

## Leave of Absence Fact Sheet

At some point in your career, you may need to take a break from your accreditation.

Some common reasons for taking leave may include:

- Completing further study
- Going on parental leave
- Moving overseas
- Illness

Whatever the reason, it is important to be familiar with the requirements you need to meet to reinstate your accreditation after a period of leave. The introduction of the [Recency of Practice Policy](#) on 1 January 2018 means it could be easier for you to reinstate your accreditation.

As each situation is individual, please contact the ESSA office on (07) 3171 3335 or via [info@essa.org.au](mailto:info@essa.org.au) to discuss the specifics.

### What do I need to consider prior to taking a leave of absence?

Before you go on leave:

- Familiarise yourself with the requirements outlined in the [Recency of Practice](#) and [Return to Practice](#) policies
- If you are still working, gather [evidence](#) about your practice before you are on leave and keep this somewhere safe
- Contact ESSA to put your accreditation on a leave of absence. You can do this by filling out a [Leave of Absence form](#) and sending it to the ESSA office

### Concerned about meeting the recency of practice requirements?

The full recency of practice requirement is to gain 1000 hours of [practice](#)\* in the field, over the previous 5 year period, ensuring:

- **no more than 2 consecutive years of no practice**
- the completion of at least 200 hours of practice within the last 3 consecutive years

\*This equates to 4 hours per week, over 5 years, **OR** 27 weeks full time, over 5 years.

The definition of practice is broad to reflect the depth and breadth of exercise and sports practice.

Acceptable practice includes any activities (volunteer or paid) where you are using the knowledge and skills of your ESSA accreditation. Practice doesn't just involve seeing clients but can include a range of activities including management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles.

If you are working and not sure if your job will meet the practice requirements, please contact the ESSA office to discuss your situation.

The [Recency of Practice Policy](#) and [FAQs](#) provide further details.

### **What is the process to reinstate accreditation?**

When you are ready to come back, you will need to contact ESSA to go through your individual requirements. These requirements ensure you have current knowledge and skills as an accredited professional.

**Recency of practice** – For those who can show that they have been ‘practicing’ whilst on a leave of absence. For example, working overseas, or undertaking a research project in the exercise and sports science field.

**Return to practice program** – For those who can’t show recency of practice. The requirements will depend on the length of time you have been away. For example, before returning, you may be required to show evidence of current First Aid and CPR certificates, professional indemnity insurance and some professional development. After returning, you may have additional requirements that will be outlined to you upon reinstatement. Please see the [Return to Practice Policy](#) for details.

### **What should I consider before reinstating my accreditation?**

- Review how long you have been away and see whether any activities completed during your leave could contribute to recency of practice requirements
- Plan for your reinstatement – for example, do you need to complete a First Aid or CPR course, or are you yet to organise insurance?
- Contact ESSA **at least 1 month** before you are ready to reinstate your accreditation to discuss your individual situation
- Gather any relevant documentation and keep on hand to provide to ESSA

### **I have done some work whilst overseas. Can I use this towards the recency of practice requirements?**

If you can demonstrate that the work you have done meets the definition of [practice](#), you may be able to reinstate your accreditation via the recency of practice pathway.

You will need to supply evidence of your practice. It is a good idea to collate the information before you return to Australia, as it can be difficult to obtain once you are back. Examples of acceptable evidence can be found [here](#).

### **I am taking leave to study, what will I need to do to reinstate?**

If the study that you are undertaking is research based and within the exercise and sports science field, you may be eligible to use some of the research activities towards the recency of practice requirements.

For example, a research study involving exercise testing on humans could count towards recency. Evidence to support this could include a detailed letter from your supervisor as evidence.

If you are not undertaking research study in the field of exercise and sports science, then it is not eligible to be counted towards recency of practice. To reinstate your accreditation, you will need to undertake a return to practice program.

### **I haven't done any 'practice' activities whilst on a leave of absence, what do I need to do to reinstate my accreditation?**

To reinstate your accreditation, you will need to undertake a return to practice program. Please see the [Return to Practice Policy](#) for details and contact the ESSA office on 07 3171 3335 to discuss your individual requirements.

### **What if my leave of absence is less than 12 months?**

If your leave of absence has been less than 12 months, you will be required to supply evidence of:

- Appropriate insurance
- Current cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate (HLTAID001 Provide Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)
  - for all AEPs
  - for AES, ASpS and AHPM who are working with clients/human subjects
- Current First Aid certificate (HLTAID003 Provide First Aid) –
  - for all AEPs
  - for AES, ASpS and AHPM who are working with clients/human subjects

### **Do I have to do anything after I reinstate my accreditation?**

Once your accreditation is reinstated you will need to meet all the standard ESSA accreditation requirements including:

1. Hold a current cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate (HLTAID001 Provide Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation):
  - for all AEPs
  - for AES, ASpS and AHPM who are working with clients/human subjects
2. Hold a current First Aid certificate (HLTAID003 Provide First Aid):
  - for all AEPs
  - for AES, ASpS and AHPM who are working with clients/human subjects
3. Hold appropriate professional indemnity insurance, either personally or through a third party (e.g. employer). Insurance must cover the scope of all activities undertaken, whether in a professional or voluntary capacity
4. Meet the requirements of the [Recency of Practice policy](#)

5. Complete annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points. This is a minimum of 20 CPD points per year (1 January – 31 December). ***If you reinstated via a return to practice program there may be additional point's requirements – this will be discussed with you before you reinstate your accreditation.***
6. If there are any changes to the mandatory declarations signed in the reinstatement process, ESSA is to be advised as soon as practicable e.g. criminal or ethics history.