

ABSENCE FROM LEARNING DURING MB CHB – leave of absence or sick/bereavement/emergency leave

The five years of the MB ChB degree form a comprehensive curriculum, structured to ensure adequate learning opportunities for students to graduate ready for medical practice under supervision as a first-year doctor. Much of the learning is experiential and reliant on interactions with others. While the degree takes five years to complete, the academic year is considerably shorter than a full calendar year, with 35-38 teaching weeks in years 2-5, a total of 186 weeks. Course dates for medical students for specific years can be found [here](#), and the typical semester/holiday course structure is as follows:

Year	Duration	Year runs	In year holidays/semester breaks
ELM 2	34 weeks	Orientation – mid Feb Mid Feb – Late October Exams finish early Nov	Five weeks: S1 mid semester/easter – 1 week Mid-year vacation (June/July) – 3 weeks S2 mid semester break (Aug) – 1 week
ELM 3	34 weeks	Mid Feb – Late October Exams finish early Nov	Five weeks: S1 mid semester/easter – 1 week Mid-year vacation (June/July) – 3 weeks S2 mid semester break (Aug) – 1 week
ALM 4	38 weeks	Late Jan – Late Oct	Four weeks: S1 mid semester/easter – 1 week Mid-year vacation (June/July) – 2 weeks S2 mid semester break (Aug) – 1 week
ALM 5	36 weeks	Early Feb – Mid Oct Oct-Nov – study break Exams finish early Nov	Four weeks: S1 mid semester/easter – 1 week Mid-year vacation (June/July) – 2 weeks S2 mid semester break (Aug) – 1 week
ALM 6	42 weeks	Mid Nov-Mid Nov	Ten weeks: Summer vacation (Mid Dec-Jan) – 2 weeks Winter vacation (Aug-Sept) – 2 weeks Scheduled holiday in course (varies according to elective Quarter) – 6 weeks

To provide for adequate learning during the course, it is expected that all medical students will attend all scheduled learning experiences. Attendance at all laboratories and tutorials in ELM and all block and vertical module teaching in ALM is considered particularly important. It is acknowledged however that a student may need to attend to personal or extracurricular matters

that clash with scheduled teaching. In these instances, a student can apply for “leave of absence (LoA)” which, if approved, becomes a “notified” from their course/module in ELM and ALM respectively.

The approval of LoA and its impact on academic progress should be fair and reasonable and involve discussion, where necessary, with the student. Nevertheless, due to professional practice, applying for leave includes consideration of the needs of others and is not granted automatically.

Application for Leave

Students are required prospectively to seek approval for all LoA. Students are required to discuss their LoA with all relevant course convenors/administrators and then complete the appropriate LoA form. It is expected that leave of absence should be requested at least six weeks in advance. You will be notified via email the outcome of your LoA application.

In ELM if the LoA being applied for is longer than 3 days AND / OR a Terms requirement would be missed as a result of the leave, an online Leave Request form needs to be filled in, annotated by an ELM Administrator and the Assessment Convenor, and then approved by the Associate Dean Student Affairs. For leave of absence shorter than 3 days, students must notify the appropriate supervisor(s)/ tutors and email ELM Administration to record the absences as notified absences (otherwise absences will be recorded as "unnotified" and considered by the ELM Student Progress Committee when evaluating students' professional behaviour).

In ALM when any leave of absence is taken an online Leave Request form must be completed and approved by the appropriate block and vertical module convenor(s), which is then automatically forwarded to the Associate Dean Student Affairs.

If students wish to discuss the process of applying for LoA, the Student Affairs Office can provide information.

Consideration of Leave of absence application

When staff are considering approval of LoA applications, the following will be taken into consideration:

Student factors:

- The family or community importance of the student attending the activity.
- Whether the student has extenuating personal circumstances.
- Whether the student is participating in a national or international sporting or cultural event.
- Learning or professional development opportunities afforded by the activity.
- Whether the student is presenting, organising or representing a group at a conference or meeting.
- Whether the leave will benefit the wellbeing of the student.

Course/learning factors:

- The proportion of the module being requested as leave.
- The reason the activity cannot be undertaken during scheduled holidays.
- The length of leave relative to the activity.

Learning factors:

- The importance of missed teaching or assessment, and the student’s ability to catch up on missed activities.

- The student's total leave in that module and leave in that year.

If a student's application for LoA is declined, or the expected make-up academic work or clinical experience time is seen as being unreasonable by the student, the student may appeal through the Student Affairs Office and the Associate Dean Student Affairs. The decision on the appeal of a LOA is made by the Dean of the campus in ALM and ADME, or the Director of the ELM programme in ELM.

Sick Leave, Bereavement Leave or other Emergency

If a student is unable to attend learning sessions, block or vertical module learning, or clinical attachment due to illness or other reasons the appropriate tutor(s), module convenor(s), the ELM Administration (for ELM students) and the Student Affairs Office (for ALM students) must be notified on the first day of the absence and on any subsequent days (noting that if the absence extends to beyond 3 days, a LoA will be required). **This is the student's responsibility. It is important not only because of the missed learning opportunities, but also because staff frequently arrange clinics and patients to be available for students so need to know if the student will not be present.**

A medical certificate maybe required for any student absence because of illness for more than 3 days. It is important that students absent themselves from work if ill, in order to avoid infecting vulnerable patients and colleagues.

The length of time taken for bereavement leave is also considered on an individual basis. Please note that evidence of bereavement should be provided i.e.: copy of death certificate, death notice etc. It is likely remediation for content/clinical experience missed within the course will be negotiated directly with the student.

Missed Sessions

In ELM it is the students' responsibility to catch up on any material that they have missed. In general, ELM module convenors are not able to provide catch up work or sessions.

In ALM it is the student's responsibility to work alongside the Module convenor and/or the Associate Dean Student Affairs to catch up on academic work or clinical experience time with the relevant module convenor(s). Normally, in ALM, an approved absence of one or two days on a module would not need to be made up, provided no essential teaching sessions, clinical experiences or assessment were missed. Above one or two days, if missed content/experience cannot be completed within the module, this may lead to a module result of 'Incomplete' and the student would need to negotiate a plan to allow completion.

Unexplained/un-notified absences or absences when leave has already been turned down, may be considered as unprofessional behaviour when it comes to assessment and progression decisions.

Student Progress Committees will take into consideration the amount of accrued LOA, and other leave taken by a student when making progress decisions.

Public Holidays

If a Trainee Intern is required to be with their clinical team on a public holiday (for example, the team is "on call" on a public holiday), they should be allowed one day's leave in lieu of this, to be taken at an appropriate time within the same module. This should be discussed with the senior members of the clinical team to identify a day that is acceptable for all parties and

where there is unlikely to be significant loss of learning opportunities. It is expected that the TI notify the module administrator by email when this arrangement has been made.