

Policy IV.06 – Leave of Absence Policy

A authorized leave of absence (LOA) is a temporary interruption in a student's program of study. LOA refers to the specific time period during a program when a student is not in attendance. A LOA is not required if a student is not in attendance only for an institutionally scheduled break. However, a scheduled break may occur during a LOA.

A LOA must meet certain conditions to be counted as a temporary interruption in a student's education instead of being counted as a withdrawal requiring an institution to perform a refund calculation. If an institution elects to offer LOAs, it must have a written Leave of Absence Policy that complies with this *NACCAS Leave of Absence Policy and Checklist*. Additionally, approval of a student's LOA must be in accordance with the institution's Leave of Absence Policy. A LOA may only be granted if there is a reasonable expectation that the student will return from the LOA.

This checklist has been prepared as a guide to assist schools in interpreting the requirements of this Policy and to serve as a guide in preparing a Leave of Absence Policy. It is not necessary for the various elements to be stated in any special phraseology or listed in any particular sequence, as long as the overall policy conveys the required elements in a way that can be easily understood.

Required Elements

If the institution elects to offer LOAs, the following elements must be included in the institution's Leave of Absence Policy. A copy of this checklist is to accompany an institution's Leave of Absence Policy each time the institution has need to submit its policy to the Commission and this checklist is a required exhibit for the Institutional Self-Study (ISS) if the institution elects to offer LOAs. For each of the items below, review the relevant section of your Leave of Absence Policy to determine if it contains all of the information required by the item in the *NACCAS Leave of Absence Policy and Checklist*. Write the item number from the Leave of Absence Policy and Checklist next to the requirement in the institution's Leave of Absence Policy then list on the included copy of this checklist the section of your Leave of Absence Policy where the information can be found.

The institution's policy:

- ___ 1. Is written and identified as a Leave of Absence Policy.
- ___ 2. Includes the reason(s) for which a LOA may be granted.
- ___ 3. Requires that the student must follow the institution's policy in requesting a LOA.
- ___ 4. Requires that the student must request the LOA in advance unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from doing so and that –
 - ___ a. The request must be in writing;
 - ___ b. The request must include the student's reason for the LOA; and
 - ___ c. The request must include the student's signature.

- ___ 5. Indicates that the institution may grant a LOA to a student who did not provide the request prior to the LOA due to unforeseen circumstances if -
 - ___ a. The institution documents the reason for its decision;
 - ___ b. The institution collects the request from the student at a later date; and
 - ___ c. The institution establishes the start date of the approved LOA as the first date the student was unable to attend.
- ___ 6. Indicates that a student will not be assessed any additional charges as a result of a requested LOA.
- ___ 7. Indicates that a student will not be granted a LOA if the LOA, together with any additional LOAs previously granted, exceed a total of 180 calendar days in any 12-month period.
- ___ 8. Indicates that a student granted a LOA in accordance with the institution's policy is not considered to have withdrawn and that no refund calculation is required at that time.
- ___ 9. Indicates that the student's contract period will be extended by the same number of calendar days taken in the LOA ⁸ and that such changes to the contract period must be either -
 - ___ a. Changes to the enrollment agreement will be initialed by all parties; or
 - ___ b. An addendum to the enrollment agreement must be signed by all parties.
- ___ 10. Indicates that the student will be withdrawn if the student takes an unapproved LOA or does not return by the expiration of an approved LOA and that either -
 - ___ a. (at an institution required to take attendance) the student's withdrawal date for the purpose of calculating a refund will be the student's last date of attendance; or
 - ___ b. (at an institution not required to take attendance) the student's withdrawal date for the purpose of calculating a refund will be the date the student began the LOA.