



Policy on Compassionate Leave for Postgraduate Research Degree students

Authors:	Postgraduate Research Education Team
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Policy on Compassionate Leave for Postgraduate Research Degree students

1. Introduction

Compassionate leave is intended to cover bereavement or the serious illness/injury of a close relative/dependant/friend, which prevents a PGR student from continuing with their PGR research and studies. This policy is designed to deal with the immediate and short-term impact; the longer-term impact of the death or serious illness/injury of a close relative/dependant/friend may require a longer period of leave and the [Policy on Leave of Absence \(intermission\) for PGR students](#) should be consulted.

Compassionate leave can be sought for up to two weeks (10 working days). The duration of the PGR student's standard and maximum period of study, and the 'thesis submission date' will automatically be extended by the duration of the approved compassionate leave.

2. How to apply

The PGR student should contact their supervisor for support and advice in the first instance. The PGR student (or their supervisor(s) if circumstances prevent the student from making the request) can apply for compassionate leave by emailing the PGRE Team (pgresearch@essex.ac.uk) and requesting up to two weeks of compassionate leave.

Compassionate leave is distinct from any other form of authorised leave, intermission or sickness absence for UKRI-funded students. PGR Students in receipt of studentship funding should also check the terms and conditions of their studentship for information about the possibility of funded sickness absence. PGR students who are also employees of the University should also consult the [Special Leave Policy](#) on the Staff Directory for leave relating to their employment.

The University reserves the right to request relevant evidence to support requests for compassionate leave (although it is expected to be by exception as the difficult circumstances related to such requests is recognised).

3. Returning to studies

When the PGR student returns to their studies following a period of compassionate leave, the supervisor should discuss with them any additional support needs and make referrals to the appropriate support services as needed.

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