

University of Prince Edward Island	Policy Number: FNDI-016
Policy Title: LEAVE OF ABSENCES FROM THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM	Pages - 4
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1. Purpose

To provide a clear, fair, and consistent process for interns who require a temporary leave of absence from the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program, while ensuring academic standards, practicum integrity, accreditation requirements, and fairness to all interns are maintained.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all interns enrolled in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program.

This policy operates in conjunction with applicable University of Prince Edward Island policies governing student status, registration, and leaves of absence, including [Section 22 of the UPEI Academic Calendar](#).

3. Responsibility

The Professional Practice Coordinator is responsible for:

- Reviewing requests for leave of absence;
- Determining the feasibility and conditions of a leave in consultation with the Program Director, relevant placement preceptors, and University offices as required;
- Communicating program decisions in writing;
- Documenting approved leaves and maintaining records in the intern’s file; and
- Coordinating revised placement schedules where applicable.

The intern is responsible for:

- Submitting a written request for leave as soon as circumstances arise;
- Completing the steps outlined in [Section 22 of the UPEI Academic Calendar](#) to formally request a Leave of Absence through the Registrar’s Office;
- Providing supporting documentation where required;
- Complying with any conditions associated with an approved leave; and
- Maintaining communication with the Professional Practice Coordinator throughout the leave period.

4. Policy

Interns may request a leave of absence from the Integrated Dietetic Internship Program for reasons including, but not limited to, medical, compassionate, family, professional, academic, or other significant personal circumstances.

Leaves of absence are not automatic and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Approval is contingent upon:

- The intern's academic and practicum standing;
- Accreditation and competency requirements;
- The feasibility of revised practicum sequencing; and
- The availability of future placement opportunities.

A leave of absence may delay program progression and completion. Due to the limited number of practicum placements and the time required to arrange them, immediate re-entry into the program cannot be guaranteed.

Interns on an approved leave must remain in good standing with the University and comply with all applicable University policies regarding student status, including formal Registrar approval of the leave.

Failure to return from an approved leave within the agreed timeframe, failure to notify the Registrar and program of return, or failure to comply with the conditions of the leave may result in withdrawal from the program.

5. Procedure

Request for Leave

The intern must submit a written request to the Professional Practice Coordinator outlining:

- The reason for the leave (without requiring disclosure of confidential personal details unless documentation is required);
- The anticipated duration of the leave; and
- The proposed semester and date of return.

In alignment with University policy, leaves may normally be approved for one, two, or three consecutive semesters, to a maximum cumulative total of three semesters. Requests exceeding this limit would normally require re-admission to the program.

Supporting documentation (e.g., medical documentation) may be required.

Review of Request

The Professional Practice Coordinator, in consultation with the Program Director and placement preceptor(s) where applicable, will review the request. Consideration will be given to:

- The duration of the request;
- The intern's current performance and standing;
- Competencies completed to date;
- The impact on practicum sites; and
- The feasibility of rescheduling remaining placements.

Decision and Documentation

The program decision will be communicated to the intern in writing. If supported, the letter will outline:

- The approved duration of the leave;
- Any conditions associated with return;
- Implications for program progression; and
- Requirements for reinstatement.

Following program support, the intern must complete the formal Registrar Leave of Absence Application through myUPEI before the beginning of the leave semester. The Professional Practice Coordinator may provide a letter of support for this application.

Documentation related to the leave will be retained in the intern's file in accordance with the Retention of Records Policy.

Return from Leave

Prior to returning, the intern must:

- Confirm their intention to return in writing to both the Professional Practice Coordinator and the Registrar's Office;
- Provide any required documentation confirming readiness to resume program activities; and
- Meet with the Professional Practice Coordinator to review expectations and updated practicum schedules.

The intern must also complete the University's process for [returning from leave](#), as outlined by the Registrar's Office

Program Re-Entry and Placement Scheduling

Re-entry into practicum placements is subject to placement availability. Interns returning from leave may experience delays in resuming placements due to scheduling constraints and seat availability in cohort-based placements.

Interns Withdrawing from the Program

If an intern determines they are unable to return following an approved leave, the [Interns Withdrawing from the Internship Program Policy](#) will apply.

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed biennially by the Program Director and Professional Practice Coordinator, or sooner if required due to changes in University policy, accreditation standards, immigration requirements, or program needs.