



**HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY**

**AC-G-13.V02: GRADUATE STUDENT  
WITHDRAWAL AND LEAVE POLICY**

## AC-G-13.V02: GRADUATE WITHDRAWAL AND LEAVE POLICY

**Date Endorsed by the Provost: 6 April 2017**

**Date Endorsed by the President: 20 April 2017**

**Date Approved by the BOT: 8 May 2017**

**Effective Date: 8 May 2017**

**Last Updated: 6 May 2018**

---

### 1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the governing rules that regulate the voluntary departure of a student from continuous enrollment in a course, a semester or the University and establishes conditions for students to resume their studies at the University.

---

### 2. POLICY DESCRIPTION

This policy presents the guidelines for students to withdraw from a course, a semester or the University. It further presents the regulations that govern the different types of leaves such as leave of absence, study abroad and military leave.

---

#### 2.1 DEFINITIONS

- **Withdrawal from a course:** A student may request to withdraw from a course in the time period between the add-and-drop and announced deadlines for withdraw with and without penalty.
- **Withdrawal from a semester:** A student may withdraw from all registered courses by the announced deadline. Pre-approved withdrawal from a semester classifies students as “active” and allows them to register courses in the following semester.
- **Withdrawal from the University:** A student may suspend enrollment and permanently depart from the University. Students who permanently depart with no expectation to return are classified as “inactive” students.
- **Leave of absence:** A student may request to suspend his/she study for a justified reason such as health or family matters, study abroad, and/or personal circumstances. Students with approved leave are classified as “active” students.
- **Study abroad:** A student may request to leave HBKU to conduct research or attend courses at an external, HBKU-recognized, degree-granting institution. Students should fulfill the following conditions:
  - Be degree-seeking graduate students at the Master’s or doctoral level
  - Be in good academic standing
  - Be enrolled as full-time students at HBKU
  - Not pursue a dual or a joint degree in which HBKU is a partner
- **Research in absentia:** Refers to a doctoral student who passed the candidacy examination and wishes to register for dissertation hours while on leave from the University.
- **Readmission:** Students who were on leave from HBKU for more than 2 consecutive regular semesters but less than 4 consecutive regular semesters may seek reenrollment in the same program of study at HBKU.
- **Academic dismissal:** An academic standing indicating that the cumulative academic performance of a student is unsatisfactory which leads to the involuntary ejection of a student from the University. Academically dismissed students are not barred to apply to the University for the same or a different academic program.
- **Administrative dismissal:** A student status indicating dismissal from the university applied by the Registrar for violation of continuous registration or attendance policy.

---

#### 2.2 POLICY STATEMENTS

**Withdraw from a course**

1. Subsequent to the add/drop deadline, students may withdraw from a course before the final deadline to withdraw from courses as indicated in the official HBKU academic calendar.
2. A grade of "W" shall be assigned and made to appear on the transcript for courses that have been withdrawn within the announced withdrawal period.
3. The student must still maintain full-time status unless granted special approval in writing by the Dean of their respective college.
4. Withdrawal may not be permitted after the announced deadlines.
5. Students who stop to attend courses and have not formally applied to withdraw a course shall receive grade of "F" for the courses.
6. With Dean's approval and under extenuating circumstances, a student may be permitted to withdraw from courses after the announced deadlines.
7. Students are not allowed to drop or withdraw from a course if an academic dishonesty charge remains pending on their records.

**Withdraw from a semester**

1. A student who seeks to withdraw from a semester must obtain the College Dean approval. Students who stop attending classes without formal approval to withdraw from a semester will be assigned a grade of "F" for all courses. This could establish grounds to academically dismiss a student.
2. Withdrawal from a semester disqualifies a student from scholarships and or financial aid.
3. Students must register in the following regular semester.
4. Students may be academically dismissed if they extend their leave beyond the approved period.

**Withdraw from the University**

1. A student who seeks to withdraw from the University with the intention to return must secure the College Dean approval. Failure to secure the College Dean approval may result in Academic dismissal.
2. Students who withdraw from the University are not qualified to maintain scholarships and/or financial aid.

**Withdrawal Tuition Fee Penalty**

1. Students who drop a course or more or withdraw from a semester or the University after the add/drop period are subject to the following penalties:
  - 25% tuition penalty if a student drops or withdraws after the add and drop period by up to two weeks;
  - 50% tuition penalty if a student drops or withdraw after the add and drop by more than two weeks but less than four weeks;
  - 75% tuition penalty if a student drops or withdraw after the add and drop by more than four weeks but less than eight weeks;
  - 100% tuition penalty if a student drops or withdraw after the add and drop period by more than eight weeks.
2. Penalties are applied to all graduate students irrespective of the source of funding covering their tuition. Tuition fee penalties are the student's sole responsibility and may not be charged to HBKU scholarship.
3. If a week falls within an official holiday, it will not count towards the penalty weeks.
4. Students may appeal the tuition fee penalty to the Dean with two weeks of the notification of the penalty. Waiver of the penalty requires approval from the Provost.

**HBKU Scholarship**

1. HBKU scholarships may be revoked upon requesting withdrawal from a semester or from the University. HBKU doesn't guarantee scholarships upon returning to the University.

**Military Absence**

1. The University recognizes and values the importance of military service. As such, students on call for military service will provided with the following options:
  - Students who are able to make arrangements with the instructor and complete all assigned work for the course will be granted a waiver for the time limit for not attending a course, as articulated in the attendance policy. Students should provide advance notices of military absences to the instructor.

- For students who are not able to make satisfactory arrangements with all instructors, the student's entire registration will be withdrawn and tuition fee penalties will be rescinded. The leave time will not count towards the time limit for a degree.

#### **Leave of Absence**

1. Students who seek to depart from continuous enrollment at the University must submit an official reasoned request to the College Dean. Applications without a justifiable cause will be automatically rejected. The application must include a plan demonstrating, within the allotted degree time limit, the processes/steps taken to fulfill all degree requirements for the degree category.
2. Leave of absence disqualifies students from maintaining scholarships and/or financial aid.
3. A student may leave for a maximum of two regular semesters. Under extenuating circumstances, the Provost may grant exceptions for the maximum allowable leave time.
4. Approvals from the supervisor and/or research advisory committee and the College Dean are mandatory to process the request.
5. Students must register in the semester they return.
6. The leave of absence time (pre-approved or not) is inclusive in accounting for the maximum time limit allotted for the completion of the degree.
7. Students on leave are not permitted to register for courses at HBKU.

#### **Study Abroad**

1. A graduate student may enroll at an external institution for a maximum of two consecutive academic semesters (excluding Summer).
2. Courses taken outside of HBKU are subject to the transfer of credit policy.
3. The supervisor must approve the research work or study-abroad plan.
4. Students must show evidence of acceptance or an invitation letter from the external University.
5. Students must apply and secure approval for academic leave prior to departure from HBKU.
6. The leave time counts towards the maximum duration of the graduate student's program of study.
7. Unless stipulated otherwise, costs associated with studying at the external institution are the responsibility of the graduate student.
8. Students on an HBKU scholarship may lose financial support during their leave. Exceptions can only be made with approvals from the Dean and Provost
9. Compensation for research assistantships may continue for study-abroad students pending the approval of the grant's Principal Investigator and/or the College's Dean.
10. The College Dean must review the students' paperwork and issue a letter of approval for the leave. The letter must stipulate the responsibilities of the student and HBKU. The study-abroad graduate students' paperwork will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar for implementation.
11. The maximum allowable transfer credit should not exceed six credit hours as per the credit transfer policy. Thesis hours taken outside of HBKU will not be transferred.

#### **Research in Absentia**

1. A doctoral student may request research in absentia if he/she:
  - Completes all courses as stipulated in the degree requirements.
  - Passes the candidacy examination.
  - Compiles a plan that contains:
    - i. Specific research activities and timelines to accomplish these activities;
    - ii. The research location and time to be spent outside of the University;
    - iii. A research guidance plan, mode and frequency of communication with the supervisor
2. Approvals from supervisor and the College Dean are required to allow students to register under the "research in absentia" classification.
3. Unless stipulated otherwise, costs associated with registration for "research in absentia" are the responsibility of the doctoral student.
4. Students on an HBKU scholarship may lose financial support during their leave. Exceptions can only be made with approvals from the Dean and Provost

5. The maximum allowable registration for “research in absentia” should not exceed one academic year. Under exceptional circumstances, the provost may grant an extension based on the Dean’s request.
6. A student may withdraw from the “research in absentia” classification in accordance with the University’s withdrawal policy.
7. Master’s students are not eligible for a “research in absentia” classification.

**Continuous Enrollment**

1. Normally students are classified as continuously enrolled, unless they:
  - Attend an external institution without official pre-approval;
  - Do not register in at least one course at HBKU over a period of two academic years;
  - Have been academically dismissed from the University.
2. Students failing to maintain continuous enrollment will be administratively dismissed and must apply for readmission as stipulated in the relevant policy.

**3. RESPONSIBILITY/SOURCE/AUTHORITY**

This policy and accompanying procedures were developed by the Office of the Provost, reviewed and endorsed by the University Academic Programs and Studies Committee and endorsed by the Provost and the University President and approved by the BOT.

This policy assigns the implementation of this process to the HBKU Registrar in collaboration with appropriate college committees and deans.

**3. 1 COMMUNITY SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY**

President, Provost, Vice Presidents, Deans, Program Coordinators, Directors, Faculty, Students

**4. Updates**

| SUMMARY OF CHANGES |                       |                                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Date               | Section               | Change                                |
| 6 May 2018         | Continuous enrollment | Added administrative dismissal clause |

**5. ACCOMPANYING PROCEDURE**