period.¹

There is a checklist at the back of the form that is designed to assist you in making your application and ensuring you have considered all the implications of taking a leave of absence.

Completing the official leave of absence application form

All forms should be typed.

Section A – personal and programme details

Section A requires you to complete your personal and programme details, including for example your name and student number, telephone number, UCD Connect email address, programme title and code and the start date of your programme (i.e. when you first registered to it). The length and dates of the leave of absence period you are requesting is also required.

- Students on undergraduate programmes should include the stage they are in.
- Students on graduate programmes should insert the name of their School and students on graduate research programmes should also include the name of their Principal Supervisor.

If you have any outstanding I/IX grades you are also asked to list the relevant module title(s) and code(s). The purpose of this is to ensure that your Programme Board/Graduate School Board has all the information required to fully support you in your application and in successfully completing your programme.

Section B – reasons for your request

You should clearly outline the reasons for your leave of absence application in this section. You may provide supporting documentation if you wish.

¹ The Leave of Absence Application Forms for students on Undergraduate, Graduate Taught and Graduate Research programmes can be accessed from www.ucd.ie/leaveofabsence.

In applications for a **retrospective leave of absence**, supporting evidence from one or more of the following competent professionals must be included. Please note that original documentation must be supplied and is non-returnable. It is recommended that you retain a copy of the application and evidence for your records. Documentation should be confined to the facts of the case and the nature of the impact only.

- Medical Practitioner
- Garda
- Other health professional (must be specified)
- UCD Student Support professional
- Other (must be specified)

This section also asks whether you have previously taken a period of leave of absence from your programme. The purpose of this is to ensure that your Programme Board/Graduate School Board has all the information required to fully support you in your application and in successfully completing your programme.

Section C – student declaration

In this section you sign your application form and by doing so, confirm that 1/ you have been made aware of and understand the possible implications of taking a leave of absence, 2/ you know it is your responsibility to re-register at the end of your leave of absence period and 3/ you know it is your responsibility to apply for a second leave of absence period before the end of your first leave of absence period where necessary.

By signing this section you are also confirming that the information you provided on the form is true and correct and that you understand that the information you provide will only be disclosed, where necessary, to staff involved in determining and implementing your request.

Graduate Research Students only: Section D – additional signatures required by students on graduate research programmes

All requests for a leave of absence by students on graduate research programmes must be supported by the Principal Supervisor and Head of School (or their nominee) to which the student is registered. Where the support of the Principal Supervisor is not forthcoming, the student may appeal directly to the Head of School, supplying all associated documentation. Where the support of the Head of School to which the student is registered is not forthcoming, the student may appeal directly to the Graduate School Board, supplying all associated documentation.

Checklist

The Checklist is designed as a handy reminder of key information you need to be aware of when making a leave of absence application. It also sets down your responsibilities in seeking advice as early as possible and accessing all information relevant to your situation.

Submitting the official leave of absence application form

Students on undergraduate programmes should submit their completed and signed application form to their Programme Office, while students on graduate programmes should submit their completed and signed application form to their School/Programme Office. Students on graduate research programmes should ensure that their Principal Supervisor and Head of School have signed their completed application form before they submit it to their School Office.

You may request a copy of your application form for your records.

3. Communicating the Board's decision to you

Your Programme Board/Graduate School Board decides your application. Where your application is refused, the Board will recommend either an alternative leave of absence period or an alternative arrangement to support you in completing your programme.

Your Programme/School Office will inform you in writing of the decision of your Programme Board/Graduate School Board.