

115 FS A – Higher Education Leave of Absence Student Fact Sheet



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This fact sheet is designed to provide students with important information about enrolment in their Course at TAFE Queensland and how breaks and intermissions in your enrolment pattern may affect your continued enrolment and the successful completion of your Course.

TAFE Queensland recognises that you may need to suspend your studies during the semester by either withdrawing or taking a break. A formal Leave of Absence is a voluntary interruption in your studies.

A formal Leave of Absence request is completed **PRIOR** to the commencement of the period from which you seek to suspend your study.

RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The application for Leave of Absence will be considered when:

- (a) A minimum of one study period has been requested;
- (b) The maximum leave period has not been breached;
- (c) The maximum time limits for completing a Course are not breached;
- (d) The Course is not in teach-out;
- (e) The Course and/or Unit of Study rules permits a leave of absence;
- (f) You have no outstanding fees or fines payable to TAFE Queensland.

The maximum period of leave is:

- (a) Two semesters where the Course duration full-time is 2 years; or
- (b) Three semesters where the Course duration full-time is 3 years; or
- (c) As determined by the specific Course Rules.

The maximum time limit for completion of a Course is:

- (a) Five years where the Course duration full-time is 2 years or
- (b) Eight years where the Course duration full-time is 3 years.

If you decide to interrupt your studies and apply for a Leave of Absence, you need to be aware of the following possible consequences of taking a break from your studies and the timing of your application for a Leave of Absence.

RESUMING STUDY

When you resume your studies after the approved period of absence, you:

- do not need to apply for re-admission into your Course.
- must meet with your Course Coordinator to ensure you have a current/revised study plan for successful completion of your Course.
- may need to demonstrate that you meet the most recent entry requirements where a Course of study has changed during your absence.
- may need to repeat a previously passed Unit/s of Study to meet professional competency standards and/or inherent requirements i.e. clinical or professional practice based units where such practice has not been maintained during your absence may require you to sit a clinical challenge test for example.

Returning Early?

Yes, you can resume studies earlier than the approved leave period. You will need to do this in writing by completing the *Higher Education Return to Study Application Form* and submitting this to the relevant Administration Officer. This is so we can manage your enrolment and any class quota restrictions or limitations.

Re-Enrolling

When you resume studies, you will re-enrol as a continuing student. The faculty Administration Officer will send you written enrolment instructions at the appropriate time relevant to your expected recommencement date. If you are not sure, contact the faculty Administration Officer.

If you do not re-enrol by the enrolment due date, your enrolment in the Course will be cancelled by TAFE Queensland and you will need to re-apply via the normal Admissions process.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND PRACTICUMS

Course requirements are unique to each Course of study. Where a Course is professionally accredited, there are requirements of that registration that TAFE Queensland is compelled to follow.

If the capacity to succeed in your Course is impacted by your inability to meet inherent requirements in your Course, your Course progression will be impacted and you will not meet all the requirements to complete the Course and gain any relevant required registrations.

For example, students in Dentistry must be able to fulfil the accreditation requirements of the Australian Dental Council (ADC) in order to become registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) as students and on graduation as clinical practitioners (These include: Immunisations, vaccinations, first aid, criminal history, completion of clinical tasks, [Health Impairments Notifiable Conduct](#)).

The following are examples of Course requirements you need to consider as a result of your break in studies.

Inherent Requirements

These are the fundamental aspects of a Course or Unit of Study that must be met by all students. They are the abilities, knowledge, and skills needed to achieve the core learning outcomes of the Course or Unit/s of Study. They cannot be allocated elsewhere or done differently.

The Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) states: *The inherent or essential requirements are those that students must pass in order to complete a course/unit/program. They are those components, which if removed or substituted would substantially impact on the learning outcomes.*

Inherent requirements are specific to a particular Course.

Medical Fitness

You may be required to submit a Medical Certificate stating whether or not, in the opinion of the medical practitioner giving the certificate, you are in a fit state of health to undertake your Course.

Re-commencement in your Course may be refused where your state of health gives cause for concern and/or where the medical fitness may be reportable to a professional body such as the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

Impairment

Impairment means any physical or mental impairment, disability, condition, or disorder (including substance abuse or dependence), that detrimentally affects or is likely to detrimentally affect your ability to safely practise a profession. If you are enrolled in a Course accredited by a professional body, you will need to meet their ongoing requirements. For example - [AHPRA - Health Impairment](#).

Criminal History

You may be required to submit a recent Criminal History Check. Re-commencement in your Course may be refused until results of your criminal history check have been provided. This may be a requirement of a professional body such as the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

Clinical Challenge

You may be required to complete a “Clinical Challenge” to test your knowledge and clinical acumen to ensure that your skills are renewed and will sufficiently enable you to successfully continue in your Course.

Repeat a Unit of Study

You may be required to re-enrol in a relevant clinical/practical/technical based Unit/s of Study where you are unable to demonstrate current knowledge and clinical acumen and/or where the capacity to succeed in your Course is impacted by your inability to meet inherecies in your Course.

Each application is considered on a case by case basis, thus additional conditions may be applied, depending on your situation.

COURSE CHANGES

If the Course structure changes during your leave period, you will be readmitted into the new Course version and where applicable, credit for Units of Study completed prior to your period absence will transfer into the new Course offering. You do not need to do anything; TAFE Queensland will do this for you.

CONSEQUENCES OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE – TIMING IMPLICATIONS

A request for a Leave of Absence should be completed PRIOR to the commencement of the period from which you seek to suspend your study. However, if you decide to apply for a Leave of Absence once the semester has commenced, you will need to withdraw from the Unit/s of Study and you need to be aware of the following impacts of the timing of your withdrawal from your Unit/s of Study.

Withdrawing from Unit/s of study – as a result of a Leave of Absence		
prior to the Census Date	after the Census Date	after the Last Day to Withdraw
If you have enrolled into Unit/s of Study and subsequently request to withdraw from your studies due to a leave of absence on or before the Census Date, you will not incur a debt if you have taken out a FEE-HELP loan for the unit/s you are withdrawing from.	<p>If you have enrolled into Unit/s of Study and you subsequently request to withdraw from your studies after the teaching period census date, but before the Last Day To Withdraw Without Academic Penalty, you will not incur an academic penalty and your academic record will be endorsed with the result of “WH” (Withdrawn).</p> <p>This grade does not contribute towards a Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation.</p> <p>You will however, be financially liable for the unit/s undertaken in that teaching period.</p> <p>Any assessment tasks submitted for marking will not be marked and any existing assessment marks will be replaced by the WH (Withdrawn) result. No assessment tasks or marks will be returned to you.</p>	<p>If you have enrolled into Unit/s of Study and you subsequently request to withdraw from your studies after:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friday of week 9 for a 13 week semester; or• Friday of week 10 for a 15 week semester or• Friday of the week that equates to 70% of delivered teaching (for a Unit of Study with less than a 13 week semester). <p>You will be both financially and academically responsible for the unit/s undertaken in that semester.</p> <p>You will receive an “LH” result (Late withdrawn - Withdrawn Fail). An LH grade has a weighting of 1.0 and is included in the Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation.</p> <p>Any assessment tasks submitted for marking will not be marked and any</p>

		existing assessment marks will be replaced by the LH (Late withdrawn - Withdrawn Fail) result. No assessment tasks or marks will be returned to you.
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COMPASSIONATE AND/OR COMPELLING CIRCUMSTANCES

These are circumstances beyond your control and they have an impact on your capability and/or ability to progress through your Course. Decisions on whether or not a circumstance is considered Compassionate and/or Compelling are at the discretion of TAFE Queensland. These could include:

- Serious illness or injury, where a Medical Certificate states that you were unable to attend class;
- Bereavement of close family members such as parents, siblings, or grandparents (where possible, a Death Certificate should be provided);
- Serious illness, accident, or family incident which requires you to be in attendance;
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster requiring your emergency travel and that has impacted your studies;
- TAFE Queensland's inability to provide a core unit in your Course, which must be completed in a given semester and for which no alternative is available in that semester.
- A traumatic experience which could include but is not limited to:
 - i. Involvement in or witnessing of a serious accident;
 - ii. A serious crime committed against you; or
 - iii. Being a witness to a serious crime.

You will need to include supporting documentation on the grounds of Compassionate and/or Compelling circumstances where you are seeking a waiver of the Financial Liability and/or Academic Penalty associated with a request for a Leave of Absence once the semester has commenced.

REFUNDS

If you are seeking a refund or re-credit of a FEE-HELP debt on Compassionate and/or Compelling grounds, you will need to complete a Refund Application (651 FM A) / FEE-HELP VET FEE-HELP Re-Credit Application Form 654 FM. Refer to the student rules [here](#).