



Ollscoil Chathair
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University

Guidelines on Suspension of Study for Research Students

1. Introduction

There may be situations where a student is required to suspend their studies. These include statutory leave such as maternity leave, adoptive leave etc. If these circumstances do not align with your case, please refer to [Guidelines on Deferral for Research Students](#).

[Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#), allow for suspension of study of a half or full academic year. Students and supervisors discussing suspension of study should consult the regulations as well as these guidelines.

2. Consultation

The student should discuss options for managing the situation with their principal supervisor. It is the student's decision to apply for a suspension of study, but it must be supported by their principal supervisor. [Student Support and Development](#) may also be of assistance in considering options. Any sponsoring agency should be consulted, and impact on funding clarified.

3. Criteria for a suspension of study

A student may apply for a suspension of study where they are taking statutory leave such as maternity leave, adoptive leave, carer's leave, parental leave etc.

If these circumstances do not align with your case, please refer to [Guidelines on Deferral for Research Students](#).

4. Duration

An application for suspension of study can be made for half year (6 months) or a full academic year (October to September).

5. Access to University facilities

The student's participation in the research programme is suspended until they return from the suspension of study and the student will not be entitled to supervision or to use the University facilities, including the library.

6. Registration Period for programme

Consistent with [DCU Marks and Standards](#), **the maximum period of registration is extended.**

When returning from a suspension of study of academic year, the student is returned to the same year of study e.g., if year two is suspended then the student is registered into year two on return.

Where a student suspends half year (6 months), they will be progressed into the next study period on their return e.g. if a student suspends March to

August in year three, they will then register for year four in the following academic year.

The maximum registration periods for completion of research programmes are published in the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research & Thesis](#).

7. Financial Implications with the University

Duration of Suspension of Study	Fee Liability
Full academic year	0%
Half year (6 months)	60%

Please refer to the section on the application process for information on application deadlines. Fee liability quoted above is for applications received in line with deadlines. Applications not received in line with these deadlines may be liable for half year or full year fees depending on the individual circumstances.

8. Funding Implications

A suspension of study should be discussed with the funder, and clarity gained as to whether funding is to be lost, or a break taken, and period of funding extended in this context.

Students who suspend their study may continue to receive their stipend if such is available, dependent on the circumstances.

Students and supervisors should be aware of possible implications a suspension of study will have on the funding and other requirements stipulated by the funding body.

Graduate Studies Office (GSO) must be notified by the supervisor if a funded student is suspending, and it is the student's responsibility to secure a GSO stamp, required on the suspension of study form.

9. International Students

The basis of the student visa will not apply in the period of suspension of study as the student will not have an active registration. It is the student's responsibility to meet the requirements of their student visa.

10. Application Process & Supporting Documentation

Before applying for a suspension of study, the student must discuss the matter with their principal supervisor to determine if this is the most appropriate action.

All applications must be accompanied by supporting documentation and cover the period of suspension.

To make an application for suspension of study, the form (R-40R) must be submitted to Registry before the corresponding deadline. [The application deadlines can be found on the form.](#) The application also requires principal supervisor and head of school support as well as GSO input in cases of funded students.

To suspend a full academic year or half year (6 months) a student must first register, and then submit the application form to Registry. It is also required that a positive annual review (PGR2) recommendation is in place.

While on a half year (6 month) suspension of study:

- the student must engage in the annual review (PGR2) process to ensure the possibility of registration into the following year. The PGR2 reports should note the fact of suspension of study.
- registration will be amended in the most relevant academic year (whichever is most reflective of the period of suspension).

11. Outcome of Application

Registry colleagues will update the student on the status of their application once all documentation has been reviewed and processed.

12. Returning to study

It is recommended that the student discusses their return to study with their principal supervisor.

Onus is on the student to re-engage with the university after a period of suspension, otherwise registration will cease, and a student would have to formally apply to be re-admitted.

13. Useful links

- [Student Support & Development](#)
- [Suspension of Study Application Form \(R-40R\)](#)
- [Guidelines on Deferral for Research Students](#)

14. Version Control

Document Name:	Guidelines on Suspension of Study for Research Students
Version Reference:	Version 2
Document Owner:	Registry
Last updated:	17 th October 2025