



## LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY: COUNSELLING, CHAPLAINCY AND SPIRITUAL CARE

<b>Responsible officer</b>	Chief Academic Officer	
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<b>Approved by</b>	Academic Board	
<b>Responsible body</b>	Academic Board	
<b>Approval date</b>	6 March 2019	
<b>Effective date</b>	6 March 2019	
<b>Review date</b>	March 2022	
<b>Superseded documents</b>	Leave of Absence Policy: Education and Counselling 2017	
<b>Related documents</b>	Leave of Absence Procedure: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Request for Leave of Absence form	
<b>Policy classification</b> <i>Select a General OR an Academic option</i>	<b>General</b>	<b>Academic</b> Learning & Teaching

### 1. PURPOSE

To define the rules that apply to a Leave of Absence from a course of study in Counselling and in Chaplaincy and Spiritual care.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

<b>Key Term or Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
LOA	Leave of Absence: a period of non-enrolment where the student has the intention to return to their studies at the end of the specified period. The period of LOA is counted in the maximum time to complete the course.
Administration Date	The date by which all enrolments are to be settled. It is usually the Friday of the second week of semester. Up to and including that date units may be added or removed from a student's enrolled units for the semester. After administration date, only withdrawals are permitted up to and including the Census Date.
Census Date	The point at which a student's enrolment in a course becomes effective and they become financially liable for the course.

### **3. SCOPE**

This policy applies to Morling College students enrolled in courses in Counselling and in Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care. International students have restrictions on their enrolment as per National Code 2007 which have implications for LOA.

### **4. POLICY STATEMENT**

Morling College recognises that students' circumstances may change over the course of their period of study and that there may be times when a Leave of Absence (LOA) from their study may be required.

Morling College encourages students to effectively communicate their needs and altered circumstances with College staff in a timely manner in order to assist students when making decisions about their academic goals and expected outcomes. While advice may be given, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to manage their course enrolment and course completion within the expected timeframes.

### **5. PRINCIPLES**

#### **Time constraint**

- 5.1 A LOA does not extend the maximum time to complete a course ie the course completion date. For example, if a student takes LOA equivalent to one year, and the award is to be completed within a maximum of five years, the five-year limit does not change. The student will have one year LOA and four years to undertake the required units of study to complete their course.
- 5.2 It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their unit selections are appropriate within the Award's regulations, and that they have enough semesters left in which to complete the Award before its time limit is reached. If the student is going to run out of time, or anticipates they will be requiring numerous LOA periods during their studies, they need to consider the following policies to identify the most appropriate option:  
Suspension of Candidature Policy: Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care  
Variation to Enrolment Policy: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care.

#### **Eligibility**

- 5.3 To be eligible to apply for LOA, a student is required to have completed at least one unit of study in the first semester of their chosen course.
- 5.4 LOA is not an option for students at the time of the offer of a place in a course of study. Alternatively, the commencement of a course may be deferred prior to commencement by contacting the Registrar.

- 5.5 LOA is not an option for a student after the commencement of a semester. Students must refer to the following policies in order to understand the best option for them:  
Special Circumstances Policy: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care  
Compassionate Withdrawal Policy: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care  
Suspension of Candidature Policy: Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care
- 5.6 Students are required to be up to date with their financial commitments to MC. Students with outstanding fees or fines may be excluded from taking LOA until outstanding monies are paid.
- 5.7 If a student anticipates that they will be requiring numerous LOA periods over the course of their studies, then they should consider a Variation to Enrolment, a Suspension of Candidature or withdrawal.

#### Duration and Number

- 5.8 A single LOA is for one semester during the course of study.
- 5.9 Periods of LOA cannot exceed two consecutive semesters (ie 1 year).
- 5.10 Students may normally apply for a *maximum of four* LOAs during their course of study providing that:
- the periods of absence do not exceed two consecutive semesters, and
  - the student can complete the course requirements within the stated course time limit. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they understand the time constraints for course completion.

#### Application

- 5.11 An application for a LOA for a course of study must be made by the administration date prior to the commencement of the Semester for which the LOA is sought.
- 5.12 Refer to Leave of Absence Procedure: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care.

#### Conditions

- 5.13 LOAs do not attract a fee.
- 5.14 Access to Moodle will be suspended for the duration of the LOA period.

#### Re-commencement of studies

- 5.15 After a period of LOA, a student must re-commence their studies by following the normal re-enrolment process. Alternatively, if not recommencing studies, they may withdraw or apply for a suspension of candidature.

- 5.16 If a student fails to re-enrol in a unit in the course:
- following 2 consecutive semesters of LOA; or
  - following the completion of a fourth LOA,
- they will be deemed to have withdrawn from the course.

## 6. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

Compassionate Withdrawal Policy: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care

Leave of Absence Procedure: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care  
Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Leave of Absence Form

Special Circumstances Policy: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care

Suspension of Candidature Policy: Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care

Variation to Enrolment Policy: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care.

## 7. REFERENCES

Nil

## 8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
3	Academic Board	March 2019	March 2019	Updated to reflect changes in MC structure. Separated policy for Education, to create a standalone policy for Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care. Updated to reflect changes in MC structure. Removed condition that library access ceases during LOA. Formatted to new template. Separated procedures into a standalone document.
2	Academic Board	Oct 2017	Oct 2017	Extended LOA for Education to one year,
1	Academic Board	Dec 2015	Dec 2015	

Always **download** this policy anew from the Policies folder on the Morling share as it may have changed.