

ANU Medical School Program Leave and Withdrawal Guidelines

Purpose

This procedure clarifies the process for domestic and international students at the ANU Medical School to apply for program leave or withdrawal from the Doctor of Medicine and Surgery (MChD) Program. This procedure takes precedence over the general leave procedure for other ANU undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

The procedures for taking program leave from the ANU Medical School are more stringent than other programs at the ANU. This is because the Medical School is required by the Commonwealth Department of Health to maintain a specific number of enrolled students across the four years of the medical program. In order for the ANU Medical School to manage the number of students enrolled, it is imperative that the school regulates the conditions of leave and withdrawal. Students must obtain permission from the Director of the Medical School or delegated authority before taking a leave of absence from the MChD program.

Program Leave Procedure

Program leave will usually only be granted for 12 months and will only be approved under specific circumstances. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, pregnancy and maternity leave, medical conditions, serious personal or family issues, or mental health concerns. Approval for program leave will normally not be granted where a student is otherwise able to continue the program. Program leave will not be considered for first year students prior to completion of Semester 1 unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Due to the structure of the MChD curriculum, the normal period granted for program leave will be the equivalent of an academic year. Where the need for program leave can be identified early (e.g. pregnancy) it is usual practice to schedule program leave to commence at the completion of a nominated curriculum block and recommence study 12 months later. Where the need for program leave cannot be identified early, a student may be granted program leave for a period of less than 12 months and may be required to return to study to enable the student to repeat incomplete components of the curriculum. In exceptional circumstances a student may, at the discretion of the Director, formally withdraw from a partly completed course (note that this may result in a fail grade being awarded) and recommence study of the course at the commencement of the next offering of that course. The student taking leave will need to sit all exams with the whole cohort upon return. There will be no extra exams scheduled for the student.

Applying for program leave

The program leave process must be completed before the ANU census date/s. If a student applies for program leave after the census date they will be required to obtain further supporting documentation, may remain liable for the tuition fee or HELP liability and may incur a fail result for any enrolled courses.

To apply for program leave, a student **must** complete the following steps:

1. Meet with their Year Coordinator to discuss reasons for program leave (note; the year coordinator does not have the delegation to approve program leave).
 - i. Phase 1 students must also talk to [Richard Callaghan](#) to discuss their research project and the implications program leave may have and what arrangements will need to be made if approved, this discussion should also involve the students research project supervisor.
2. Arrange a meeting with the Director to discuss program leave.
 - i. Supporting documentation should be provided to the Director for this meeting.
3. If the Director approves, the student will receive a letter outlining the conditions of the program leave. The student must sign this letter and return it before they go on leave.
4. The student is then required to complete the online Program Leave e-Form which is available through their ISIS account. If applicable supporting documentation should be uploaded within the E-Form (International students must upload supporting documentation).

Returning from program leave

To resume study, a student **must** follow the below steps;

1. Notify the Medical School Admissions Office; admissions.medicalschool@anu.edu.au with their intention to return. Unless specified different in the letter from the Director the confirmation of return must be sent by 30th May for Semester 2 return and by 30th September for Semester 1 return.
2. If applicable, follow the action plan provided by the Student Welfare Committee.
3. Ensure that any conditions outlined in their letter from the Director have been met and describe them in the letter when asking for permission to return to the program. The Director may, depending on the reason for program leave, make a decision based on advice from other Medical School committees, such as the Student Welfare Committee.
4. If permission to return to the program is granted, follow the return to study check list provided by the Admissions Office.

Program Withdrawal Procedure

Students contemplating withdrawal from the MChD should discuss their situation with their Year Coordinator and if applicable, seek advice from the ANU Health Services.

To withdraw from the MChD program, a student **must** complete the following steps:

1. Arrange a meeting with the Director to discuss their intentions for withdrawal.
2. If withdrawal is the best option, the student is required to complete the online Application for Program Withdrawal e-Form which is available through their ISIS account.
3. The student must notify the Medical School Admissions Office on admissions.medicalschool@anu.edu.au with their decision to withdraw.

Note: It is encouraged that international students promptly seek advice from the ANU Academic Standard and Quality Office regarding visa implications and the ANU Division of Student Life regarding available support services: student@anu.edu.au. A student withdrawing due to failure must read the [Procedures for Failing Students](#), as there are serious visa implications.