This page tells you all about program leave, and the rules, procedures and policies that apply.

You apply for program leave if you want to:

- Discontinue your current enrolment for up to 2 semesters during your program,
- Ensure that you maintain standing in your program, and
- Come back to your studies after taking leave.

If you want to discontinue your studies completely, and not resume them at a later date, see Program Discontinuation.

Who can take program leave?

Program leave is for enrolled domestic undergraduate or postgraduate students. It is not usually available to international students.

**Domestic students**

A domestic undergraduate or postgraduate student enrolled in their second or later semester of a program may apply for program leave. (A new student enrolled in their first semester would apply for a deferment, no later than the relevant census date.)

You can apply for program leave no later than the relevant census date. For Semester 1 leave this is 31 March; for Semester 2 leave, 31 August. Program leave sought after census date will be subject to UNSW's rules for course withdrawal and may result in failures being listed on your academic record.

**Postgrads:** If you are on a scholarship (e.g. APA), check that it is deferrable. Also, check that your chosen supervisor is available during your return semester.

**International students**

International students on student visas can apply for program leave; however, certain conditions may apply. Please get advice from Student Development - International before applying for course discontinuation or program leave.

Important advice for student visa holders

**Notification of program leave/cancellation**

Under Commonwealth Legislation, the University is required to notify the Australian Government Office of changes in
the enrolment of student visa holders. Cancellation and leave of absence (program leave) will in most cases lead to the
cancellation of your student visa, and you will be required to depart Australia, or transfer to another visa type. Provided
that you report to the Australian Government Office as required, your visa cancellation should be ‘without prejudice’,
and should not prevent you from reapplying in the future.

Granting of program leave to student visa holders

As required by Commonwealth Law, student visa holders will be granted Leave by UNSW, conditional on complying with
immigration requirements. In all but exceptional circumstances (e.g. Serious personal/health problems requiring you to
remain in Australia), student visa holders granted leave will be required to depart Australia for the duration of their leave.
If you believe your circumstances are exceptional, please provide documentation to support this claim. In all cases,
student visa holders granted leave by the University must report to Immigration authorities to clarify their visa status.

Reapplying for your student visa

You may find it easier to apply for a new student visa before leaving Australia. Whether you choose to apply in Australia
or overseas, you need to fill in a New Confirmation of Enrolment Request.

How long can I take program leave for?

Program leave is generally restricted to no more than 2 semesters of your enrolment in a program. Applications for leave
of more than 2 semesters will be approved only in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Program Authority.