



## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICE**

### **CAREER BREAK SCHEME (ALL SCHOOL STAFF)**

## **Policy issued March 2004**

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## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Career Break Scheme aims to encourage employees who need to or want to give up work for a period of up to 5 years to come back into the Council workforce. This allows the Council to retain skills and experience and to protect its investment in the development of the individual employee.

## **2. Who is Eligible for the Scheme?**

- 2.1 All employees who have more than 12 months continuous service with the Council can apply for the Career Break Scheme.
- 2.2 Both men and women, full-time and part-time can apply for the Scheme.
- 2.3 If at any point during the career break, the former employee takes up any paid employment with another employer, s/he will forfeit their place on the scheme and any acquired rights outlined in 7.1 below.
- 2.4 The minimum period that can be taken for a career break is 6 months. If a shorter break is wanted, the employee should talk to their line manager about the feasibility of taking unpaid leave.
- 2.5 The employee seeking a career break should ask for advice from the Personnel and Payroll Admin Unit (PPAU), or from the Teachers Pension Scheme, West Yorkshire Pension Scheme and the Local Government Pension and Financial Services Officer in the Employment Agency, as appropriate to find out the effect that a career break will have on their pension entitlements.

## **3. How to Apply for a Career Break**

- 3.1 In the first instance the employee should make a request in writing to their Headteacher or manager. S/he should specify the length of time s/he intends to take and the reason for the request (see appendix 1).

## **4. How Long can the Career Break Last?**

- 4.1 A minimum of 6 months to a maximum of 5 years can be taken.
- 4.2 When the employee starts the Career Break, s/he will be resigning from the school and will be treated as a leaver in the normal way. However the Headteacher or manager will sit down with the leaver and agree what kind of training and development support, if any, would be appropriate during the career break.

**5. What support can be expected from the Council during the Career Break?**

<b>Headteacher or manager responsibility (3 monthly intervals)</b>	<b>Personnel &amp; Payroll Admin Unit responsibility</b>	<b>Individual responsibility</b>
Maintain regular contact with the former employee	Maintain regular contact with the former employee. To contact the former employee to check if s/he wishes to remain on the scheme at 6 monthly intervals (see draft letter, appendix 2).	To contact the Headteacher/ Manager to maintain communication if the former employee knows that s/he is not able to be contacted.
Provision of service or Council newsletters		To contact the Group Personnel Manager to confirm their place on the scheme if s/he knows s/he is not able to be contacted.
Provision of appropriate job specific information	Failure to establish contact on a 6 monthly basis will result in the former employee's name being removed from the Scheme.	
Invite the former employee if appropriate to attend in-house training and development opportunities		To look for suitable vacancies with the Council either on the Council website or through the vacancy bulletins

**6. Return to Work**

- 6.1 It is helpful to the Headteacher/Manager of the scheme if the career break returner can notify both the Headteacher/Manager and PPAU no less than 3 months before s/he wishes to return to work to allow them time to try to find a suitable vacancy for her/him. However there is nothing to stop the returner from identifying a suitable vacancy in the press or the LA/Council's website at any time.
- 6.2 The LA/Council cannot guarantee that it will find the returner a suitable vacancy. However once notification has been received, the line manager will notify the Employee Support Co-ordinator in PPAU of the proposed return. Where the Employee Support Co-ordinator identifies a broadly similar job, s/he will notify the returner. S/he will be able to remain on the career break referral list for 12 months.
- 6.3 The Headteacher/Manager will send the returner a Career Break Return Form (see Appendix 3). If the returner decides to submit an application for a post, the form must be completed and attached to the application form in order to notify the selection panel that the applicant is a career break returner.

- 6.4 The Headteacher/Manager will also provide a reference for the returner. If the Headteacher/Manager has changed, the current Manager will undertake to find a suitable alternative referee from within the LA/Council.
- 6.5 If the returner wishes, the Employee Support Co-ordinator will put him/her in touch with PPAU who can help to prepare an application and get ready for interview. If appropriate, they will also provide information on 'reasonable adjustments' and useful contacts.
- 6.6 On receipt of a Career Break Return Form attached to an application, the Selection Panel will guarantee the returner an interview if the 'A' criteria in the employee specification are met. However the appointment will be made on merit and the returner will have to persuade the selection panel that s/he is the best candidate.
- 6.7 If the returner is unsuccessful in their applications for any posts applied for in the 12-month period, the LA/Council will nevertheless have fulfilled its obligations under the scheme. No further support will be provided to the returner and his/her name will be removed from the career break register. The former employee will, of course, still be welcome to apply for any vacancies with the LA/Council, in the usual way.

#### **6.8 Responsibilities on return to work**

<b>Headteacher/Manager responsibility</b>	<b>Selection panel responsibility</b>	<b>Redeployment officer responsibility</b>	<b>Individual responsibility</b>
Notify employee Support Co-ordinator of returnee's details.	On receipt of application with career break return form attached, guarantee interview if 'A' criteria met	Notify returner of suitable vacancies for up to 12 months from intention to return	Notify HR and Headteacher/Manager of intention to return (3 months before)
Send returner career break return form/s (appendix 3)		Put returner in touch with Employment Advisers; on request	Attach career break return form (appendix 3) to all applications as appropriate
Provide reference/s for returner on request			
<b>Personnel responsibility :</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notify Employee Support Co-ordinator if returner is appointed,</li> <li>• ensure previous service is taken into account as appropriate (see 7.1 below)</li> <li>• keep career break register for your services and provide data for annual monitoring</li> </ul>			

## **7. Conditions of Service**

- 7.1 If the returner is successful in getting a job through the Career Break scheme, s/he will be entitled to have their previous service taken into account in respect of annual leave (if appropriate), sickness, maternity scheme and long service award calculations.
- 7.2 S/he will not however be able to count the time spent on career break towards continuous service.

## **8. Administration**

- 8.1 Personnel & Payroll Admin Unit are required to keep records of employees on the Career Break scheme and to monitor their return. This should be available for annual corporate monitoring.
- 8.2 Personnel & Payroll Admin Unit will also inform the Redeployment Officer when a career break returner is successful at interview.

### CONTACTS:

Geraldine Yehya	860 5269	01484 225269
David Blackburn	860 5089	01484 225089
Helen Moriarty	860 5202	01484 225202
John Moran/Gillian Brewer	860 5193/2559	01484 225193/412559

### TRADE UNIONS:

(ATL)	861 5002
(NASUWT)	01484 513397
(NUT)	01484 513683
(GMB)	833 6507
(T&GWU)	800 5094
(UNISON)	800 3577

**APPLICATION FORM FOR SCHOOLS CAREER BREAK SCHEME**

<b>Employee Surname:</b>	<b>Initials:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
<b>Service:</b>	<b>Division:</b>	
<b>Post Title:</b>  <b>Work address:</b>		
<b>Home Address:</b>		
<b>Date of joining Kirklees:</b>  <b>Planned Leaving date:</b>  <b>Length of continuous service:</b>		
<b>For completion by Career Break Applicant:</b> I understand that when I register for the LA/Council's School's Career Break scheme, I make a commitment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Help my Headteacher/Manager keep me up to date with developments by making contact at least every 6 months, particularly if I am difficult to get hold of;</li><li>◆ Help my HR Officer maintain contact on a 6 monthly basis, particularly if I am difficult to get hold of.</li><li>◆ Inform my Headteacher/Manager and HR Officer no later than 3 months before I wish to return to work. This must be no later than 4 years 9 months after leaving the LA.</li><li>◆ Make sure that I attach a Career Break return form to any application I make to the LA.</li></ul> I understand that I can get help in preparing an application from the Council's Employee Support Co-ordinator in Personnel and Payroll Admin Unit.  <b>Signed:</b>  <b>Date:</b>		
<b>Type of Occupation/Skill area:</b>		

**For counter signature by the Headteacher/Manager:** see below:

As the Headteacher/Manager of employee who wishes to take a career break, I understand that I am responsible for ensuring the following support for the employee above:

- ◆ Keep in contact with the employee as a minimum of once every 6 months throughout the career break. This may include personal contact, mailing of newsletters and other relevant information, inclusion in away days and other team training;
- ◆ When advised that the former employee plans to return, to advise the Employee Support Co-ordinator that s/he may be in touch
- ◆ Send the former employee copies of the return form for applications
- ◆ Provide a reference for any suitable post within the Council applied for the by the returner.

**Signed:**  
(Headteacher/Manager)

**Date:**

Please return this form to the Personnel and Payroll Admin Unit for registration and data recording.

Name of HR Officer responsible for maintaining contact with the career break employee:



**DRAFT – Standard Letter to returner from HR to be sent at six monthly intervals.**

Insert name and address

Dear Returner – (insert name)

**RE: - MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCHOOL'S CAREER BREAK SCHEME**

According to our records, you are currently on a career break from Kirklees Council. I am writing to you to check if you wish to maintain your place on the scheme.

I would be grateful if you could return the tear off slip or e-mail me at the above address so that we can keep our records up to date and make sure you are getting the support agreed.

I hope you are enjoying your career break from the Kirklees Council and we look forward to your return.

Yours sincerely

HR Officer/Assistant HR Officer

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

LAST POST HELD: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that I wish to remain on the career break scheme

I wish to resign from the career break scheme (delete as appropriate)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Kirklees Council School's Career Break scheme**

### **Advice Note for Selection Panel**

The applicant named below took a Career Break from Kirklees Council on the date specified and wishes to return to the LA/Council within the five years allowed.

Our Career Break Scheme aims to encourage employees who need to or want to give up work for a period of up to 5 years to come back into the LA/Council workforce. This allows the LA/Council to retain skills and experience and to protect its investment in the development of the individual employee.

Therefore the Selection Panel is asked to note that the application attached falls within the terms of our Career Break scheme. If the application meets the A criteria on the Employee Specification, please guarantee an interview to the applicant. Where tests will be used to assess the longlisted applicants, this application should go through to the test stage if the A criteria are met. The applicant must however be assessed on merit.

Thank You.

Name of Career Break returner: \_\_\_\_\_

Former School: \_\_\_\_\_

Former Post held: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Career Break started: \_\_\_\_\_