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Routines for study leave at the Royal Institute of Art

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Introduction

This is a procedure description regarding study leaves at the Royal Institute of Art. The Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 7, Section 33) contains provisions on study leaves and the right to resume studies after an approved leave of studies. At the Royal Institute of Art, the following terms are used: Study leaves *with a place guarantee* and study leaves *without a place guarantee*.

Study leaves with a place guarantee

The Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 7, Section 33) contains provisions regarding study leaves and the right to resume studies following a study leave on special grounds. According to the Swedish Council for Higher Education's regulations (UHRFS 2013:3), special reasons may include social, medical or other special circumstances such as childcare, military or civil service, or student union duties. Special reasons may also include fixed-term probationary employment under Section 12 of the Act (2021:332) on certain employment in the Armed Forces, or service in the Armed Forces for those employed as temporary non-commissioned officers, soldiers or sailors under this Act.

Even if a student has such special reasons that may entitle them to a study leave with a place guarantee, other circumstances may mean that the application must be rejected, e.g. that the programme is to be discontinued, that the course is not being offered at the time the student wishes to return to their studies, or that a new intake has not been confirmed.

Following a leave of absence, the student is guaranteed a place upon returning to their studies immediately after the end of the leave of absence. If the student chooses to remain away from the university for a longer period, the study leave with a guaranteed place will be converted to a study leave without a guaranteed place. (See below).

In their application for a study leave, the student must state the reasons for the break and, where applicable, provide supporting documentation. Applications for a study leave with a guaranteed place should preferably be made using the special form available on the intranet and submitted to the registrar together with supporting documentation substantiating the applicant's reasons. Applications for a study leave with a place guarantee may only be submitted and granted for a maximum of one academic year at a time.

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Decisions regarding study leaves with a guaranteed place are taken by the Head of the Education and Research Unit following a recommendation from the education officer. A decision granting a leave of absence with a place guarantee must specify the duration of the leave and provide information on when the student may resume their studies. If an application for a study leave with a place guarantee is not granted, the decision must include information on how it may be appealed.

If a student has not registered for a term, without having been granted a study leave decision with a place guarantee, the student is not entitled to subsequently cite special reasons and apply for a study leave with a place guarantee.

Study leaves without a guaranteed place

In cases where there are no grounds for a study leave with a guaranteed place, a student may choose to take a voluntary break from their studies. This is then classified as a study leave without a guaranteed place. This may be due to work, assignments or other reasons that lead the student to take a break from their studies.

A student who has previously been admitted to a programme is entitled to withdraw from their studies later. Due to physical constraints, such as studio spaces and exhibition spaces, the Royal Institute of Art has a limit on the number of students who can be enrolled on the fine art programmes each academic year. This means that the Royal Institute of Art cannot provide students on study leaves without a place guarantee, a guarantee of when they can resume their studies. The student therefore does not have a place guarantee for a specific term following this type of break from the studies.

The Royal Institute of Art's degree programmes only accept new students once a year, and the courses are organized by year. It is not possible to change places for all semesters. Therefore, students who take a break from their studies must be absent for at least two terms to join their course at the correct stage.

Notification of a study leave without a place guarantee should be submitted as soon as possible, and ideally before 31 March for the coming academic year. No specific form is required; notification should be made in writing to the relevant programme coordinator.

Freestanding course

The range of freestanding courses at the Royal Institute of Art varies from year to year. It is therefore not certain that a student who voluntarily takes a break from their studies will be able to resume their studies on a course with the same syllabus as the one they were originally admitted to. Students have the right to complete their studies, but in cases where the course is no longer offered by the university, the studies may be replaced by other assignments. If the course has been discontinued and the syllabus revoked, students may only be examined on the course for three terms after the course has been discontinued.

Appeals

Under the Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 12, Section 2), a decision refusing a student's request for a study leave from a programme or course may be appealed. Information on how to appeal a decision must be provided in an appeal notice attached to the decision in question. Read more about appeals in the Admissions Regulations (Ref. No. 1.1.3/2022:149).

Resuming studies

Study leaves with a place guarantee

Students on study leave with a place guarantee are expected to resume their studies at the end of the study leave. If students do not resume their studies and do not apply for an extension of their study leave with a place guarantee, their study leave will be converted to study leave without a place guarantee. Students on a study leave with a place guarantee are obliged to notify the university of any changes.

Study breaks without a guaranteed place

For students on a study leave without a guaranteed place, it is the student's own responsibility to notify the university in good time of when they wish to resume their studies.

This must be done by 15 March at the latest for students to return in the same autumn. Notification should be made to the relevant student administrator. Once the university has compiled information on who wishes to return and the availability of places, the university will get back to you with a decision on whether there is a place available for the autumn. This will take place in conjunction with admissions to the fine art programmes, but no later than the end of May.

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Students wishing to resume their studies in the spring term should notify the student advisor as soon as possible; the advisor will get back to you as soon as the student situation for the spring term has been reviewed.

If many students wish to resume their studies at the same time, the university may have to allocate places by lottery for that term. This means that those who choose to take a break from their studies without a guaranteed place may be forced to be away from their studies for longer than they would like.

The allocation is organized by the Education and Research Unit, and a member of staff and the head of the unit take part in the allocation. A reserve list is drawn up so that reserves can be called upon if further places become available. If the lottery concerns Year 4, reserve admissions are made alternately from the list of those on the reserve list for the master's programme and those wishing to resume their place in Year 4. The first reserve is taken from the reserve list for the master's programme. Students who have participated in previous lotteries and were unable to be offered a study place are given priority the next time study places are offered. If they cannot be offered a place on the programme immediately, a lottery will first be held among those who have previously taken part in a lottery, before a lottery is held among the others who have expressed an interest.

It is important that the Royal Institute of Art communicates the above information to those who wish to apply for a study leave without a place guarantee before they choose to take a leave.

Studios and access during a leave of absence

Whilst a student is on study leave, regardless of the category, they lose their studio space and their access to the Royal Institute of Art's accounts and premises. Students on a study leave are not covered by the university's insurance and may under no circumstances work in the Royal Institute of Art's workshops or premises. During a study leave, students may not participate in course modules or trips organized as part of their studies.

Students are responsible for clearing out their studio space at the start of their leave, or on any other date specified by the studio coordinator. Students taking a study leave from the coming autumn term, and who are not registered for a summer course, are not entitled to their studio space during the summer and must clear their studio at the end of the spring term.

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