

# DOCTOR OF MEDICINE SHORT LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Melbourne  
Medical School

## 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.

The Melbourne Medical School grants three forms of SLOA:

- Personal leave (and COVID-19 impacted personal leave)
- Student Wellbeing leave, and
- Professional development leave

SLOA requests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the proposed date of leave, except in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances and for student wellbeing leave. Students are advised to not make travel arrangements until leave has been approved. Leave will not be granted on the grounds of pre-booked leave or travel.

Enquiries about this procedure should be submitted [via this link](#).

## CONDITIONS

- 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 and clinical placement missed during that leave (except in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances).
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that arrangements are made to make up for any missed content and clinical placement during a SLOA and that these arrangements are detailed in the application. If the leave is foreseen, clinical, hospital and University staff should be consulted in advance of the application so that they can help students with these arrangements
- If making up placement time is required and it is not possible to make up placement time (missed whilst on LOA) during the standard teaching week, placement may need to be made up after hours, on weekends or within breaks. Students will need to acknowledge this when applying for wellbeing leave and SLOA. For this reason, wellbeing days are not permitted to be taken in the last week of semester as there is no ability to make up time that is not within a break or weekend.
- Students are not permitted to take SLOA during Student Conference **OR** during the first, orientation/foundation week (s) as determined by subject coordinators or term leaders of any term, except in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances.
- Students are not permitted to take more than a combined total of 2.5 days SLOA of all leave types during Discovery, except in exceptional and/or unforeseen circumstances which are approved by the Discovery Coordinator. As outlined below, student wellbeing days are not allowed to be taken during Discovery topics with teaching periods of 4 weeks or less
- SLOAs will not be approved for any dates where assessment is due, or clinical assessments are scheduled. Students must follow the [UoM special consideration process](#) for this.

## PERSONAL LEAVE AND STUDENT WELLBEING LEAVE

Personal leave and student wellbeing leave combined must be no more than ten [10] days per semester, and a total of twenty [20] days across the academic year.

Student Wellbeing leave must be for no more than two [2] single days per semester for a total of four [4] single days per academic year. These days cannot be consecutive and if consecutive days are required this will revert to the conditions required for personal leave.

**Personal leave** requires supporting evidence to substantiate the student's request for leave. 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 – Students must be registered as an Elite athlete prior to requesting leave)
- Defence Reservists
- State Emergency Service volunteers
- Fulfil religious obligations to observe traditions, ceremonial activities or requirements of cultural or religious holidays

**Student Wellbeing leave** will not require any supporting evidence to substantiate the student's claim for leave. However, the student is required to notify their clinical school/subject coordinator as soon as practicable, and prior to any scheduled teaching activities. This notification process is via Qualtrics, and specific year level Qualtrics forms are linked below.

Student Wellbeing days cannot be taken:

- during the first/orientation week(s) as determined by term leaders of any term, and during the last week of each semester except in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances
- during clinical placement days in FCP in Year 1
- during written assessment periods or during scheduled assessments such as OSCEs, SJTs and long cases
- during procedural skills sessions related to assessment, simulation sessions and sensitive examination programs teaching activities
- during any subject with a teaching period of four weeks or less. This includes all MD Student Conference subjects, and all Discovery 2 and 3 subjects

**Students must note that the granting of personal leave, or student wellbeing leave, does not negate subject attendance requirements. If attendance is unsatisfactory as a result of personal leave or student wellbeing leave, students may be asked to make up the time missed or be referred to the Course Academic Progress Committee for unsatisfactory progress in the MD Course.**

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE**

Up to ten [10] days per year (with a maximum of five [5] days per semester) of professional leave is permitted. Professional development leave may be granted for approved health related activity including attendance at:

- Conferences
- Meetings
- Committees
- Short courses
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural leave (An Indigenous student who is fulfilling Indigenous cultural responsibilities and is required to be absent for the purpose of attending NAIDOC, community, cultural or ceremonial activities)

## APPLICATION PROCESS – PERSONAL LEAVE & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE

The Melbourne Medical School administers SLOA requests as follows:

1. A student requesting a SLOA who is enrolled in:

- A) **MD1** must submit a SLOA request [via Qualtrics](#) to gain approval from the Year 1 coordinator, student's clinical school (where relevant) & Discovery Coordinator (where relevant).
- B) **MD2** must submit a SLOA request [via Qualtrics](#) to the relevant clinical school to gain approval from the relevant Director, Medical Student Education/Clinical School Dean;
- C) **MD3** must submit a SLOA request [via Qualtrics](#) to the relevant clinical school to gain approval from the relevant term coordinator and from the relevant Director, Medical Student Education/Clinical School Dean
- E) **TTPA** must submit a SLOA request [via Qualtrics](#) to their Clinical School to gain approval from the relevant Director, Medical Student Education/Clinical School Dean.
- F) **MDSC** must submit a SLOA request [via Qualtrics](#) to gain approval from the MDSC Subject Co-ordinator.

2. Students must provide documentary evidence supporting personal and professional leave requests. Please note, medical certificates completed by a health professional who is related to the student, will not be accepted. Requests will not be considered without supporting documentation.

3. SLOA cannot be taken during the first/orientation week(s) as determined by term leaders of any term, except in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances.

4. SLOA cannot be taken during written assessment periods or during scheduled assessments such as OSCEs, SJTs and long cases. If a student can not attend a scheduled assessment, students must follow the [UoM special consideration process](#).

5. Students are not permitted to take SLOA during Student Conference except in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. In exceptional circumstances, a request and supporting documentation must be submitted [via Qualtrics](#) to gain approval from the MD Student Conference subject coordinator.

6. Late applications will not be considered.

## NOTIFICATION PROCESS – STUDENT WELLBEING LEAVE

All students must complete the Qualtrics form by 10:00AM (AEDT) on the day of leave.

A student notifying us of a wellbeing day who is enrolled in:

- A) **MD1** must submit a completed SLOA form (via Qualtrics, link above) to notify the Year 1 coordinator & students' clinical school. No supporting documentation is required.
- B) **MD2** must submit a completed SLOA form (via Qualtrics, link above) to the relevant clinical school to notify the relevant Director, Medical Student Education/Clinical School Dean. No supporting documentation is required.
- C) **MD3** must submit a completed SLOA form (via Qualtrics, link above) to the relevant clinical school to notify the relevant term coordinator. Rural Clinical School students will need to notify the Director, Medical Student Education.
- D) **TTP/TTPA** must submit a completed SLOA form (via Qualtrics, link above) to their Clinical School to notify the relevant Director, Medical Student Education/Clinical School Dean.
- E) **MDSC** student wellbeing days are not permitted

## APPEALS

Students may appeal against a decision made under the Melbourne Medical School SLOA policy in writing within ten [10] working days of the allocation notification.

The Appeals Committee comprises the Director of Medical Education (or nominee), Academic Programs Manager (or nominee), 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.

Appeals should be addressed as below, and submitted [via this link](#)

Leave of Absence Appeals Committee  
The Department of Medical Education  
Level 7, North Wing, Medical Building  
The University of Melbourne VIC 3010

If a student does not believe that the appeal has been adequately considered, they may follow the formal grievance procedures outlined here: [Student complaints and grievances \(unimelb.edu.au\)](http://unimelb.edu.au)