

Title:	Leave of Absence	Number:	002
Approved By:	Undergraduate Medical Education Committee (UGMEC)		
Approval Date:	26 September 2022	Next Review:	01 August 2025
Effective Date:	27 September 2022		
Audience:	Years 1-4 Students, Faculty and Staff – all sites		
Purpose:	Provides students, faculty and staff with information regarding the types, duration, consequences and procedures for Leaves of Absence from the Undergraduate Medical Education program.		
Related Policies and Procedures:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance Policy and Absence Procedure #006 2. Academic Advising: Requested, Recommended and Required #015+036 3. Blood-Borne Communicable Diseases Policy & Guidelines #032 4. Return to Studies Policy #037 		
Exclusions:	None		
Calendar Statement:	calendar.ubc.ca		
Contact:	Associate Dean, Student Affairs		

Preamble

Students may request a Leave of Absence (“LOA”) in circumstances that adversely affect their attendance or performance in the Undergraduate Medical Education program (“Program”). There are four types of LOA: Parental, Medical, Personal, and Educational/Career Development.

An LOA is required if the time away from the Program is anticipated to be more than four consecutive weeks. This includes temporary inactivation of a student education license by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of B.C. (“CPSBC”). An absence of four or less weeks is addressed in the Attendance Policy and Absence Procedure (#006).

Students have a professional responsibility to withdraw from patient care when they are impaired by illness, whether due to physical or mental reasons, emotional disturbance, cognitive concerns, or addiction to alcohol or drugs. The Health Professions Act requires that any health practitioner notify the CPSBC regarding a health concern or impairment that may constitute a risk to patient or public.

Students must successfully complete all of the academic requirements and achieve all expected competencies for the Doctor of Medicine degree, to be recommended for graduation (#014).

Definitions

Academic Plan	An individualized plan that is implemented as part of Required Academic Advising. It is developed by the Student Development and Support Subcommittee (“SDSS”) in collaboration with a student, to support the student to address performance deficits, missed program requirements or competencies.
Leave of Absence (LOA)	A temporary suspension of all academic, clinical and professional activities for a period of more than four (4) consecutive weeks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical LOA 	An LOA for a physical or mental health condition, including cognitive impairment or addiction to alcohol or drugs that significantly interferes with a student’s ability to pursue the study of medicine, and/or provide safe patient care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental LOA 	An LOA for the birth or adoption of a child.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal LOA 	An LOA to attend to personal or family circumstances that significantly interfere with a student’s ability to pursue their studies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational/Career Development LOA 	An LOA for approved academic, research or training activities that require time away from the Program.
Return to Studies Requirement (“RTS”)	An additional experience to re-introduce students returning from an LOA, to ensure readiness to re-enter the program.
Regional Student Promotions Subcommittee (“RSPS”)	A Program site-specific subcommittee of the Student Promotion & Review Board (“SPRB”) that oversees and reviews the academic performance of students at the Program site and confirms assignment of course grades to SPRB according to assessment policies.
Student Development and Support Subcommittee (“SDSS”)	Ad hoc subcommittees of the RSPSs that support students experiencing academic difficulties, returning from an LOA, or experiencing other special circumstances.
Student Promotion & Review Board (“SPRB”)	A subcommittee of the Undergraduate Medical Education Committee (“UGMEC”) responsible for student’s academic review and promotion.

Policy

1. A student must request an LOA if the student has missed or will miss more than four consecutive weeks of the Program.
2. Each request for an LOA will be considered individually.
3. The duration of a Personal, Parental or Educational/Career Development LOA is ordinarily one year or less. The LOA may be extended for as much as one further year under exceptional circumstances, as recommended by the Regional Student Promotions Subcommittee (“RSPS”) and approved by the Student Promotion Review Board (“SPRB”). The duration of a Medical LOA is determined on a case by case basis.
4. A student on an LOA is not permitted to attend academic sessions, perform any clinical duties, or undertake curricular assessments. Access to online materials is suspended unless otherwise requested and approved by the Regional Associate Dean (“RAD”) or designate.
5. During an approved LOA, the CPSBC educational license is changed to Temporarily Inactive.
6. A student on an LOA will be contacted regarding grades or decisions of the SPRB only with the approval of the RAD or designate.
7. Return to the Program is dependent on reactivation of the student’s license by the CPSBC. All students returning from an LOA must meet all requirements of the CPSBC for reactivation of an educational license.
8. The RSPS approves the re-entry point and the Return to Studies Requirement (“RTS”) for a student on an LOA of less than or equal to one year.
9. The SPRB approves the re-entry point and the RTS for a student on an LOA longer than one year and/or when major curricular adjustments are required.
10. A student cannot participate in an RTS until the Faculty receives notification from the CPSBC that the student’s license has been reactivated.
11. A student returning from an LOA must meet all the RTS requirements as defined in the academic plan. Students who do not meet the RTS requirements will be referred by the RSPS to the SPRB.
12. An LOA will require the student to complete outstanding year requirements during a subsequent academic year, except under the most exceptional circumstances.

- 12.1. **Year 1 or 2:**
 - 12.1.1. A student returning from an LOA can re-enter the Program only when the incomplete course(s) or assessment(s) are next offered.
 - 12.1.2. A student returning to the second term of Year 1, or to Year 2, may be required to complete an RTS if the SDSS determines it is necessary.
 - 12.1.3. A student on an LOA between Year 2 and Year 3 is required to attend the Transitions into Clinical Education (TICE) component of MEDD 422 immediately before they begin Year 3, even if they have previously completed this course component.
- 12.2. **Year 3:**
 - 12.2.1. A student returning from LOA cannot sit a MEDD431 end of block exam until the clinical work for that block is complete.
 - 12.2.2. A student returning from LOA will be offered the Year 3 Summative OSCE at the end of Year 3 with the rest of the class or after completion of a clinical experience with students sitting the supplemental/deferred OSCE.
 - 12.2.3. A student returning from an LOA may be required to undertake an RTS, as determined by the RSPS or SPRB.
- 12.3. **Year 4:**
 - 12.3.1. A student returning from an LOA must successfully complete all curricular and assessment components of the year to be eligible for graduation.
 - 12.3.2. A student returning from an LOA may be required to undertake an RTS, as determined by the RSPS or SPRB.
- 13. A student on an LOA remains registered in the Faculty of Medicine but is not enrolled in courses.
- 14. A student returning from an LOA is subject to the fee schedule in place upon re-entry to the Program.

Procedures

1. Prior to Leave

- 1.1. For medical LOA, the student should contact their Site Assistant Dean, Student Affairs or the UBC Centre for Accessibility (“CFA”). For any other LOA, the student should contact their Site Assistant Dean, Student Affairs.
- 1.2. All students considering or requesting an LOA are advised to contact the Student Financial Assistance Officer to discuss the financial implications of an LOA.
- 1.3. When possible, a preliminary academic plan will be developed prior to the leave (i.e., in planned Parental leaves or for Educational/Career Development Leaves).

1.4. Medical Leave

- 1.4.1. The student or CFA will inform the Associate/Site Assistant Dean, Student Affairs, in writing, about the request for a Medical LOA.
- 1.4.2. The student will be required to meet with a CFA advisor and provide documentation from the student’s principal health practitioner supporting the request for a medical LOA. The CFA may require additional documentation or may request permission to contact the student’s principal health practitioner for additional information. This documentation is not provided to the Program.
- 1.4.3. The student will be placed on an LOA at the time of the request for a Medical LOA, pending assessment by the CFA:
 - 1.4.3.1. Student Affairs will advise the RAD or designate of the request. Student Affairs does not share confidential details.
 - 1.4.3.2. The RAD or designate will notify the student of approval in writing and will

advise RSPS/SPRB of the medical LOA.

- 1.4.3.3. Student Affairs will advise the CPSBC that the student is on a medical LOA.
- 1.4.4. The CFA may discuss the LOA request and any conditions upon which they recommend the LOA be granted with Student Affairs. The RAD or designate will notify the student and Student Affairs in writing advising whether the LOA has been granted and identifying any conditions attached to the Medical LOA.
- 1.4.5. The CFA will monitor the Medical LOA in consultation with the Program and may request additional medical documentation from the student's treating physician during the course of the LOA, to assess the need for continuation of the LOA or to assess the feasibility of a return to studies. The RAD or designate will meet with any student whose request for a medical LOA is not granted.

1.5. Parental Leave

- 1.5.1. The student must inform their Site Assistant Dean, Student Affairs in writing, about the anticipated Parental LOA.
- 1.5.2. Student Affairs will notify the RAD or designate. Student Affairs does not share confidential details.
- 1.5.3. The RAD or designate will provide the student confirmation in writing and will advise the RSPS/SPRB of the Parental LOA.

1.6. Personal Leave

- 1.6.1. The student must submit a written request for a Personal LOA to their Site Assistant Dean, Student Affairs including:
 - the reason for the LOA
 - the proposed or expected duration of the LOA
- 1.6.2. Student Affairs will review the request and will consult with the RAD or designate who will determine whether the LOA will be granted taking into account the recommendations of Student Affairs. The Associate/Assistant Dean, Student Affairs, may excuse a student from attendance, pending a determination of the leave request.
- 1.6.3. The RAD or designate will notify the student of approval in writing and will advise the RSPS/SPRB of the Personal LOA.

1.7. Educational/Career Development Leave

- 1.7.1. The student must submit a written request for an Educational/Career Development LOA to the RAD or designate, including:
 - the purpose of the LOA
 - the proposed duration of the LOA
- 1.7.2. The RAD or designate will also consider the following:
 - student's attendance record and history of previous LOAs
 - student's academic performance, including issues of professionalism
 - student's year of studies
 - changes to the curriculum that may occur during the requested LOA
- 1.7.3. The RAD or designate will notify the student of approval in writing and will advise the RSPS/SPRB of the Educational/Career Developmental LOA.

1.8. Upon Approval of the Leave

- 1.8.1. Student Affairs will enter the student's information in the Leave-of-Absence Tracking Tool, which will initiate correspondence with the student and faculty as follows:

- Student Affairs will notify the CPSBC that the student is taking an LOA and the anticipated point of re-entry.
- Student Affairs will notify UBC Enrolment Services of the student's change in enrolment status for the affected term(s).
- For Year 3 students, the Year 3 stipend is cancelled.
- Access to UBC and Faculty systems, including the learning management and assessment systems is suspended unless otherwise specified by the RAD or designate

2. During the Leave

- 2.1. Students must renew their educational license with CPSBC while on an LOA even though it is Temporarily Inactive.
- 2.2. Students may request access to UBC and Faculty learning management or assessment systems and should discuss their request with the RAD or designate, or Student Affairs. The RAD or designate will determine whether such access is granted.
- 2.3. During a Medical LOA the student must maintain an agreed-upon schedule of contact with CFA, to provide updates regarding progress and anticipated return to the Program. CFA will inform the UGME through Student Affairs. For other types of LOA, the student is encouraged to be in contact with Student Affairs.

3. Preparing to Return from Leave

3.1. Academic and Clinical

- 3.1.1. A SDSS may be convened upon return from the LOA to develop an academic plan, at the discretion of the RSPS or SPRB.
- 3.1.2. The RSPS may recommend to the SPRB that a student re-enter the Program at an earlier point than when the student left. The SPRB will make the final decision. When approving the point of re-entry into the Program, the RSPS/SPRB will take into consideration:
 - year of study
 - duration of the LOA
 - the student's prior academic performance, including issues of professionalism;
 - changes to the curriculum that may have occurred during the LOA
 - impact on resources, including capacity at the site
 - performance during the RTS requirement
 - outstanding academic activities yet to be completed
- 3.1.3. When determining and approving the nature and length of the RTS, the SDSS/RSPS/SPRB will take into consideration:
 - year of study
 - duration of the LOA
 - the student's prior academic performance including issues of professionalism
 - changes to the curriculum that may have occurred during the LOA

3.2. Administrative

- 3.2.1. The process of reinstatement may take up to two months.
- 3.2.2. Students returning from a Medical LOA must contact CFA at the earliest opportunity to facilitate a return to studies. CFA will:
 - 3.2.2.1. request and assess documentation from the recognized primary health care provider(s), confirming fitness to return to the Program;
 - 3.2.2.2. inform Student Affairs about the student's fitness to return to the Program;
 - 3.2.2.3. assess any requests or recommendations for accommodations,

- either for the RTS requirement or ongoing and discuss these with the Program; and
- 3.2.2.4. inform the student and Student Affairs directly about any recommended accommodations.
- 3.2.3. For all types of LOAs, the site RAD or designate will inform the student in writing of the return from LOA date and will outline the requirements for return from the LOA.
- 3.2.4. The Associate Dean, Student Affairs will contact the CPSBC to inform them that the student will be returning and of the student's start date.
- 3.2.5. The Program Managers, Assistants, Student Affairs, and UBC Enrolment Services will:
- add the student to the class list and listservs
 - enable access to the learning management and assessment systems
 - enable registering for courses
 - make tuition adjustments

Review History

Action	Committee	Date	Status
Reviewed	MD Undergraduate Education Committee	20 April, 2015	Approved
Revised	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	20 July, 2017	Revised
Reviewed	Student Affairs (Procedures only)	7 August, 2017	Revised
Reviewed	Student Assessment Subcommittee	10 August, 2017	Reviewed
Revised	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	7 September, 2017	Revised
Reviewed	Legal Counsel (by email)	September/October 2017	Revised
Reviewed	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	2 November, 2017	Revised
Revised	Legal Counsel	November 2017	Revised
Reviewed	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	7 December, 2017	Endorsed
Reviewed	MD Undergraduate Program Committee	11 December, 2017	Deferred
Reviewed	MD Undergraduate Program Committee	15 January, 2018	Approved
Reviewed	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	2 August, 2018	Endorsed
Reviewed	Undergraduate Medical Education Committee	20 August 2018	Approved
Reviewed	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	7 March 2019	Revised
Reviewed	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	4 April 2019	Endorsed with revisions
Reviewed	Undergraduate Medical Education Committee	9 April 2019	Approved
Revised	Legal Counsel	25 April 2019	Revised
Revised	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	6 June + 4 July 2019 + by email	Endorsed
Reviewed	Undergraduate Medical Education Committee	15 July 2019	Approved
Reviewed	Policy Advisory Subcommittee	18 August 2022	Endorsed
Reviewed	Legal Counsel	06 September 2022	Endorsed
Reviewed	Undergraduate Medical Education Committee	26 September 2022	Approved