

Policy for Sickness Absence for Postgraduate Research Students

(This policy applies to all registered Doctoral and MPhil students up to completion of their studies.)

1. For **any periods** of absence due to sickness, you are expected to inform your academic supervisor as soon as possible.
2. Where your illness prevents you from studying for **more than three working days and up to seven days**, you should self-certify and complete the 'Student notice of Absence form' in S3P (to notify your Academic Supervisor and School/Institute office as soon as you are able to return to your studies: <https://s3p.ncl.ac.uk/login/index.aspx>)
3. If illness prevents you from studying for **more than seven working days**, you should obtain a medical certificate from your doctor. You should complete the 'Student notice of Absence form' in S3P as soon as possible and upload your doctor's note as evidence: <https://s3p.ncl.ac.uk/login/index.aspx>)
4. Students who accumulate frequent short-term periods of absence over the course of a year may be referred to Occupational Health on the recommendation of their supervisory team.
5. For periods of sickness absence of **more than one month** you must inform the relevant Graduate School by means of applying for an interruption of studies through the PGR Code of Practice System and uploading the medical certificate with your application. Consideration will be given as to whether you need referral to Occupational Health. <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/student-progress/pgr/circumstances/>
6. Interruption of studies will not normally be granted for more than a maximum of twelve months. If any referral appointments are made for you on your return to your studies, you must attend them and you must attend any agreed regular follow up appointments.
7. A re-entry interview will be arranged for you, if your sickness absence has been for more than two months, with your School Director of Postgraduate Studies/ Institute Postgraduate Research Student Coordinator, on your return.

Stipend/maintenance payments during sickness absence

1. If you are receiving stipend payments from an external sponsor, it is your responsibility to inform the sponsor who will apply their own policy concerning stipend payments during periods of extended (1 month or greater) sick leave. Additionally, the University has a duty of responsibility to external sponsors and may be required to inform your sponsor of significant periods of absence. Continuation of stipend payments during periods of sickness absence is solely the responsibility of the sponsor.
2. If you are receiving stipend payments administered through the University, including on behalf on an external sponsor, subject to any conditions imposed by an external sponsor, stipend payments will continue through the first three months of sickness. Stipend payments will normally cease after three months, but continuation of stipends may be considered on a case-by-case discretionary basis. Continuation of stipend payments during periods of sickness absence has no implication on the overall duration of the scholarship award; i.e. the scholarship will not be extended to take into account periods of sickness absence.