Common Issues Preventing Access to Harvard Library Online Resources

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Access Eligibility

Access to most licensed online Harvard Library resources like journals, articles, and databases is restricted to current students, faculty, and staff of Harvard University. This restriction is legally required by the licenses we have with the resource providers. The ability to log in to online library resources with your HarvardKey is controlled automatically based on your current Harvard affiliation.

All eligible users are expected to comply with Harvard Library e-resource access policies.

Common Access/Eligibility Issues

These are the most common reasons we hear from library users who are unable to access online resources by HarvardKey login. Contact information for further assistance is listed for each case.

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<th>Issue Preventing Access</th>
<th>Contact for Assistance:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HarvardKey Login issue</strong></td>
<td>Contact HUIT for assistance with HarvardKey/DUO account: <a href="mailto:ithelp@harvard.edu">ithelp@harvard.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>HarvardKey or DUO error page indicating that the username and/or password are incorrect, or two-step verification failed</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expired Harvard role</strong></td>
<td>If you believe your affiliation should still be active:</td>
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</table>
| The central Harvard ID database shows that your previous role has expired and has not (yet) been renewed. *Library access ends as soon as your affiliation becomes inactive, even if you still have access to other Harvard services like email.* | • Students: Contact your school registrar to confirm your current student status  
• Staff: Contact your HR office to confirm the status of your employee role  
• Faculty and Academic Fellows: Contact your department administrator to confirm the status of your employee role. Note that "Harvard Sponsored Role" affiliations are not eligible for library access. |
| | If your school/department confirms you have an active student or employee role in the central Harvard ID database (MIDAS) and you are still seeing a "not authorized" error, contact Library Technology Services for further assistance |
| | For other library access options, see Visitor Access |
| **Harvard-affiliated lab/hospital employee without matching university affiliation** | • To confirm whether you have a university affiliation, contact your local HR department  
• For more information on library access available to staff at Harvard-affiliated labs and hospitals, contact Countway Library at circinfo@hms.harvard.libanswers.com |
| In order to be eligible for Harvard Library access (including HarvardKey login access to online resources), you must also have a university affiliation in addition to your hospital/lab job. | |
| **Harvard alum** | Harvard Library Alumni Resources (information and links to available resources): https://library.harvard.edu/how-to-use-harvard-library-alum  
Other Alumni Services: For more information about alumni services or to confirm your alumni status, contact the Harvard Alumni Association. |
| Once you graduate and leave Harvard, you no longer have access to the licensed online resources available through HOLLIS and other library search tools. As an alum, you retain lifelong access to a distinct set of online library resources licensed specifically for Harvard alumni. | |
### Harvard retiree (non-emeritus)

With the exception of emeritus faculty (who are still considered active faculty), HarvardKey login access to online library resources ends when you retire from Harvard.

Harvard retirees retain lifelong physical library privileges – visiting the library and borrowing books and other physical materials. You can also access most licensed online resources from library computers when you visit the library in person, without needing to log in with HarvardKey.

**Contact the Harvard Library Access and Borrowing Office at** [hl_accessborrowing@harvard.edu](mailto:hl_accessborrowing@harvard.edu)

### "Harvard Sponsored Role" affiliation

Most Harvard Sponsored Role affiliations are not eligible for library access.

If you have a Harvard Sponsored Role affiliation and need library access in order to perform your Harvard work:

- **First contact your manager and/or department administrator** to confirm your role type and determine if a library-eligible role is possible.
- Have your manager and/or department administrator contact the Harvard Library Access and Borrowing Office at [hl_accessborrowing@harvard.edu](mailto:hl_accessborrowing@harvard.edu)

### Brand new or recently renewed affiliation

When an affiliation is first created or renewed, it takes at least overnight (and occasionally longer) for your login access to library resources to be fully active. The delay depends on the Harvard school/department and type of affiliation. Once your role is active in the central Harvard ID database, your online library access will be active the next morning.

If your affiliation was recently created or renewed, please wait 24 hours and then check again to see if you can log in.

**If you still get a "not authorized" error after 24 hours:**

- **First contact your registrar (students) or HR office (faculty/staff)** to confirm that your role was created/renewed and synced to the central Harvard ID database (MIDAS)
- If they confirm your role is active, contact Library Technology Services for further assistance

### Student on Leave of Absence

Library access is usually turned off when a student goes on a leave of absence from Harvard. Depending on the school, it is sometimes possible to keep your library access while on leave. Contact your school for more details.

- **Harvard College (undergraduates):** Contact the Resident Dean for your House about applying for exceptional library access while on leave
- **Graduate Students:** Contact your school registrar for details on how to retain library access while on leave. In many cases library access will remain active if you continue to pay the school's facility fees.