

# Studying away from campus or overseas

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## Counting time away

HDR students may complete part of their study away from campus within Australia or overseas, this is called counting time away. You will need to lodge a leave request through Sydney Student and your request must be supported by your supervisors and postgraduate coordinator. You may also request counting time away for internships that are a part of your research degree.

If you are an international HDR student, you can apply for counting time away for your last 2 research periods, if you have been on campus during your candidature so far. If you are an international student and want to take any type of leave, you should speak to your supervisor and HDRAC first for advice.

**[use pull-out highlight box for this paragraph]** When considering counting time away, HDR students must be mindful of the minimum time required for onshore candidature. Master's by Research candidates must complete a minimum of 2 research periods on campus at the University of Sydney, and PhD candidates must complete a minimum of 4 research periods on campus at the University of Sydney, for your degree to be conferred.

## Checklist for studying away from campus

Consider the following when planning your study away from campus.

### 1. Supervision and communication

Make sure you communicate with your supervisors before you take your leave. Together you should decide how you will continue to receive supervision when you are away from campus, or overseas in a different time zone. Decide on the best method of communication: email, phone or video calls; and how often.

## 2. Internet access

In many parts of the world internet access can be inconsistent. It is your responsibility to ensure you will have adequate internet access.

## 3. Contact details

It's important to give your supervisory team alternate contact details in case they have trouble reaching you. Don't forget to update the University's records with your contact details as well.

## 4. Collaborators, co-authors, group and lab members, and research participants

Let your research network know your travel plans. If you're used to communicating via social media or forums, check whether your destination country permits use of these channels. If your preferred app isn't available, decide on alternatives before you leave.

## 5. Presentations and other non-thesis tasks while away

Your supervisors or research sponsors may have connections with researchers or research centres in your destination country. Discuss whether there is any opportunity or expectation for you to complete non-thesis work while you're away.

## 6. Completion timeline

If your submission date is likely to be affected by changing the location of your candidature, your completion deadline may require an extension. Discuss with your lead supervisor and try not to underestimate how much time you need to complete your degree. It might be stressful to have this conversation with your supervisors, but it is best if everyone is clear about their expectations. If you are later asked by the University to [Show Good Cause](#), your supervisors might be more willing to give their continued support of your candidature if there were clear and thorough discussions of how much work you realistically had left to complete.

## 7. Time management

If you are an international student completing your last two research periods in your home country, it's likely that your scholarship has run out. This means you might need to find

employment while finishing your thesis. [The University has resources for time management](#), which you may find useful.

## 8. Financing your studies

If you're an international student who is counting time away, and you're no longer receiving a scholarship, you will be charged the normal rate of onshore international student fees (calculated per research period). This places a huge burden on international students to quickly find paid employment or other scholarships. Start your search for other funding before you head overseas. Ask researchers in your field if they know of funding, and if they can connect you with research centres that might need staff. Start your job search before you leave by reaching out to your social networks. Search for job seeker apps or job boards that have opened up since the last time you lived back home. You may want to suspend your studies, continue working on your thesis, and re-enrol when you are ready to submit.

## 9. Visa compliance issues

If you're an international student who needs to discontinue your candidature, and then re-enrol when you are ready to submit, [contact our Legal Service](#) if you have questions about your visa. If you have questions about a new Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE), email the University's compliance officers at [student.compliance@sydney.edu.au](mailto:student.compliance@sydney.edu.au) before you leave Sydney.

[Read the University's advice regarding student visas.](#)

## 10. Desk, equipment, library access

Make sure to sort out your on-campus resources, such as:

- informing the relevant administrative unit that you don't need your allocated desk anymore (as there could be a waiting list of HDR candidates needing a desk)
- returning lab keys and other University equipment relating to your research
- checking with the [University library](#) about which of its services you can access while you're overseas.

## 11. Data storage

You should get advice about any implications for data access due to your change in location, especially if:

- your thesis is part of larger group research project
- you're using very large data sets
- you're storing data on servers belonging to research institutions other than the University.

You should check with:

- your project's chief investigator (who is usually your lead supervisor)
- [the University's Research Integrity Advisors](#)
- [the ICT Service Desk](#)
- the research data managers of any relevant external organisations.

## 12. Non-University matters

If you've been renting a home in Sydney, make sure you're aware of [your legal rights and obligations when ending a tenancy](#).

If you're involved in any complaints, grievance processes, or disputes (such as consumer matters, vehicle accidents or relationship breakdowns), make sure you inform the relevant parties of your overseas contact details. Double check you have securely retained all relevant documentation, and confirm deadlines for important actions.

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