



Leave of Absence Policy 2021/22

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 NMITE acknowledges that during their time of study, a student may experience a range of significant challenges that may compromise their ability to continue to fully engage with their programme of study. A Leave of Absence is a support mechanism NMITE offers to address a variety of circumstances.
- 1.2 The Leave of Absence Policy is in place to outline and address the conditions and processes through which students can take Leave of Absence, re-engage with their studies following a period of Leave of Absence from their studies, or take more permanent steps to cease attending NMITE through a process of Withdrawal.
- 1.3 For short-term circumstances affecting their ability to study or take assessments, or students who have had a late diagnosis of a disability or long-term medical condition; students should refer to the Extenuating Circumstances Policy.

2. Eligibility and Conditions

- 2.1 You may apply to take leave of absence from your course for up to a total of four semesters. In this event, the maximum registration period will be extended for the same period.
- 2.2 Periods of leave undertaken due to statutory childcare (including maternity leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave and adoptive leave) will not be counted towards the maximum total of four semesters, although the maximum registration period will be extended.



- 2.3 Some common reasons a student may have for requesting a Leave of Absence include (but are not limited to):
- Personal issues - these could include caring for a family member, taking a 'gap-year', or just wanting to review options.
 - Bereavement
 - Financial hardship - this may include unexpected loss of income, family financial hardship, lack of funding, debt, or any other financial issue.
 - Illness - this includes any illness affecting a student's ability to study, which could be mental or physical health.
 - Academic reasons - include wanting to investigate transferring to another education establishment.
- 2.3 Taking Leave of Absence may have [financial implications](#) and it is your responsibility to be aware of these before applying for a Leave of Absence. Upon approval of the Leave of Absence and where a student has applied for funding from the Student Loans Company (SLC), the SLC will be notified.
- 2.4 Multiple or further Leave of Absence requests can be made, but the total amount of Leave of Absence accumulated on your record may not exceed the equivalent of four semesters.
- 2.5 Students may be required to fulfil specified conditions before resumption of their studies.
- 2.6 Requests for Leave of Absence need to be formally submitted and approved.
- 2.7 Retrospective Leave of Absence is not normally permitted.
- 2.8 Short term requests (i.e. requests for less than one semester) will not normally be approved. Students requiring less than one semester should apply for Extenuating Circumstances.
- 2.9 A student whose Leave of Absence has been approved for the whole or part of the year will not be enrolled with NMITE for the purposes of study.
- 2.10 If you take a Leave of Absence because of extenuating circumstances, upon your return to study, you will be deemed fit to study and the circumstances which affected your ability to study previously will not be considered in relation to your performance. NMITE will, however, exceptionally consider sudden or unexpected worsening of a disability and / or medical condition for a student where medical evidence is provided to confirm the circumstances being presented.



3. Financial Implications

3.1 You need to carefully consider the financial implications of requesting a Leave of Absence, as well as implications with regard to the right to remain in NMITE accommodation. The Student Support Team can advise on these issues which may include:

- i. Tuition fees will be charged on a termly/semester basis. If you are receiving payments from a student loan, you will need to notify Student Finance England or the relevant other funding body to ensure you are not overpaid.
- ii. If you are in receipt of a grant/bursary from a sponsor, you may need to repay part of this; if you repeat any part of your studies on your return, you may not receive support towards your tuition fees for that part of the programme.
- iii. Students will not receive their maintenance loan whilst on a Leave of Absence. If you take a Leave of Absence and have already received some of your maintenance loan, you may be required to pay some of it back.
- iv. If you return from Leave of Absence part way through an academic year, you will need to make a new Student Finance application for that academic year in advance of your return to studies. You are advised to request the maximum amount of tuition fee loan and if your tuition fee is reduced NMITE will inform Student Finance.
- v. If you are responsible for paying your own tuition fees and your approved Leave of Absence will have an impact on payments made/due, your position will be reviewed automatically by the NMITE Finance Department
- vi. Change of status may impact on tuition fees paid and due, and you may even be entitled to a refund.
- vii. Taking a Leave of Absence may have other financial implications for support from welfare agencies, who are likely to re-assess eligibility for assistance.

4 How to apply for a Leave of Absence

4.1 If you are considering a Leave of Absence, you should in the first instance speak to a member of the Student Services Team or your Personal Tutor so that you can receive support, advice, and ensure you have considered alternative options to Leave of Absence where possible.

4.2 At the point where you decide to request a Leave of Absence, you must contact the Academic Registrar who will advise on the implications involved in taking a Leave of Absence and the necessary steps you need to take in order to apply for Leave of Absence. You will need to complete the Application for Leave of Absence form.

4.3 The following information will also be required at this stage:



- i. The duration of the period of Leave of Absence you wish to take from your studies.
 - ii. The grounds for the Leave of Absence (e.g., medical, or personal, giving brief details of the circumstances).
 - iii. Documentary support for the request if appropriate. This should always be provided if the request is on medical, maternity, or paternity grounds. It is your responsibility to obtain such evidence (e.g. in the form of a certificate from your doctor).
- 4.3 The Academic Registrar will liaise with the relevant academic staff and Chief Academic Officer on your behalf to seek academic approval for the Leave of Absence. The responsible member of the academic staff must complete the Leave of Absence – Academic Approval form and return to the Academic Registrar within 5 working days of submission date
- 4.4 Once the Leave of Absence is approved and the central student record updated, you will receive confirmation of the leave of absence to your NMITE email account. Leave of Absence is granted on the basis of your last date of attendance at NMITE, and not the date the application is made or approved.

5 Access to NMITE facilities

- 5.1 For the period you are on Leave of Absence, your student status is set to 'interrupted' as you are not in attendance at NMITE. Consequently, the access you have for the duration of your Leave of Absence to NMITE is limited, and you will not receive any form of tuition or academic supervision.
- 5.2 A place in NMITE managed accommodation is not normally provided to students who have taken a Leave of Absence and following the approval of a Leave of Absence you will receive further information from the Student Support Team about making arrangements to vacate your accommodation.
- 5.4 You are expected to correspond with both Student Support Services and Registry under the terms and conditions agreed as part of your Leave of Absence and expected re-engagement. You will therefore continue to have access to your computer accounts for the purposes of this communication.
- 5.5 Where it is necessary, students on Leave of Absence may arrange to receive on-going support from Student Support Team. Such an arrangement is especially recommended for students who remain in the local area throughout their Leave of Absence. This is however at the discretion of Student Support Team, and the terms of this arrangement must be agreed at the time Leave of Absence is arranged.

6 Returning from a leave of Absence

- 6.1 Students on a Leave of Absence will be contacted by Registry prior to their expected return date, and asked to select one of the following options:



- i. Return to Study: The student declares that they are able, and if appropriate, fit, to return to study on the expected return date. If you wish to return to study and therefore re-engage with NMITE on this basis should complete the application to return from Leave of Absence and return to the Registry.
 - ii. Request a further Leave of Absence - the student requests a further period of Leave of Absence, providing reasons and relevant documentation where required.
 - iii. Request for permanent Withdrawal from NMITE - the student requests withdrawal (see Section 7 of this policy).
- 6.2 In order for you to return from a Leave of Absence you must demonstrate that the circumstances under which you were granted Leave of Absence have been resolved and that, and where applicable, any conditions of re-engagement have been met.
- 6.3 If you have been on a Leave of Absence due to medical reasons, you will need to submit this form with a copy of a medical note confirming you are fit to resume study. NMITE reserves the right to request a second opinion on such medical notes so it can satisfy itself fully that you are indeed well enough to resume your studies. In all such cases the Student Support Team will be notified in order that (if required) any appropriate adjustments can be made to support your return.
- 6.4 If you are unable to do this, then you will not be permitted to re-engage with your studies and will be required to request further Leave of Absence if this is still permissible.
- 6.5 Students who intend to reside in NMITE managed accommodation must have completed the re-engagement process prior to taking residence at NMITE.
- 6.6 When you are due to return from your Leave of Absence, you will not be able to take up residence in NMITE managed accommodation until you have completed the process of re-engagement with your programme of study.
- 6.7 If you fail to communicate with NMITE within 20 working days following the request from Registry to state your intention to return from your Leave of Absence, then your studies will be terminated.
- 6.8 You will be informed of the approval to return from Leave of Absence by the Registry. The return date will be confirmed and in line with the recommendation made by the Chief Academic Officer to coincide with the start of the appropriate module of study.
- 6.9 If your return from Leave of Absence is agreed and all required conditions have been achieved and you subsequently fail to return, the Registry will attempt to make contact via e-mail. If you do not communicate with the Registry within 5 working days, then NMITE will consider you to have failed to re-engage. Consequently, Registry will close your student record and your studies at NMITE will normally be terminated with no right to appeal.



7 Withdrawal

- 7.1 If it is the case that you are considering withdrawal, you are encouraged to engage with the sources of support and advice available within NMITE before finalising your decision in order to ensure that all other avenues and potential solutions are fully explored.
- 7.2 Withdrawal is a voluntary choice made by the student to discontinue their studies and permanently leave NMITE, this decision may be based on circumstances such as changes in circumstance linked to health or personal life, or to facilitate a transfer to another Higher Education Institution/University.
- 7.2 There are no barriers to withdrawal should you wish to do so, however this is a very important decision to make and you should be aware that once you withdraw from your studies, this is final and if you wished to return to study at NMITE at any point thereafter you would have to formally seek readmission.
- 7.3 NMITE encourage students to consider withdrawal carefully before finalising the process. You may also be affected by external legislation and policy as a result of the withdrawal (such as by the requirements of funding bodies). It is your responsibility to ensure that you make an informed choice and that you are fully aware of any implications to withdrawal.
- 7.4 If you have made the decision to withdraw, you will then be required to contact the Registry who will provide the withdrawal Form for you to complete. Application to withdraw should be received prior to the anticipated withdrawal date.
- 7.5 You will be asked to state the effective date and reasons for withdrawal, once all the academic and financial implications have been addressed your request will require approval by the Chief Academic Officer. Once approved the Academic Registrar will then send a notice confirming the date of the withdrawal to you via e-mail and a letter posted to your home address.
- 7.6 Once a student has permanently withdrawn, they will not have access to any part of the NMITE services, including academic study, student support services, NMITE managed accommodation, IT services and MyNMITE; their NMITE e-mail will be suspended 30 days following the withdrawal date.



Appendix 1 – Application for Leave of Absence

Part A should be completed by the Student

PART A:

Name:

Student ID Number:

Programme of Study:

Level of Study: (e.g. FHEQ Level 5)

Email address (for confirmation of status change):

Has a previous Leave of Absence been granted? Yes/No

If yes, please give dates and reasons:

Are you applying to extend an existing Leave of Absence? Yes/No

If yes, please give new dates and reasons:

Dates of the new Leave of Absence being requested:

From:

To:

You must apply for a Leave of Absence at the time the situation arises that adversely impacts on your ability to study.

Reasons for requesting a Leave of Absence:

Medical Maternity Paternity Competitive Sports Placement

Other (state reason) e.g. bereavement

Please provide a brief statement to support your request. You must give valid reasons and provide supporting evidence (required for reason stated as medical)

Applications without appropriate supporting evidence will not be considered and will be returned.



Funding Information:

Student ID Number:

Do you receive a: (please tick as appropriate)

Maintenance Loan

Tuition Fee Loan

NMITE Bursary

Accommodation:

Are you currently living in NMITE managed accommodation?

YES/NO (delete as appropriate)

Tuition Fees:

Taking a leave of absence may affect your tuition fee liability. If you would like information regarding the financial implications for your leave of absence, please contact the Student Support Team.

Sponsorships:

Do you have a sponsor?

Yes No

Sponsors may require information regarding the need to repeat any part of the course. Do we have permission to release medical information to your sponsor in response to any questions relating to your period of absence?

Yes No

Please provide the name of an academic member of staff who is able to give the information sponsors may require:



STUDENT DECLARATION:

I understand the implications of taking a leave of absence and that it is my responsibility to notify NMITE of my wish to return prior to the proposed date of return quoted on this form. I have attached all required documentation with my application.

Signature:

Date:



Appendix 2 – Leave of Absence – Academic Approval

Part B should be completed by the relevant academic staff member:

PART B:

This application must have full academic support.

On behalf of the Academic team I hereby approve the Leave of Absence of this student:

Student Name:

Student ID number:

The following evidence has been provided and deemed acceptable:

(please provide details: e.g.: Medical Certificate)

This will be retained on the student's record.

If the request is retrospective, please comment on the reasons for the late submission.

Comments:

Please specify any conditions (non-medical) for the student's return:

Signed:

Full name of Authorised Signatory:

Job Title:

Date:

Please forward this form to Academic Registrar within 5 working days of submission.



Appendix 3 – Application to return from leave of absence

All students wishing to return from a Leave of Absence are required to complete this form.

When your return from Leave of Absence has been agreed, your student record will be updated, and you will receive an email from the Academic Registrar confirming your eligibility to re-register online.

Name:

ID number:

Programme of Study:

Year returning to:

Email address:

Agreed date of return:/...../.....

Reason for Absence: Medical / Other (delete as appropriate)

Has the reason for your absence been resolved: No/Yes

Funding Information:

Will you be applying to the Student Loans Company for funding?

Student ID Number:

Signature:

Date:

Declaration: I understand the implications of returning from a leave of absence and have attached documentation where relevant to my situation.

Signature:

Date:

Academic Registrar to confirm receipt of appropriate evidence as required:

Signature:

Date:



Appendix 4 – Application for Withdrawal from Studies

Section 1

This section is to be completed by a student requesting to permanently withdraw from NMITE. It should be forwarded to the Academic Registrar. All information on this form is treated as STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Name:

ID number:

Programme of Study:

Year of Study:

Email address:

Reason for Withdrawal Request:

Medical / Financial/ Employment/ Other personal or family reason (delete as appropriate)

Have you previously applied for a Leave of Absence No/Yes

If no; is this something you would consider No/Yes

Last proposed day of attendance:

Student ID Number:

Signature:

Date:

Section 2

This section should be completed when a withdrawal to a programme of study has been discussed with a student by the Academic Registrar, Personal Tutor and/or member of Student Support Services as appropriate.

Student Name:

ID number:



I confirm that the above-named student has discussed his/her circumstances with me and that I support their application to withdraw from their programme of study from dd/mm/yy

Additional Comments:

NMITE staff name and role:

Signature:

Date:

Academic Registrar:

Signature:

Date: