

Policy for Holiday Entitlement for Doctoral and MPhil Postgraduate Research Students

Effective from 01/08/2019 (updated October 2024)

1. Purpose

This policy has been prepared to provide holiday entitlement guidance to Doctoral and MPhil research students taking into account the guidance provided by Research Councils and in consideration of holiday entitlement for Newcastle University staff.

2. What is covered by the policy?

The policy covers holiday entitlement for Doctoral and MPhil research students and the mechanisms for approving and recording holidays.

3. Who does the policy apply to?

Doctoral and MPhil research students, Supervisors and Academic Units. (If you are a Postgraduate Teaching Assistant (PGTA) or a Contracted Postgraduate Teacher (CPT), you should read this guidance in conjunction with the Postgraduates who Teach policy and Frequently Asked Questions, which is available [here](#).)

4. Roles and responsibilities

The policy identifies responsibilities for Doctoral and MPhil research students, supervisors and academic units.

5. Policy

The University holiday year is 1 October to 30 September inclusive and the entitlement is based on an assumption of a 37-hour working week for full-time students.

If you are a full-time Doctoral/MPhil student you will be entitled to 30 days annual holiday, plus University fixed closure days (during the Christmas/New Year period) and public holidays. If you are a part-time Doctoral/MPhil student this holiday entitlement will be applied pro-rata.

Normally, no period of holiday leave can be more than 4 weeks in length at a time.

If you need more than 4 weeks away from your studies, you are able to apply for a formal Interruption of Studies, which will require the approval of the Dean of Postgraduate Studies. Applications can be made through the submission of an online 'Mitigations' form available in the PGR Code of Practice System (available at <http://postgrad.ncl.ac.uk>). Any period of interruption does not count against your holiday entitlement.

Holidays can be taken at any time in each holiday year but must be agreed in advance with your supervisory team, and, if you are a sponsored student, be consistent with the terms and conditions of your sponsor, as you may be required to provide an explanation/justification. The normal expectation is that permission will not be withheld taking into account all the factors involved, both personal and organisational.

You should complete the Student Notice of Absence form submitted via the [Student Portal](#) to both request holiday and to have it authorised by your Academic Unit. If you encounter any difficulties submitting an absence form you should consult your Academic Unit.

If you are a Student Visa holder your holiday leave must be in accordance with the University's Attendance Engagement requirements.

PGR Student Employment and Holiday Entitlement

Pending Submission Students (also known as writing-up)

If you are a Home student and wish to take up paid employment within the University of more than 20 hours per week while registered as 'Pending Submission', you should discuss this with your Supervisory Team, in advance of starting the employment. The normal expectation is that supervisory approval will not be withheld.

If you are undertaking paid employment of more than 20 hours per week you should ensure you do not put your degree programme submission at risk, due to the employment undertaken. The University will not normally accept employment within the University, as grounds for an extension to a thesis submission deadline.

Alternatively, you could consider seeking an 'Interruption of Studies' for the period of the employment, which would change your latest submission deadline, in line with the length of interruption requested.

Following Thesis Submission

If you are a Home student and wish to take up paid employment within the University of more than 20 hours per week following your thesis submission (registered as Under Examination), you should discuss this with your Supervisory Team and the normal expectation is that supervisory approval will not be withheld.

You should ensure that you do not put your degree programme completion at risk, due to the employment undertaken.

Student Visa Holders

If you are a student who is subject to Student Visa conditions you are restricted to working no more than 20 hours per week under the terms of your visa throughout your entire degree. If you wish to take up paid employment with the University of more than 20 hours per week, this is only possible during an approved holiday period.

You must discuss this employment with their Supervisory Team, and you should ensure that you do not put your degree programme submission and completion at risk, due to the employment undertaken.

Normal holiday entitlement will apply and therefore you should not normally undertake employment of more than 20 hours, for more than one month.

If you hold any other type of immigration permission for the UK, especially: asylum seeker; discretionary leave and under immigration bail, you should seek advice from the Visa Team/People Services before undertaking any employment.

If you have Indefinite Leave to Remain you are able to undertake employment in the same way as a Home student - see Pending Submission and After Thesis Submission sections above.

Process for Approval

If your Supervisory Team is supportive of the employment in excess of 20 hours per week, you should submit a 'Student Notice of Absence form' (on the [Student Portal](#)) for the duration of the employment. Submission of the 'Student Notice of Absence form' changes your status and subsequent eligibility to work full-time (i.e. more than 20 hours per week). An absence request to cover the employment period does not count as part of your holiday entitlement.

6. Related regulations, statutes and policies

Policy on Student Employment

Policy on Postgraduates Who Teach