



Career break policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The University recognises that some employees may wish or need to take a break from work for a variety of personal reasons, during the course of their employment.
- 1.2. This policy confirms the University's commitment to arrangements that enable members of staff to balance work with other commitment and responsibilities outside work.
- 1.3. This policy sets out the basis on which an employee may take a career break.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1. The application of this policy covers all members of staff with a minimum of 12 months continuous service.
- 2.2. Reasons for applying for a career break may include:
 - Care and/or responsibility for child(ren)
 - Care and/or responsibility for other dependents
 - Personal study, training and development (which is relevant to their work at the University)
 - Other, which may include travel or voluntary work may be considered.
- 2.3. The purpose of this policy is not to allow people to leave to work with another organisation. However exception to this may be where, for example, work overseas or charitable work could broaden experience.
- 2.4. This policy does not provide an automatic right to take a career break.

3. Leave entitlement

- 3.1. A career break may be a minimum of three months up to a maximum of three years with any combination in between.

4. Applying for a career break

- 4.1. Staff should apply for a career break to their Head of School, by completing a career break application form at least six months before they wish the leave to commence.
- 4.2. On receipt of the application the Head of School should arrange to meet the member of staff. Full consideration must be given to the request.
- 4.3. When assessing the application account will be taken of:
 - difficulties of filling the post on a temporary basis;
 - the length of the requested break – this should balance the needs of the staff member and the needs of the University;
 - whether it will be possible for the staff member to return to a similar/the same post;
 - the retention of the skills of the member of staff.

5. Membership terms and conditions of service whilst on a career break

- 5.1. A period of absence on a career break shall not be regarded as a break in service and will count towards continuous service for statutory purposes. However, the period of the break will not itself count as reckonable service for the purposes of pension, increments, sick leave, annual leave, maternity leave, redundancy rights. These provisions will be suspended for the period of the break.
- 5.2. Staff MAY be able to return earlier than anticipated from a Career Break provided six months notice is given (two months notice if the career break is for less than one year).
- 5.3. Staff who wish to resign whilst on a career break should do so in writing.

6. Return to work

- 6.1. Staff members must confirm in writing their intention to return to work following a career break giving the University six months notice (two months notice if the career break is less than one year).
- 6.2. Staff returning to work following a career break will be re-employed on the same or comparable terms and conditions (including grade) as they previously enjoyed. If the member of staff returns to work within one year, where practicable, the same job will be available. If the break is for longer than one year the applicant may return to a similar job as possible.
- 6.3. In exceptional circumstances, where the same or a comparable grade and level of post cannot be identified, the member of staff may be re-assimilated on a lower grade. In this event their previous pay and terms and conditions will be protected under University protection arrangements.
- 6.4. Where the University cannot guarantee return to the same location/post where the staff member previously worked, every effort will be made to accommodate members requests and personal circumstances.
- 6.5. Members of staff will, where appropriate, be included in of any organisational change affecting their department.