

MIT Remote Appointment Guidance

Updated July 2023

MIT will continue to expect all enrolled students to...

- physically be on campus for in-person learning; and
- conduct their U.S.-based appointments from inside the U.S. and to enter/return to the U.S. prior to the start of each academic semester.

Exceptions to the above include appointments that involve remote work or research obligations (e.g., field research, nonresident thesis research or absentia status, IvyPlus Exchange Scholars), students on an approved leave, or for short-term periods of time away from campus (less than 30 days).

We also recognize that some students may face absolute barriers (such as visa processing delays) or other significant hardship (such as attending to a family emergency or personal emergency) that require them to spend time away from campus. Thus, there will continue to be **limited flexibility** on a case by case basis for students who encounter these personal situations.

This guidance only applies where remote learning/appointments are required for the above personal reasons. For periods away from campus for more than 30 days for academic and research reasons, students should apply for [thesis in absentia](#) or [non-residential status](#) as has been our longstanding policy. These requests will not go through the remote appointments review process.

Requirements for in-person learning

- All **new students starting in undergraduate programs, doctoral programs, and research masters programs** are expected to arrive before the start of the semester, or, at the latest, within 25 days following the start of the semester. Those unable to do so will be required to defer until a later semester. Students should check with their departments on the length of time they may defer. Some excused absences or consideration may be available

for those students who arrive late but within 25 days following the start of the semester.

- For **new students in professional masters programs or other graduate-level programs, the individual School/College/Program** will decide whether or not they can offer exceptions to in-person learning for those who are unable to arrive on campus due to absolute barriers or significant hardship. If these programs are not able to provide remote learning, the students will be required to defer. Students should check with their departments on the length of time they may defer.
- For **continuing students in all undergraduate and graduate programs, the individual School/College/Program** will handle requests for exceptions to in-person learning (for part or all of the semester) on a case-by-case basis for students who face absolute barriers or significant hardship to returning to/remaining on campus. If a remote learning option is not possible, continuing students will be required to take a leave of absence.

Requirements for campus-based appointments

- For **graduate research students** who are required to defer their program start dates or take a leave of absence, programs/labs/Pis may appoint such students as unpaid research affiliates to allow them to obtain MIT IDs (if they do not already have them) and to stay informally connected to research groups.
- **Graduate students who receive an exception to the in-person learning requirement for part or all of the semester** (consistent with the above limitations) may, at the discretion of their department/program, be eligible for remote appointments if there are absolute barriers or significant hardship preventing the students from returning to or remaining in the U.S. As in prior terms, these appointments will need to be reviewed by the remote international appointments team. [The intake form is available online.](#)

Limited Exceptions Process

Graduate students seeking a remote international appointment should contact their academic administrator and work with them to prepare an intake request that will

be reviewed by the remote international appointments team. We ask that whenever possible students work with their graduate administrators to submit an intake form prior to the start of the appointment period.

For any potential requests for exceptions to the requirements for in-person learning and campus- based appointments:

- Absolute barriers are narrow and are limited to situations such as visa delays, travel bans, and border closures, where a student is prevented from traveling to campus. Examples of significant hardship include attending to a family emergency or other personal emergency.

Student disability-based requests are managed, per usual, by Disability and Access Services (DAS). This will include any disability-related requests to pursue remote learning or appointments from within the U.S., but outside of Massachusetts. MIT is committed to equal access for students with disabilities and students who need a disability-related accommodation in order to access their academic program or activities. Students should contact DAS directly with such requests. For other cases where students face absolute barriers or significant hardship that require them to be remote but within the U.S., students should seek approval of their PI/supervisor and department head. No intake form needs to be submitted to the remote international appointments team; however, international students should consult their ISO advisor before conducting any remote learning or remote appointments.