



University of
St Andrews

Discounted time for postgraduate research students

Document type	Policy
Scope (applies to)	PGR only
Applicability date	30/06/2020
Review / Expiry date	31/07/2027
Approved date	25/06/2024
Approver	Senate Policies
Document owner	Administrative Officer
School / unit	Education and Student Experience
Document status	Published
Information classification	Public
Equality impact assessment	None
Key terms	Academic policies/Student progression/Length of study for PGRs
Purpose	This policy details when a student may request discounted time, the process for submitting a request and the evidence required.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.5	Updated for three years	Approved	Administrative officer	25/06/2024

Discounted time for postgraduate research students

1. Purpose

This policy:

- defines discounted time
- details situations that are likely to result in discounted time
- explains the process of requesting discounted time
- defines the types of evidence needed to support a request
- describes how fees and funding are calculated during discounted time
- outlines the appeal procedure

2. Discounted time

Discounted time is a way to accommodate serious disruptions to postgraduate research studies which are unforeseeable, unpreventable and beyond the student's control (see section 3). It allows students to remain registered and to be able to engage with their studies, while also having extra time added to their end date. Students on discounted time will continue to receive supervision, although it may be appropriate to adjust supervisory arrangements based on the specific disruption. The student and supervisory team should discuss and agree a supervision plan before applying for discounted time.

When discounted time is granted, a 'year' of academic study becomes 12 months + any additional discounted time. For example, if the current end date is 26 January 2021 and 3 months of discounted time is granted, the student's current 'year' is extended to 15 months, and the new end date becomes 26 April 2021.

Discounted time will be awarded in month-long intervals. Applications can be for a minimum of one month and a maximum of 6 months in the first instance.

3. Situations likely to result in discounted time

Discounted time is used when events outside the student's and University's control prevent access to necessary resources such as laboratories, Library or archival resources, or data sets.

Discounted time may be used to accommodate:

- Natural disasters
- Pandemics
- Loss of (or loss of access to) a significant instrument or set of data integral to the student's research

Discounted time will not be granted for:

- Individual ill health (in such cases a [Leave of Absence](#) may be more appropriate)
- Short term delays or diversions which are to be expected in a substantial research project

- Minor research setbacks such as loss of data or instruments that are not integral to the project

Students on a co-tutelle programme or Global PhD may not be able to utilise the discounted time provision, unless there is agreement to do so by the partner institution.

4. Requesting discounted time

A student should discuss the possibility of discounted time with their supervisor or the [Registry Student Support Officer \(PGR\)](#) in the first instance. Together with the student, the supervisor or Registry Support Officer will assess the situation and agree whether a period of discounted time is appropriate. They will then make a recommendation to the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies (DoPGR). If they have not already been consulted, the Registry Student Support Officer should be consulted at this point to provide advice and investigate other aspects of the request.

Discounted time should be discussed at the point of the disruption. Retrospective requests for discounted time will not normally be considered. Students nearing their end date should also consult the [extension policy](#) as this may be more appropriate.

International students on a visa should speak to the [International Advice team](#), as the addition of discounted time will not automatically result in an extension of the visa period.

The application process may be amended when discounted time allowances are aligned with a particular phase in a funding scheme, or where a discounted time scheme linked to a particular source of disruption is winding down.

5. Evidence to support a discounted time request

Students must present a compelling case when requesting discounted time. This should include:

- information about the nature of the disruption to the studies (e.g. access to labs, Library, etc)
- details about how the research programme was affected
- information about how the student was affected
- any endeavours at mitigating disruption
- the time needed to complete the research project.

6. Fees and funding

Students are not charged any additional tuition fees for discounted time.

Funded students will continue to receive their stipend while on discounted time but must speak to their funders to determine whether their stipend will be extended to accommodate the later end date.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.0	New policy	Approved	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	07/07/2020
1.1	Amendments to the periods of discounted allowed and addition of supervision expectations.	Approved	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	18/Dec/20
1.2	Appeals section added. Link inserted for new Discounted Time Guidance.	Approved	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	16/Mar/21
1.3	Minor updates to policy to further clarify reasons for requesting discounted time and references to the Covid-19 pandemic have been removed.	Approved	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	22/06/2022
1.4	Removal of reference to guidance document and route of appeal, both of which concluded in December 2022.	Approved	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	05/01/2023
1.5	Updated for three years	Approved	Administrative officer	25/06/2024