

Ill-Health Policy

Ill-Health Leave

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) will consider extension of the awards of PhD Scholars and of Split-site PhD Scholars on grounds of ill-health, **subject to the agreement of the Scholar's university.***

1. Requests for an extension are considered individually. Agreement from the university to leave of absence on grounds of ill-health does not necessarily mean that the Commission will fund an extension.
2. The maximum duration of an extension on grounds of ill-health during an award is 13 weeks.
3. An extension is not granted for illness lasting less than 4 weeks, during which time the Scholar has been unable to complete PhD work.
4. In order for an extension on the grounds of ill-health to be authorised, the Scholar must forward to their Programme Officer: written confirmation of the length of absence, as confirmed by their university, and that the Scholar was unable to work on their PhD during this period.
5. The CSC must be informed as soon after the onset of illness as is practicable, and no later than 4 weeks after the onset of illness. Any later notification may affect the length of ill-health extension granted.
6. The CSC must be informed in writing when the award-holder returns to work.
7. The CSC must receive a report from a doctor looking after the award-holder during his/her illness within 2 months of the award-holder's return to work. The report should state when the illness began and contain details of the diagnosis and the management of the illness together with an estimate of the likelihood of recurrence of the illness during the remainder of the award (0-10%, 11-25%, 26-50%, 51-75%, 76-100%).
8. The CSC will notify the award-holder in writing whether or not an extension has been granted, and if so the length of an extension, within 2 months of the receipt of the medical report.

Please note that the Commission reserves the right to change its policies for its own reasons or in response to external changes. All of the above is subject to the agreement of the UK host university and UK Home Office whose policies are subject to change.

Whilst these Good Practice arrangements conform to current UK employment law, the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission is not obliged to follow the law as Scholars are not employees.

** UK visa regulations mean that it is at the discretion of the institution sponsoring a Scholar's visa whether they support an absence from studies for 'ill-health' and for how long a period of leave will be granted.*

We recommend that you speak with an International Student Adviser at your university as soon as possible to discuss your options and obtain immigration advice before contacting the CSC regarding your eligibility for an extension on the grounds of ill-health leave.