Sabbatical and Extended Leave

It is recognised that in addition to the generous annual leave entitlement employees may occasionally wish to take a leave of absence from work for a purpose not covered by one of the University's other policies e.g. maternity, adoption, parental leave, etc. It is not an entitlement or a contractual right to take such leave but the University agrees to listen to and consider such requests.

To request a ‘leave of absence’ an employee must submit, in writing, using the request form for extended leave of absence, a convincing case for an extended period of leave. This should include a statement on why they want this time off, together with the planned dates of departure and return, and information about what impact they believe their leave would have on the School/Department. This request should be submitted to the Head of School or equivalent at least 2 months in advance, wherever possible.

The decision to agree to the request will normally be made by the Head of School or equivalent, in consultation with the employee and any other relevant stakeholders. If a member of academic staff requests leave of absence of more than one week, during term time, then the request should be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor for approval.

Decisions will be made by balancing the employee's personal needs with the needs of the School/Department and are likely to be concerned with the following:

- Ability to cover any additional costs to the School/Department
- Ability to reorganise the work amongst existing staff
- Ability to recruit additional staff
- Ability to meet customer demand
- Impact on quality and performance of the department
- Planned structural changes.

It is not possible to provide written guidance on every circumstance in which a School/Department might consider requests for leave of absence. Schools/Departments have the discretion to agree to or refuse requests and to determine whether any periods of leave will be paid or unpaid.
HR Partners/Advisors will, on request, advise Heads of School/Department making such decisions.

Sabbatical Leave – Academic Staff

‘Although the University has no formal system of entitlement to sabbatical leave, it recognises the value of such leave of absence in appropriate cases, in helping to maintain high standards of research and scholarship particularly when academic staff are subject to increasing pressure and demands on their time.

Each Head of School is therefore expected to make arrangements within the School to enable every member of the established academic staff to receive sabbatical leave at a rate of one term in nine. Leave on this basis is therefore understood as the reasonable expectation of relevant staff.

Requests for sabbatical leave should be handled as outlined above in relation to leave of absence in general.

Please refer to your HR Partner/Adviser if you require further Sabbatical or Extended Leave advice.