



OBJECTIVES

This policy details how the Melbourne Medical School in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS) administers Short Leave of Absence (SLOA) requests.

POLICY

The Melbourne Medical School grants two forms of Short Leave of Absence:

- Personal Leave
- Professional Development Leave

Short Leave of Absence requests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the proposed date of leave.

Personal leave

Duration: There is no set duration for personal leave. Students must however note that the granting of personal leave does not negate subject attendance requirements. If attendance is unsatisfactory as a result of personal leave students may be asked to make up the time missed or be referred to the Course Unsatisfactory Progress Committee.

Personal leave may be granted for:

- Personal illness
- To care for a family or household member who is ill or injured
- Parental leave
- Significant personal event (as a guide, the following examples would be considered 'significant': birth of a child, funeral of a family member)
- Representation at state, national or international level in sports, arts or other activity (for students registered in the Elite Athlete Program)
- Defence reservists
- State Emergency Service volunteers

Professional development leave

Duration: Up to ten [10] days per year (with a maximum of five [5] days per semester).

Professional development leave may be granted for approved health related activity including attendance at:

- Conferences
- Meetings
- Committees
- Short courses

Conditions of short leave of absence

The conditions of SLOA are:

- Students are not permitted to undertake an elective clinical placement whilst on SLOA
- Students taking a SLOA must make arrangements to catch up on all content missed during that leave.
- Students may be required to attend make-up time for tutorials, practical classes or clinical time missed during a period of SLOA. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that these arrangements are made. Please note, clinical, hospital and University staff are not obliged to schedule any make-up sessions, or make arrangements or to ensure that this requirement is met.
- Students who are granted SLOA while undertaking Primary Care Community Base (PCCB) placements will not ordinarily be required to make up for clinical time at their PCCB placement.

PROCEDURES

The Melbourne Medical School administers Short Leave of Absence requests as follows:

1. A student requesting a SLOA who is enrolled in:
 - a. **Year 1** must submit a completed SLOA form to mms-postgrad@unimelb.edu.au to gain approval from the Principles of Clinical Practice 1 subject coordinator and Foundations of Biomedical Science subject coordinator.
 - b. **Year 2** must submit a completed SLOA form to the relevant clinical school to gain approval from the relevant Director, Medical Student Education/Clinical School Dean;
 - c. **Year 3** must submit a completed SLOA form to the relevant clinical school / site to gain approval from the relevant term coordinator. Rural Clinical School students will seek approval from the Director, Medical Student Education.
 - d. **Year 4**, requesting absence during **MD Research Project 2** must submit a completed SLOA form with supervisor endorsement to mms-postgrad@unimelb.edu.au to gain approval from the Scholarly Selective 2 subject coordinator.
 - e. **Year 4**, requesting absence during **Transition to Practice** must submit a completed SLOA form to mms-postgrad@unimelb.edu.au to gain approval from the relevant Director, Medical Student Education/Clinical Dean (for the Preparation for Practice and Trainee Intern terms) and from the Transition to Practice subject coordinator (for the Vocational Selective term). Note that students applying for leaving during their Vocational Selective must provide evidence of supervisor endorsement when submitting an application to the Transition to Practice subject coordinator.
 - f. Students requesting absence during **Student Conference** (from any year level) must submit a fully completed SLOA form to mms-postgrad@unimelb.edu.au to seek approval from the MD Student Conference subject coordinator.
2. Students must provide documentary evidence supporting the leave request. Please note, medical certificates completed by a health professional who is related to the student, will not be accepted.
3. Short LOA cannot be taken during assessment periods, except in exceptional circumstances. For SLOA approval for dates where assessments have been scheduled, approval will be referred to the Director of Medical Education who can make one of the following recommendations:
 - The application for SLOA be approved with a result of 0.00 being applied to that particular piece of assessment;
 - The application for SLOA be approved with assessment to be scheduled at a later date;
 - The application for SLOA be approved and student to be exempt from assessment; or
 - The application for SLOA be denied.

APPEAL PROCESS

- Students may appeal against a decision made under the Melbourne Medical School SLOA policy in writing within ten working days of the allocation notification.
- Appeals should be addressed and submitted to:
Leave of Absence Appeals Committee
The Department of Medical Education
Level 7, North Wing, Medical Building
The University of Melbourne VIC 3010
- The Appeals Committee comprises the Director of Medical Education (or nominee), Academic Programs Manager, and relevant Students and Programs Coordinator of the Melbourne Medical School.
- An acknowledgement of receipt of the appeal will be sent to the student within three (3) working days of its receipt.
- The student will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the appeal. Where possible, notification will be provided prior to the SLOA dates.
- Appeals should comprise a one page cover letter outlining the reason for the appeal, with supporting documentation attached. Verbal or emailed appeals will not be considered.
- If a student does not believe that the appeal has been adequately considered, they may follow the formal grievance procedures outlined in the Melbourne Medical School Student Grievance Procedures located at <https://medicine.unimelb.edu.au/study/current-student-resources/mms-students-resources/policies,-procedures-and-forms>