

## Faculty of Graduate Studies General Regulations

---

### Regulation Details

Name: Leave of Absence for Master's Students

Number: 2.

Date of Implementation: September 1, 2026

Approving Jurisdiction: Senate

Administrative Responsibility: Graduate Studies Council

---

### 5.1 General Requirements

After finishing at least one semester at KPU, a student in a master's program may request a leave of absence from their studies for personal or professional, parental, medical, or compassionate reasons.

A leave of absence normally begins on the first day of an academic semester and is considered complete at the end of an academic semester. A retroactive leave will only be approved in exceptional cases.

A leave of absence will not be considered in the first term of the graduate program. A leave of absence is granted for a minimum of one semester (four months), up to three semesters (twelve months). Short-term absences of less than three weeks will be managed within the academic unit. In exceptional circumstances, a student may apply for a subsequent leave, if they require additional time off beyond their original approved leave. The total duration of all leaves of absence granted in a master's program is normally limited to a maximum of six semesters (two years).

Students will not pay tuition and fees while on an approved leave. During a leave of absence, students should not undertake any academic or research work; access to the University's facilities and resources, including library, IT, student services and faculty supervision, will be limited.

Students on approved leave will be reflected on their official academic record.

### 5.2 Student Awards and Student Loans

For student awards, scholarships and bursaries (refer to [Policy ST1 Student Awards](#) and [Procedure](#)) unless otherwise specified in the terms of reference, a student award established by KPU will be suspended at the start of a leave of absence and resume upon the student's

return to their studies at KPU, provided that the student continues to meet all requirements for the award. Awards not established by KPU will be paid according to the terms and conditions established by the donor or funding agency.

If a student who plans to take a parental, medical or compassionate leave is receiving government student loans (e.g. StudentAid BC) and needs to postpone repayment, they must have an approved leave of absence from KPU prior to applying for a repayment postponement through the National Student Loan Service Center (NSLSC) online.

### **5.3 Student Responsibilities**

Students should discuss with their Graduate Guides (for students in a thesis-based program), program advisors, and a financial aid advisor (if applicable) before requesting a leave of absence. Students are responsible for ensuring that they understand the academic, financial and immigration status implications of being on leave, and the resources that may or may not be available to them while they are on leave.

Indigenous students who are receiving sponsorship should check with their local Nation for guidance to ensure their leave does not affect their sponsorship standing.

International students must consult with KPU International on how their leave may impact their permits and other relevant Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) requirements.

Students who are receiving KPU student awards, scholarships, bursaries, or government student loans must consult with Student Awards and Financial Assistance (SAFA) for guidance on how their leave may impact their eligibility upon their return from their leave and how their government loan repayment may be impacted.

Students who are receiving a research assistantship or stipend from an external grant held by their Graduate Guides must consult with their Graduate Guides before requesting a leave of absence. Students who are receiving a Tri-Council scholarship must consult with the Faculty of Graduate Studies before requesting a leave of absence.

### **5.4 Request and Approval for Leave**

To request a leave of absence, students must complete a “Request for Leave of Absence” form, provide supporting documentation, obtain signatures from their Graduate Guide (for students in a thesis-based program) and/or Department Chair and the Dean of the disciplinary Faculty indicating their support of the leave request, and submit their complete request to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies for consideration.

### **5.5 Return from Leave**

As students prepare to return to studies, they must discuss their return plan with the Dean of the disciplinary Faculty (or designate) at least one month prior to their date of return.

Prior to the student’s planned date of return from their approved leave of absence, the Dean of the disciplinary Faculty (or designate) will assess the student’s academic progress towards the completion of the degree requirements. KPU will make every effort to accommodate students

who return from their approved leave to resume their studies. Due to program design, some courses may not be available at the time when the student returns from their leave to resume their studies in the program. In this case, a scheduled break will be required to the next semester the course is made available. Scheduled breaks will not count towards the time limit for program completion.

## **5.6 Types of Leave**

### **5.6.1 Personal or Professional Leave**

A student may request a leave of absence for personal or professional reasons that impact their ability to continue with their studies. Time spent on leave will count towards the time limit for program completion.

### **5.6.2 The following types of Leave will not count towards time limits for program completion, and time limits will be adjusted accordingly:**

- **Parental leave:** A student who is expecting a child and/or who has primary responsibility for the care of a child immediately prior to or following birth or an adoption.
- **Medical Leave:** A student who is experiencing medical issues that significantly interfere with their ability to continue their studies.
- **Compassionate Leave:** A student who is experiencing personal or family issues that significantly interfere with their ability to continue their studies.

All other program requirements and academic unit expectations remain the same.