

School of Audiology and Speech Sciences  
Guidelines on Student Absence from Externships  
*January 2, 2019*

Clinical externships are a required element of the M.Sc. program which are developed to facilitate students' clinical skills development.

It is important that students have ample opportunity to develop clinical skills and achieve learning goals within a full externship. Externships are intentionally designed in lengths to support this development.

It is also important that attendance during externships aligns with the workplace standards of attendance. Attendance at a job is not optional.

If a student is absent for more than 10% of the externship, the time must be made up by either:

- Extending the externship by the amount of time missed as determined by the Clinical Coordinator and Clinical Educator together
- Completion of a clinical project agreed upon by Clinical Educator, Clinical Coordinator and the student when it is not possible to extend the externship

If a student misses more than 20% of a scheduled externship, the externship may be discontinued at the discretion of the School.

### **1. Absence from an externship: Health or personal reasons**

For all requests for an planned absence that falls on a clinic day, the student **must** forward his/her request to the **Clinical Coordinator not the Clinical Educator**. The student is not to approach the Clinical Educator directly with their request.

- For requests for planned absence from externship due to **medical reasons or appointments**, the request must be made to your Clinical Coordinator in advance whenever possible. You may be required to provide a medical note/evidence of a medical appointment.
- For absence due to unexpected illness, the student must **directly contact their CE and CC** as soon as possible, and communicate the expected duration of absence and day of return, so that the CE can plan accordingly. The student should also verify that the CE has received this communication to ensure receipt of the message.
- For requests for absence that are **not due to medical reasons or appointments**, the request will be reviewed and subject to nonapproval with the reinforced expectation of attendance in externship. Examples of denied requests for absence include those for social events or holiday travel. The Clinical Coordinator is again the point of contact on these requests, not the Clinical Educator.

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If a student proceeds with an unapproved absence, the grade in Requirements for Professional Practice for that externship will be lowered by the School to an I (Inconsistent) and with repeated occurrence, a U (Unsatisfactory), lowering the externship mark by one increment for Inconsistent and two for Unsatisfactory ( e.g., A+ dropped to A, or A+ dropped to A-, respectively).

## **2. Absences from Externship for Educational Reasons**

Professional education opportunities such as workshops or conferences are part of a healthy culture of ongoing professional development. However, while in the program, the priority for students is first and foremost the fulfilling their academic and externship commitments. Attendance, participation or volunteering at said events require approval of the School.

Students requests for absence from externships to attend, participate or volunteer at professional education when not offered as part of the externship **must make this request with advance notice to their Clinical Coordinator prior to further discussion with their Clinical Educator**. When these requests involve absence from an academic class, the student should consult the SASS Policy on Attendance and Missed Classes.