

## Guidelines for PhD, MPhil, MD[Res] and EngD students wishing to take External Study Leave

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1. External Study Leave is defined as being a period of time away from College (minimum of two weeks) to undertake research which counts towards the degree registration. Ordinarily, this is either fieldwork or a placement, but also covers split-PhDs. It will be recorded as an External Study Leave Milestone. Before taking a period of external study leave, supervisors and students are advised to check the terms and conditions of the student's funding body which may stipulate restrictions on taking this type of leave and may impact on the stipend.
2. The use of an external study leave milestone is determined using the *Postgraduate Research: Recording of External Study Leave Form* which must be completed by the department and submitted to Registry Records. For Tier 4 students, there is an additional requirement for the supervisor to state how they intend to remain in contact with the student during the period of external study leave which must be approved by the Visa Compliance Team.  
  
[Note: The College is required to notify the Home Office immediately if a student on a Tier 4 visa is taking a period of time away from College. This will be reported to the Home Office as a Change of Study Location but will not impact on their visa status in the UK].
3. In some circumstances a reduced (part-time) fee may be charged for the period the student is away from College. This must be requested by department/division and approved by the Dean and should be for a minimum of three months.
4. Students studying for a Split PhD will have their period away from College recorded as an External Study Leave Milestone on or prior to enrolment at the beginning of the students' degree. Once again, Departments must notify the Visa Compliance Team if this applies to a student who holds a Tier 4 Visa.
5. For advice and guidance on study leave, please contact [student.records@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:student.records@imperial.ac.uk). Guidance on placements can be provided by the Assistant Registrar (Placements) ([student.placement@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:student.placement@imperial.ac.uk)). To contact Visa Compliance email [visacompliance@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:visacompliance@imperial.ac.uk)

Note: A period of time away from College to undertake activities which do not directly contribute towards the degree registration should be recorded as an interruption of studies using the category Alternative Research/Internships (please see *Guidelines for Interruptions of Studies for PhD, MPhil, MD[Res] and EngD students*).

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