



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Department of Enrolment and Student Administration

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING LEAVE OF ABSENCE

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to guide academics, departmental and faculty student administrators on the official procedure to process the Leave of Absence (LOA) for students.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

The SOP is applicable to academic and administrative staff of the University, responsible for the processing of leave of absence.

This SOP is applicable to both undergraduate and postgraduate students at the University of Pretoria.

3. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE SOP

- a) Leave of absence is granted when it is impossible for a registered student at the University of Pretoria to continue with their studies/research in a specific year, but they intend to continue in the subsequent year.
- b) A leave of absence is not granted for more than one academic year. Approval for leave of absence in excess of one year will only be granted in circumstances that are regarded as exceptional. (Exceptional circumstances may include extended hospitalisation, unexpected health issues etc.). Such applications must be escalated to the Director of the Department of Enrolment and Student Administration (DESA) or their representative for approval.
- c) Leave of absence is granted based on medical, psychological, or mental well-being ailments, or compassionate reasons (e.g. the death or serious illness of a close family member). Valid documentation of the circumstances is required.
- d) In the case of undergraduate and honours students, where leave of absence has been granted before the date stipulated in the Senate-approved University calendar for the cancellation of modules, a student is obliged to pay the fees due. In the event that the leave of absence is granted after this stipulated date, a student will not be entitled to any refund and will remain liable for full tuition fee. For more information on fees payable, please contact the Finance department.
- e) In the case of master's and doctoral students, all outstanding fees must be paid in full upon **the student's return from his or her leave of absence**.
- f) A student who has engaged in behaviour that violates the regulations, rules or policies of the University, and/or is the subject of a disciplinary enquiry in terms of the University's Disciplinary Code: Students, and/or the disciplinary code of their residence, will as a rule not be granted a leave of absence.
- g) Students granted leave of absence do not have access to classes, the libraries or any other UP facility for the duration of their leave of absence.
- h) All students must inform the faculty administration in writing of their return from leave of absence, immediately upon their return.
- i) The closing date for all undergraduate and postgraduate applications for leave of absence is 31 May for the first semester and 30 September for the second semester. Applications beyond the set deadlines will be considered only in exceptional cases, and will be escalated to the Director of DESA or their representative for consideration. Late applications must be accompanied by a motivation from the relevant HoD.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsible parties are DESA, academics, (lecturers, heads of department, deputy deans, deans), departmental and faculty student administration.

- a) The main responsibility of the abovementioned parties will be to ensure that all processes are followed in accordance with the University rules and regulations.
- b) The faculty administrator must ensure that only authorised personnel such as deans/deputy deans (and in exceptional cases, the Director of DESA or their representative) may approve the application for a leave of absence, after ensuring that all the requirements for the application as set out in this SOP have been met. In the case of postgraduate students, the decision must also be made in consultation with the supervisor.
- c) In addition:
 - The status of the student academic record must be verified for negative service indicators such as:
 - Outstanding immigration matters (contact International Office for clarity)
 - Financial unsuitability
 - Any other outstanding matters that may affect the student negatively.
 - These negative service indicators must be resolved before the approved application is sent to pgacademicadmin@up.ac.za
- d) The application for leave of absence, including a motivation for the LOA, must be submitted to the faculty administrator, who will submit the documents to the head of department, postgraduate committee, deputy dean or dean, as applicable for approval.
- e) The application form for leave of absence can be downloaded from the PeopleSoft system, and is labelled [X48] for undergraduate students and [P01] for postgraduate students.
- f) The completed, approved and signed documents must be submitted by the faculty administrator to pgacademicadmin@up.ac.za for processing by adhering to 3 b) and c) above. Once the application has been processed, the academic record of the student will be updated accordingly and the respective faculty will be notified.
- g) For master's and doctoral students, a dissertation, mini-dissertation, or thesis module code (for a coursework master's) must be used to capture the leave of absence on the PeopleSoft system.

NB: The back-dating of leave of absence requests are not allowed. LOA can only be registered for the current or subsequent years.

5. ASSOCIATED/RELATED DOCUMENTS

University of Pretoria General Academic Regulations and Student Rules.

6. DOCUMENT METADATA

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