

Guidelines for leave entitlements (Graduate Research)



Applies to:	This policy covers all Higher Degree by Research candidates enrolled from 2009 and will be implemented by Heads of Schools, Graduate Research Coordinators, Graduate Research Supervisors and the Graduate Research Office.
Approved by:	Dean of Graduate Research
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Custodian and Review Responsibility:	Dean of Graduate Research
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Definitions

Candidature: Candidature refers to 2 years for Masters and 4 years for a doctorate, unless a formal extension for exceptional circumstances has been approved by the Dean.

Higher Degree by Research candidate: A graduate enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) towards a Research Masters or Doctorate qualification, who has fulfilled the requirements for confirmation.

Equivalent Full-Time (EFT): Throughout this document, all quoted timeframes are to be read as Equivalent Full-Time.

Supervisory Team: The supervisors, including primary and co-supervisors, supporting a candidate in their HDR. This includes all members of the supervisory team, regardless of the supervisory load. A research advisor, internal or external, is desirable, but additional to the Supervisory Team as they are not calculated as part of the supervisory load.

Graduate Research Coordinator (GRC): Coordinates supervision and HDR candidature requirements within a School, recommended by the Head of School and appointed by the Dean.

Medical Proforma: This form needs to be completed by a medical professional and the HDR candidate and submitted confidentially to the Dean Graduate Research when applying for an extension to candidature on medical grounds. A Change of Candidature form must also be completed.

Health practitioner: A registered dentist, optometrist, psychologist, chiropractor, osteopath, physiotherapist, or, at the Dean's discretion, another registered health services provider.

Medical professional: A registered health professional with a medical degree, i.e. a general practitioner or medical specialist.

GRO - Graduate Research Office.

Leave Entitlements Statement

All Higher Degree by Research candidates are entitled to sick, annual and maternity or paternity leave in the course of their candidature, as detailed below under 'Leave Entitlement Principles'.

In the case of scholarship holders, there may be provisions for paid leave. Candidates should check their scholarship terms and conditions. In instances where the scholarship disallows paid leave, candidates are required to suspend scholarship payments for the period of leave.

Leave Entitlements Principles

Annual leave

- HDR Candidates are entitled to receive up to 20 working days recreational leave per year.
- Annual leave may be accruable but will be dissolved upon submission of thesis or termination or expiry of candidature.
- This category of leave is to be processed within Schools and is included within EFT candidature timeframes.

Sick leave

- Sick leave entitlements may also be used to cover leave for candidates caring for sick immediate family members.
- **(Category A)** HDR Candidates are entitled to ten working days sick leave per year. These leave entitlements may be accrued over the EFT years of candidature and dissolve upon submission of thesis or termination or expiry of candidature.
- A candidate who is absent for a period exceeding two consecutive days due to illness must supply a medical certificate from a health practitioner or medical professional.

This category of sick leave is to be managed within Schools and is included within EFT candidature timeframes.

- **(Category B)** Candidates are entitled to an extension/suspension of candidature on medical grounds for periods of illness lasting longer than ten consecutive working days.
- To be eligible for an extension/suspension on medical grounds, the Graduate Research Office requires a completed 'Change of Candidature' form in conjunction with a 'Medical Proforma'.
- Extensions/suspensions on medical grounds are subject to a candidate completing the Medical Proforma in conjunction with a medical professional. The Medical Proforma provides evidence of the nature of the illness or injury and how it impacts on candidature as well as the estimated duration of the absence and supports the candidate's application for extension/suspension on medical grounds.

- This Medical Proforma is to be forwarded directly to the Dean of Graduate Research, clearly marked 'Confidential'.
- An application for extension/suspension of candidature on medical grounds will not be considered until both the Change of Candidature form and the Medical Proforma have been provided.
- Once the Medical Proforma and Change of Candidature forms have been received the Dean will consider these and a response letter from the Dean, informing of the application outcome, will be sent to the candidate with copies also forwarded to the candidate's GRC and primary supervisor. Information concerning a candidate's medical condition will not be released without permission from the candidate.
- Normally, an extension/suspension on medical grounds will only be granted for a maximum one month block.
- Candidates must disclose any pre-existing health conditions which may affect their HDR work at commencement of candidature to assist with management of their candidature.
- Applications on the basis of long term conditions will be considered with reference to any previous history of extension/suspension on the same basis and with reference to any Candidature Management Plan that is currently in place.
- Approval of applications on the basis of long-term conditions may involve an ongoing review of the candidate's Research Plan and milestones.

In all but exceptional circumstances, the medical practitioner must examine the candidate on or before the period covered in the medical certificate. ie. A certificate is not to be retrospective. As a general practice, backdated medical certificates will not be accepted.

Maternity or Paternity Leave

- HDR candidates who have completed 12 months EFT of their candidature are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks maternity leave in the course of their candidacy. Subject to the Dean's approval, maternity leave may also be approved if the candidate has adopted a child. Maternity leave may commence on a date between six and eight weeks before the expected date of birth and in the case of adoption on the arrival date of the adopted child.
- In both instances, proof must be provided (of pregnancy and expected birth date; or of adoption).
- Candidates who have completed 12 months EFT of their candidature may be entitled to five days of parenting leave at the time their partner gives birth or they adopt a child.

Scope

This policy has application across the University of Tasmania. It pertains to all domestic and international HDR (Masters and Doctoral) candidates, probationary or otherwise, unless a candidate's scholarship conditions specify otherwise.

Related Resources

- Medical Proforma
- Leave form

Compliance

The Graduate Research Office, the chief function of which is to monitor quality and compliance relating to graduate research policy and processes, will approve applications for sick leave involving more than 10 working days.

Consultation

- Graduate Research Coordinators as representative of schools/departments (to occur)
- Board of Graduate Research
- Graduate Research Office
- Pro Vice Chancellor Research
- Governance and Legal

Attachments

- 1 Medical Proforma and guidelines
- 2 Change of Candidature form