



# POLICY & GUIDELINES

Effective April 1, 2024.

## Authorized Leave of Absence Policy (LOA) for International Students (Authorized Leave)

### Scope

This policy outlines the guidelines for a Leave of Absence (LOA) from Cape Breton University (CBU) for international students. For additional information on what constitutes an authorized leave from studies, please refer to the IRCC Information on Authorized Leave from Study. Students must consider both CBU's registration requirements and degree progression alongside immigration considerations.

### Definitions

**Authorized Leave of Absence:** A university-approved one-term period during which students may suspend and later resume enrollment and academic activities within their program of study. An authorized leave can be granted for a maximum of 150 calendar days.

**International Student:** a foreign national, who is legally authorized to study in Canada on a temporary basis.

**Study Permit:** a written authorization, issued by an IRCC officer, permitting a foreign national to engage in academic, professional, vocational, or other education- or training-related activities in Canada.

**Designated Learning Institution:** A school that admits international students. A letter of acceptance from a DLI is essential for obtaining a Canadian Study Permit.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide information about an Authorized Leave of Absence from Cape Breton University. All international students contemplating taking a leave of absence must consult with an International Student Advisor prior to applying for a leave. Students who are granted such a leave will have "authorized leave of absence" recorded on the Student's Record.

All students considering an Authorized Leave of Absence (LOA) for an academic term must submit a formal request [Click Here! Select Option 13](#). Requests received are assessed on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Registrar's Office.

### Authorized Leaves

Authorized leaves of absence shall be considered for any exceptional circumstances that hinder a student's ability to study or to remain compliant with IRCC requirements.

Approval of the Request for Authorized Leave will be recorded on the student's electronic record and retained for immigration and mandatory reporting purposes. A leave of absence may be granted to undergraduate students for reasons related to:

- maternity or parenting
- personal or family health
- required military service
- family emergency
- other

### **Eligibility**

- Have completed a minimum of one academic term of studies. (e.g., Fall and Winter)
- Be in good academic standing. Students who are on suspension or have been refused further registration are not eligible.
- Students who are experiencing serious health, personal or family issues; issues related to childbirth or childcare; military service.
- Be in good financial standing
  - An Authorized Leave of Absence will not be approved for newly admitted (first year or transfer) students who have not yet begun their studies at CBU.

**Note:** An Authorized Leave of Absence is not required during the Summer Break (May1 - August 31)

### **Conditions related to Authorized Leave of Absence**

- Personal objectives, such as travel or time off, and financial matters are not grounds for a leave of absence.
- Normally, a student shall be in Satisfactory Standing when requesting a leave of absence; exceptions may apply and will be determined by the faculty and, if applicable, the professional program.
- Students who are eligible for scholarship renewal will not have scholarship monies transferred to their account while they are on leave of absence but will maintain eligibility for renewal upon registration in subsequent terms.
- Terms and conditions vary among loan and bursary providers; student consultation with an adviser in Scholarships and Student Aid is recommended.
- Professional programs may impose constraints to application of the undergraduate leave of absence policy due to accreditation requirements or placement limitations.
- International students are advised to contact an International Student Advisor regarding individual circumstances.
- Students will not be included in the GaurdMe group health insurance plan and must enroll in an emergency plan for the time they are away on an authorized leave of absence.
- Students must adhere to academic and financial policies and regulations in the CBU Academic Calendar and on the Financial Deadlines, Policies and Regulations page. Upon registration, students agree to be, and shall be, bound by the regulations and policies of Cape Breton University as published in the CBU Academic Calendar or otherwise enacted by the University.

- Students must withdraw from courses and may incur penalties depending on the timing of the leave request.
- Students who are approved for an Authorized Leave mid semester may incur academic for financial penalties depending on the timing of the request and approval.
- Cape Breton University is a Designated Learning Institution (DLI) and is required to report to IRCC on student registration status in December and April of each year. All requests for an Authorized Leave of Absence need to be requested no later than November 1 and March 1 of each Academic Year.  
**\*\*No applications will be considered any later for the dates outlined above due to IRCC reporting.**

### **Additional Information: Leave of Absence**

As an international student on an institutionally approved LOA, you are authorized to remain in Canada with a valid study permit for **150 days** from the start date of your leave. For students who are requesting a leave for the current term and it is approved after the start of the term, the approval date will be the first day of the term. Students will need to be readvised upon their return to their studies and there is no guarantee all courses will be available to progress in your program of study. International students **are NOT authorized to work in Canada** during their LOA – Working without authorization in Canada can have a serious impact on future immigration applications.

By obtaining documentation explaining the universities policies for students seeking authorized leaves from their studies, students by no means become exempt from their obligations to comply with IRCC policies and requirements. Cape Breton University cannot (and does not) make immigration decisions. Any documentation issued by Cape Breton University to students shall serve the exclusive purpose of highlighting that Cape Breton University authorizes any such student to take a break from their studies. Such documentation shall also highlight the universities requirement that students prepare a Return-to Studies Plan, in consultation with their Program Area.

### **Falsified Documents**

If evidence of misrepresentation, fraudulent or falsified documentation is found, the penalty is severe. Cape Breton University reserves the right to revoke any offer of admission and/or financial support. Cape Breton University may also disclose evidence of any misrepresentation or fraudulent or falsified documentation to all Canadian universities, to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and to law enforcement personnel where appropriate.

[Cape Breton University Academic Calendar](#)

### **Policy Steward:**

- University Registrar and Director of Admissions

### **Relevant Legislation:**

[IRCC - Authorized Leave Information](#)

### **Application Process:**

1. Students will submit a request for an Authorized Leave of Absence [Click Here!](#) [Select Option 13](#). Students can provide a summary in the application regarding the reason for the Authorized Leave. However, students should maintain records and documents (i.e. medical documentation) or immigration purposes.
2. The student's record is reviewed. Once a decision has been made, the decision will be emailed to the student.
3. If approved, the Authorized Leave of Absence will be recorded on the students record.
4. Please allow 6-8 weeks processing time.
5. If a student needs to take an Authorized Leave mid semester the student will be subject to both Academic and Financial Penalties depending on the timing of the request.
6. Students, if approved for an Authorized Leave will need to ensure that they dropped classes.
7. There is a \$15 fee for an Authorized Leave that can be accessed using MyCredits.
8. Allow 4-6 Weeks for processing.

**Please note**, students are responsible to follow academic and financial policies and regulations in our [CBU Academic Calendar](#) and on our [Financial Deadlines, Policies and Regulations](#) page. Upon registration, students agree to be, and shall be, bound by the regulations and policies of Cape Breton University as published in the [CBU Academic Calendar](#) or otherwise enacted by the University.

*Cape Breton University reserves the right, without liability or penalty and without notice, to make changes to its policies and offered services and programs, including alteration of fees, cancellation of particular courses and changes to financial policies including the Refund Policy. Every student accepted for registration in Cape Breton University shall be deemed to have agreed to any such changes, whether made before or after said acceptance. Please see the [Cape Breton University Academic Calendar](#)*