

# STUDY AND SABBATICAL LEAVE

## 1. Introduction

The University supports study leave and sabbatical leave for members of staff. This might be leave which is essential to support the post or role undertaken by the member of staff as part of his/her employment, or might be part of an agreed educational programme for personal development.

It is recognised that in certain posts or roles members of staff must remain 'in good standing' with their professional associations and must undertake particular study or activity to maintain professional membership.

These arrangements are in addition to the contractual arrangements for academic members of staff for whom the undertaking of research and scholarly activity is a requirement to underpin their teaching, specific research and other duties. Separate arrangements operate for the agreement and management of this contractual time<sup>1</sup>.

These arrangements are separate from secondment to another post/role, underpinned by a substantive position which may result from the University's normal recruitment and selection procedures or as part of redeployment in accordance with the University's Avoidance of Redundancy Procedure<sup>2</sup>.

## 2. Scope and General Principles

These arrangements will apply to all members of staff, regardless of their type of contract, hours of work or terms of employment:

- (a) each application will be considered on its merits and appropriateness;
- (b) subject to the approval process, periods of time off, either paid or unpaid, may be agreed for the purposes outlined above;
- (c) leave may include secondment to another department, faculty or external establishment, or a voluntary or remunerated position which is of benefit to the University through the development of the individual.

Applications should fit with individual and departmental staff development or strategic plans, and the purpose of the leave should support the University's mission and strategic plan. The scheme is not intended to support requests for an unpaid career break, compassionate leave, caring responsibilities or public duties, which are covered by other arrangements in this Handbook.

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<sup>1</sup> See Section 1.7 'Guidelines for the Determination of the Duties of Academic Staff (Lecturers, Researchers and Managers) in the Personnel Handbook and particularly paragraph 2.5.2.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 3.6 'Grading, Regrading, Promotion and progression Policy, particularly paragraph 2.8.

### 3. Process and Equal Opportunities

The process for deciding if a member of staff may be granted study or sabbatical leave will be open and transparent with decisions based on an agreed methodology and clear criteria.

The principle of equality of treatment underpins these arrangements to ensure that all staff groups and areas of activity or development are given equal consideration.

- (a) There will be annual monitoring through reports to the Employment Committee.
- (b) Criteria will be agreed with the Trade Unions and Management Common Interest Group to be compatible with the University's Equal Opportunities and Race Equality policies (See Appendix 2 and Appendix 20 in this Handbook).
- (c) The factors will include the effect of periods of leave on other members of staff and workloads within the team and department.
- (d) Other factors include the nature of the work, the effect on the service delivery and the priorities within the Faculty/Department/School/Research Unit or team.

### 4. Study leave

#### 4.1 General Principles

Study leave is normally associated with training and qualifications relevant to the job. In specific situations this leave must be given such as attaining PGCHE qualifications<sup>3</sup>, retraining in respect of redeployment<sup>4</sup> and retraining in respect of regrading issues<sup>5</sup>.

Study leave is normally to assist members of staff in the achievement of relevant academic and professional qualifications. These qualifications must be relevant to the post that they are undertaking or, in exceptional cases, unpaid study leave may be granted for non-relevant qualifications or other forms of professional development.

The Staff Development Policy (Appendix 13.9 in this Handbook) defines the framework for Staff Development in the University and the commitment of a minimum of paid time for members of staff. This includes a range of development opportunities for members of staff, including further study for qualifications, work shadowing and training. Such development needs will be discussed during the annual Staff Development Review meeting, and should include any consideration of study time required to meet agreed individual development needs.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 13.17 'Staff Participation in the PGCHE Policy' in the Personnel Handbook.

<sup>4</sup> See Section 12.1 'Avoidance of Redundancy Procedure' in the Personnel Handbook particularly paragraphs in respect of measures to be used to avoid redundancy and the allocation process .

<sup>5</sup> See Section 2.10 'Pay and Grading Structures' in the Personnel Handbook particularly information on 'red circling' arrangements.

Arrangements for Staff Development which operate from this policy (Section 5.2 in this Handbook) describe particular arrangements for study leave and support of professional engagement.

#### **4.2 Eligibility**

There is no minimum period of service with the University to become eligible for an application for study leave. However, members of staff should be aware that unacceptable levels of sickness absence, other than pregnancy or disability-related absence, or a recent formal review of their conduct, may adversely affect the decision on their application.

#### **4.3 Provision**

Provision is as follows:

- (a) leave with or without pay may be agreed for periods of study leave;
- (b) periods of up to a maximum of 15 days' study leave may be granted per year, depending on the requirements of the course or development activity being undertaken;
- (c) study leave may be requested for attendance time, personal study, revision and examination time, preparation of assignments, portfolios of work or dissertations/reports/theses, and other assessment requirements, as appropriate;
- (d) entitlement to annual leave will accrue during a period of study leave and members of staff should make arrangements to book annual leave in the normal way;
- (e) travel and subsistence costs, and other reasonable expenses associated with the study leave, may be paid at the discretion of the line manager.

In many cases, the agreed time off is likely to be less than the maximum where, for example, attendance time is in the evenings or at the end of the working day and the only required time off is for examinations.

Each application will be considered on its merits. Factors that will be taken into account when applications for study leave are considered will include:

- (a) the relevance of the development activity to the individual and his/her career and the University as the employer;
- (b) the effect of the leave on the Faculty/Department/School/Research Unit;
- (c) whether there is any entitlement to and existence of annual leave or time off in lieu of paid overtime worked which may be used in part for purposes of study leave;
- (d) there is no detriment to the level and quality of service for the relevant area.

## Section 5.5: Study and Sabbatical Leave

Leave with or without pay may be granted at the discretion of the member of staff's Head of Faculty/Department/School/Research Unit, or where applicable a member of the Directorate or Vice-Chancellor. Factors considered will include the length of service with the University, amount of leave requested, and the relevance to the training and gaining of a qualification in relation to the job the member of staff is employed to do.

Other factors that may be taken into account are given in Appendix A.

### 4.4 Application and approval process for Study Leave

Applications for study leave must be made through the completion of a Study Leave application form submitted to the Head of Department/Faculty. A copy of the application form is shown in Appendix B of this section. Applications should be made in good time and at least one month before the course of study begins.

Applications must be discussed and approved by the line manager. Submissions should be supported by the following evidence:

- (a) a statement on the form from the manager that the course of study has been discussed and agreed as part of the Staff Development Review;
- (b) an outline of the course of study for which the leave is requested, with any relevant information such as study or examination leave requirements or other documentation that may help the decision-making;
- (c) if the application is for unpaid study leave and external funding has been secured, details of the funding should accompany the application form.

The form will require line managers to describe the effect the study leave may have on the team/department and the contingency plans that could be made to ensure the level of service is not affected as a result of their absence.

Applications for study leave will be considered on their merit by the Head of Department/Faculty or appropriate senior manager who will take into account relevant criteria from those shown in Appendix A in this section.

### 4.5 Appeal Process

In the event of dissatisfaction arising from a decision to refuse an application, the member of staff will have the right of appeal within 10 working days of the decision being received in writing. The notice of appeal must be in writing and set out the grounds of the appeal, which will be in accordance with the University's Grievance Procedures (Section 6.2 in this Handbook). The appeal will be heard at Stage 3 of the Grievance Procedures and there is no further right of appeal.

## 5. Sabbatical Leave

### 5.1 General Principles

Sabbatical leave framework is as follows:

- (a) all management, academic and support staff are eligible to apply for a period of sabbatical leave normally on completion of 5 years' continuous service with this University. Periods of service with other bodies that count towards

continuous service for other purposes will not count for the purpose of sabbatical leave;

- (b) periods of maternity, adoption, paternity, parental, carers' and sick leave will count towards this qualifying service;
- (c) periods of sabbatical leave up to 12 months may be granted;
- (d) there is no lower limit but it is expected that requests for leave of less than 3 weeks may be accommodated in part through other schemes such as annual leave or Flexible Working Scheme arrangements (as outlined in Section 3.14 in this Handbook);
- (e) applications should be made at least 6 months before the proposed start of the leave period;
- (f) normally only one application from an individual in each 5 year period may be agreed;
- (g) additional requests for a period of sabbatical leave after completing a further period of normally 5 years' service will be considered through the agreed application process;
- (h) the period of leave may be paid or unpaid, depending on the circumstances and purpose of the application;
- (i) paid leave may be funded by the University or in other specific ways, e.g. through funding raised by the individual, funds raised as part of the Knowledge Exchange or other commercial activity or by other funding bodies such as HEFCE;
- (j) periods of unpaid sabbatical leave may be agreed where a member of staff is applying on a self-funded basis and it may also be possible to agree this type of arrangement through the Career Break Scheme as outlined in section 3.14 in this Handbook;
- (k) the purpose of this leave is to allow a period of study (beyond that described in paragraph 4. above), scholarly activity or research for personal development purposes, and to develop the knowledge and skills of the individual whilst also being of benefit to the University;
- (l) a member of staff, or the University, may wish to set up an exchange scheme with another national or internal institution. This may be considered sabbatical leave or separate arrangements agreed;
- (m) the university will aim to help members of staff to acquire knowledge on how to apply for funding through regular training events.

These arrangements are intended to complement the existing arrangements for Special and Carers' leave, Career Break arrangements (which are part of the Flexible Working Scheme) and other arrangements in the Section on 'Leave and Absence' (Section 3 in this Handbook), and those on Staff Development (Section 5 in this Handbook). They are in addition to the research and scholarly activity requirements stated for members of academic staff (Section 1.7 in this Handbook).

## **5.2 Eligibility**

Members of staff should be aware that unacceptable levels of sickness absence, other than pregnancy or disability-related absence, or a recent formal review of their conduct, may adversely affect the decision on their application.

## **5.3 Factors for consideration**

A full description of the factors which will be taken into account is given in Appendix A in this Section outlining the application process.

Where several members of staff from one department/school/research unit apply for sabbatical leave in the same period, requests will be considered equally on their merits but the effect on service will take priority. It may not be possible to agree more than one request for leave from within the same department or team in the same academic year.

## **5.4 Keeping in touch and Consultation issues**

An individual will be required to keep in touch with the University during their sabbatical leave, and may be required to attend relevant training and development activities or staff meetings to ensure they keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

During the Sabbatical members of staff will be consulted in relation to any restructuring which would affect their normal work area, as stated within the University's Avoidance of Redundancy Procedure. This Procedure defines the rights of consultation in relation to any organisational change which affects the post/job/role the member of staff is employed to do. The procedure also defines the right of allocation to a post, ring-fencing within the areas at risk, the right to be offered suitable alternative employment, short-term arrangements and eligibility for redundancy payment as appropriate.

## **5.5 Outputs from Sabbatical Leave**

All periods of sabbatical leave will normally result in some output and the organisation that is funding it may identify particular requirements such as the production of a book, paper, work of art, an exhibition, the organization of a seminar or development of computer software and other ICT work.

This list is not exhaustive and other outputs may be required which the University, if it is the funding organization, will require the member of staff to present at the end of the sabbatical leave.

This may be in the form of a report to management and/or supporting material, depending on the purpose of the leave, presented within three months of the end of the period of leave.

Where the output is in the form of skills development such as management skills, the University may require the member of staff to apply these skills through their involvement in research and development strategies, structural reviews and other management activities.

Failure to produce an appropriate satisfactory output at the end of a period of sabbatical leave may result in the member of staff being required to pay back the time and/or money agreed as part of the sabbatical. If a member of staff experiences

problems during the period of leave in terms of meeting the agreed output due to sickness or other personal reasons, he/she should inform the University at the earliest opportunity in order for consideration to be given to curtailing or suspending the period of leave and making arrangements for support if necessary.

## **6. Contractual Arrangements for Sabbatical and Study Leave**

The following arrangements will apply:

### **6.1 Salary arrangements**

Where periods of leave are being funded by the University, the normal salary i.e. basic salary and any contractual entitlements such as holiday, maternity or sick leave will be paid during the leave. Where external funding or a grant is available to support sabbatical leave and is paid direct to the member of staff, the period of leave will be granted as unpaid leave. The position relating to contribution to Occupational Pension schemes during the period of unpaid leave is outlined in paragraph 6.4 below.

Eligibility for accelerated incremental progression, discretionary progression, regrading or pay awards (incremental within the grade and annual increments) and will be unaffected by the leave.

Where a member of staff is being funded by another organisation or is taking unpaid leave, salary will not be paid during the leave period, but eligibility for incremental progression and pay awards will remain unaffected. Pension contributions may be affected by a period of unpaid leave as outlined in paragraph 6.4 below.

### **6.2 Funding and expenses**

An individual should declare all sources of external funding provided for the period of sabbatical leave in order for the responsible person to make a fully-informed decision on his/her application.

Travel and subsistence costs or any other expenses associated with the sabbatical activity will not be paid by the University during the period of leave, unless provision for travel and subsistence costs are specifically included in externally-funded agreements in which the University is in receipt of the funding.

### **6.3 Booking of leave**

Entitlement to annual leave will accrue during a period of paid sabbatical leave and the member of staff should make arrangements to book annual leave in the normal way.

Payment in lieu of untaken leave during this period will not be made, and any untaken annual leave of more than 5 days at the end of the sabbatical period will be lost unless previous arrangements are agreed with the line manager. In exceptional cases, accrued annual leave may be added to the end of a period of sabbatical leave if circumstances have made it difficult to take it during this period. This will require the member of staff to book annual leave in the normal way whilst he/she is on sabbatical leave, as outlined in Section 3.1 in this Handbook.

#### 6.4 Contractual arrangements

The contract of employment for all members of staff will continue during any period of sabbatical or study leave and will not affect continuous service or any service-related benefits.

Unpaid leave does not count towards a number of statutory and contractual employment rights, including calculation of statutory or occupational sick pay and redundancy pay.

If a member of staff is a member of the Teachers' Pension scheme he/she will not have the option of paying contributions for the period of unpaid leave.

If a member of staff, who is a member of the Local Government pension scheme, wishes to maintain their contributions to the scheme he/she will be required to pay only the employees' pension contributions<sup>6</sup>.

If a member of staff is a member of any other pension scheme he/she should contact the Pay and Benefits Section for advice on their entitlements.

During study leave or sabbatical leave, the entitlement to death in service benefit may be affected if a scheme member is not making payments into the scheme. There are complex regulations governing this. Further information is available from the Pay and Benefits Section within the Financial Operations Section within the Finance and Planning Department.

Following a period of sabbatical leave, an individual is entitled to return to the post/role in which he/she was employed, under his/her original contract of employment and on terms and conditions no less favourable than those they would have been entitled to had he/she not been absent from work. In exceptional circumstances such as a restructuring, this may not be possible (see paragraph 5.4 above).

An individual who is returning to work after a period of sabbatical leave must notify the Personnel and Staff Development Department and his/her line manager to confirm this at least a month before their scheduled date of return. If any changes to the working arrangements are being requested, such as a change to hours of work, at least two months' notice should be given to allow time to consider the request and make necessary arrangements.

If a member of staff wishes to resign during their sabbatical or study leave, he/she is expected to give the University the contractual period of notice. An individual who fails to return on the date set for their return, and does not provide an acceptable reason for his/her absence within one month of this date will be considered to have resigned and left the University.

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<sup>6</sup> The difference in pension contributions between staff employment groups reflects current pension scheme regulations.



## **7. Application and approval process for Sabbatical Leave**

### **7.1 Application Form**

Applications for sabbatical leave must be made on a form submitted to the Head of Department/Faculty or where applicable, a member of the Directorate or Vice-Chancellor. A copy of the application form is shown in Appendix C of this section. Applications should be made at least 6 months before the proposed start of the leave period.

Applications must be discussed and approved by the member of staff's line manager before submission. If the line manager is the Head of Department/Faculty, the responsible person for approval will be a member of the Directorate. A second level of approval is required by a member of the Directorate. Submissions should be supported by the following evidence:

- (a) a statement on the application form indicating that the professional or personal development activity the leave is requested for has been discussed and agreed;
- (b) an outline of the study or development activity for which the leave is requested, with any relevant information such as a course outline, study or examination leave requirements, and any other relevant documentation that may facilitate the decision-making;
- (c) whether the request is for paid or unpaid leave and details of any funding that is available to support the period of leave. In the case of paid leave, applicants should identify whether or not they have explored alternative sources of funding.

The form will require the line manager to describe the effect of the period of leave on other members of staff within their team/department and the cover plans that could be made to ensure no unreasonable detriment to the members of staff or the quality and level of service is suffered as a result of their absence.

Agreement to periods of sabbatical are made on the understanding that, if it is known before the leave commences that the member of staff will be leaving the University within one year of completion of the leave, permission for the leave may be withdrawn.

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

The scheme will be subject to monitoring to respond to the University's Promotion of Equal Opportunities and Promotion of Race equality policies. Monitoring will include the basic categories of gender, race, disability, full-time/part-time employment and age and will be guided by the principles established in Section 4.5 'Employment and Workforce Monitoring' in this Handbook. The scheme will be reviewed every two years.

The Head of Personnel and Staff Development will oversee the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this scheme. Regular reports will be produced for the University Employment Committee and the Senior Management Group. It is the responsibility of individual managers to evaluate the impact of learning on personal and professional development within their respective Faculty/Department/School/Research Unit.

## **APPENDIX A CRITERIA FOR DECISIONS ON STUDY AND SABBATICAL LEAVE**

The following criteria will be used for decision-making on applications for study leave or sabbatical leave, depending on their appropriateness.

The managers considering the application should decide which criteria will be taken into consideration but should in all cases include criteria 1 to 6. The criteria to apply are:

1. the purpose of the request for leave and the relevance of the application to the needs of the individual, their role, career development and the department/ faculty;
2. the degree to which it supports the University's overall mission and strategic objectives;
3. whether the purpose for the leave has been agreed as part of the individual's Staff Development Review;
4. the amount of time requested and the ability of the department/ faculty to cover the absence of the member of staff without difficulty;
5. the impact the leave may have on the continuity and quality of service the department/faculty can offer;
6. the priorities within the department/ faculty which may be affected by the period of leave;
7. the number of previous periods of sabbatical or study leave requested by the applicant;
8. the record of the applicant in participating and meeting staff development needs or research and scholarly activity objectives in the past;
9. an unacceptable level of sickness absence, other than absence related to pregnancy or disability, or any review of conduct resulting in formal action in the last 12 months;
10. any planned outcome of the leave such as a book, research paper, exhibition, artwork or artefact production, improved skills or knowledge, etc and their relevance and usefulness to the University or department/ faculty;
11. the evaluation of the likelihood that the proposed outcome is realistic and achievable;
12. in the case of applications for paid leave, evidence that possible alternative sources of funding have been considered;
13. any additional costs such as replacement costs that may be incurred as a result of the leave and the ability of the department/ faculty to bear these costs.

## APPENDIX B

### APPLICATION FOR STUDY LEAVE



Before completing this form, please read Section 5.5 Study and Sabbatical Leave in the Personnel Handbook. See the University web site at:

<http://resources.glos.ac.uk/departments/personnel/phbk/phbkpart5.cfm>

**1 For completion by member of staff**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Block capitals)

Faculty/Department/School/Research Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

I am applying for study leave in accordance with the University's Study and Sabbatical Leave Scheme. I was/will be absent from work on the following grounds:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of absence from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (dates inclusive) and returned/returning to work on \_\_\_\_\_

(Please tick and complete the statement that applies to you)

Total number of working days/hours absence requested/taken (**with pay**) \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of working days/hours absence requested/taken (**without pay**) \_\_\_\_\_ which is to be deducted from my salary at the earliest opportunity.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In the event of exceeding the period of absence ordinarily allowed within the scheme this will be recovered from annual leave where due, or where applicable, time off in lieu.

**2 For completion by the appropriate level of authority**

I confirm that I have authorised that the above be granted study leave (**with pay/without pay**) for the period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (dates inclusive), in accordance with the period of absence normally allowed. Any absence in excess of the period allowed will be deducted from the member of staff's annual leave entitlement, banked hours, or where applicable taken without pay as indicated by the member of staff above.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**On full completion of this form by the appropriate level of authority a copy of this form should be sent to the Personnel and Staff Development Department.**

## APPENDIX C

### APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE



Before completing this form, please read Section 5.5 Study and Sabbatical Leave in the Personnel Handbook. See the University web site at <http://resources.glos.ac.uk/departments/personnel/phbk/phbkpart5.cfm>

**1. For completion by the member of staff applying for leave**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Block Capitals)

Faculty/Department/School/Research Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

I am applying for a period of sabbatical leave in accordance with the University's Study and Sabbatical Leave scheme

Length of leave period: \_\_\_\_\_  
(maximum 12 months)

Proposed start date of leave: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of leave: (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

What outcome will there be from your period of leave (e.g. a book, research paper, work of art, organisation of a seminar, etc)?

How does this contribute to your personal skills development and/or be of benefit to the University as a whole?

Section 5.5: Study and Sabbatical Leave

Has the purpose for this leave been discussed and agreed as part of your Staff Development Review?

YES/NO

Is your leave funded by yourself

YES/NO

Is your leave funded by another organisation?

YES/NO

If so, please provide details of the funding arrangements and attach any relevant documentation.

If you are applying for University funding, what other sources of funding have you considered and explored?

Have you previously taken a period of sabbatical/research leave?  
If so, when was your period of leave?

YES/NO

I agree to the conditions of any sabbatical leave agreed by the University, as outlined in the Study and Sabbatical Leave arrangements.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**2. For completion by the line manager (may be a member of the Directorate)**

I support/do not support the above application for sabbatical (delete as appropriate).

Please give reasons for this

If you support the application, have you discussed the reasons for the leave as part of the staff member's Staff Development Review?

YES/NO

Have you evaluated the impact of this period of leave on the other members of staff in your areas of responsibility and what are the conclusions?

What cover or other arrangements do you propose to ensure minimal impact on the service during the leave period?

Has any review of conduct resulting in formal action taken place within the past 12 months?  
**YES/NO**

Does this member of staff have a satisfactory sickness absence record? (discounting absence relating to pregnancy and disability)  
**YES/NO**

If not, please give details

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Member of the Directorate (different from line manager).**

The above application for sabbatical leave is approved/not approved

If approved, the approval is subject to the following conditions (if applicable)

If not approved, the reasons for refusal of the application are:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_