



Postgraduate Researchers

Visa Responsibilities and Changes to your Registration

As a Student visa holder studying at the University of Surrey, you are obliged to ensure that you maintain the conditions of your visa:

- **Keep your contact details up-to-date** through your [Surrey Self-Service](#) account and report any changes to your immigration status to [Immigration Compliance](#).
- **Engage** with your research programme.
- **Check** your Surrey email account on a regular basis.
- **Log your supervision meetings** or engagements once every month by the deadline:
 - You will receive an automated email to your Surrey email account each month informing you that a new meeting record has been opened for that month. The deadline for logging your meeting notes is the 15th of the following month.
 - Immigration Compliance monitor your monthly engagements and will contact you if you fail to log engagements with your supervisors.
 - You risk having your Student visa sponsorship withdrawn if you do not log your monthly supervisions by the set deadline.
- **Field Work** - inform [Immigration Compliance](#) and the [Research Degrees Programme Management Team](#) if you are planning to change your location of study. You will need to complete and return an overseas research/fieldwork form
- **Internships integral to the thesis** – if the internship is directly related to your thesis and will advance the research, it will be classed as an overseas research placement. The University will not withdraw sponsorship, even if the internship is longer than 60 days. Your registration end date will not be extended. You will need to complete and return an overseas research/fieldwork form prior to beginning the internship
- **Internships NOT integral to the thesis** - if the internship will not directly contribute to the research for your PhD project then it cannot be classed as a research/fieldwork trip and it would instead be classed as employment, so could only be undertaken if it meets the Student visa employment regulations (see below). Your Student visa sponsorship will be withdrawn if you temporarily withdraw from your studies for over 60 days in order to pursue an internship which is not directly contributing to the submission of your thesis.

- **Working during your studies** – you are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week throughout your studies, however you cannot be self-employed or engage in business activity. The [UK Council for International Student Affairs](#) has further information on Student visa working restrictions.
- **Holiday (up to 25 days per year)** – request this from your supervisor in advance.
- **Manage your time.** Your programme registration and your visa are both valid for 48 months. If you want to sit your *viva voce* examination and undertake any corrections before your visa expires, you will need to submit your thesis within 36-42 months of your registration start date.
- **Inform** your [supervisors](#) and the [Research Degrees Programme Management Team](#) if you are unable to study. If you are unwell or personal circumstances affect your ability to engage in your programme you can take a period of absence by requesting a temporary withdrawal:
 - [Requests for temporary withdrawal](#) are made through your Surrey Self-Service Research Programme screen.
 - Requests for temporary withdrawal must be made either at the time they are needed or in advance. Backdated requests cannot normally be considered.
 - The Research Degrees Office is obliged to inform Immigration Compliance as soon as a request for temporary withdrawal is made. This is because the University has 10 working days in which to report the absence.
 - You can remain in the UK on your Student Visa if your temporary withdrawal is for 60 days or less.
 - Your visa sponsorship will be withdrawn and you will be required to leave the UK if your temporary withdrawal is for more than 60 days
 - You cannot extend a temporary withdrawal in order to remain in the UK. It would be treated as a continuation of the original temporary withdrawal and if the absence was over 60 days your sponsorship would be withdrawn

Please Note: your visa is not extended to take account of periods when you are on temporary withdrawal. If you do take short periods of temporary withdrawal (60 days or less) during your programme then your visa may expire before your registration end date. **Remember that it is your responsibility to ensure that your visa covers the duration of your course.** If you have any questions in relation to your visa, contact the International Student Advice Team using the details below.

Key contacts

International Student Advice: Contact details are available at the bottom of <https://my.surrey.ac.uk/visas>.

Immigration Compliance: Contactable via [Surrey Support](#). Select the primary case category of MySurrey Hive, and then International Advice and Visas as the secondary subject.

Research Degrees Programme Management Team: researchdegrees@surrey.ac.uk
<https://my.surrey.ac.uk/research/guidance-and-support/research-degrees-programme-management>