



Sabbatical Leave Policy

Introduction

While the University has a positive clause in all academic contracts of employment dealing with Sabbatical Leave i.e. "Proposals from members of staff regarding Sabbatical Leave will be favourably regarded by the University, the form and content of Sabbatical Leave arrangements will be determined by the Governing Authority on the advice of Academic Council of the University". There is nonetheless a need to identify a policy and procedure for dealing with such leave and it is felt appropriate to include in this sabbatical leave policy a policy on leave of absence there including non-academic staff in this document.

What Is Sabbatical Leave?

The teaching function in a higher education institution has the dual objectives of educating young graduates and undertaking research and development. It follows that the staff members involved in this teaching role should ideally be involved or aware of current research, thinking and practice in their chosen fields of discipline. Sabbatical leave is a mechanism whereby staff members are facilitated for a period of time in order to complete a research project or in order to initiate new research or to experience practice elsewhere in education, research, industry or teaching. In addition, a change of physical environment and culture is often helpful in ensuring that staff members are stimulated by the new ideas which they encounter in different settings with a consequent positive effect on their teaching and research role. Sabbatical leave is such an integral part of the academic system in every high grade higher education institution that it is essential that this operates successfully within the University in order to attract, retain and develop high calibre staff members. In addition, the involvement of staff members in substantial external research is a useful model for academic teachers in relation to their students. In a University such as ours which is new, which has an emphasis on high technology link-ups with industry, it is necessary for on-going research and for the constant renewal and revision of our course content; thus staff members should be involved in sabbatical leave as an integral part of their academic career.

Policy

The policy of the University shall be to encourage individual staff members to enhance their effectiveness as teachers and scholars through the implementation of a positive and progressive sabbatical leave policy. Therefore sabbatical leave may be granted where it



provides the staff member with an opportunity for an intensive programme of research and/or study thus enhancing his/her effectiveness to the University.

Eligibility

Normally, members of the full-time academic staff who have completed a minimum of 3 years continuous service at the University are eligible to apply for sabbatical leave. In exceptional circumstances sabbatical leave may be granted to a staff member with less than 3 years continuous service.

Duration and Compensation

Each application for sabbatical leave will be examined on its own merits. However in general sabbatical leave may be granted for periods normally not exceeding one year. A staff member who is granted sabbatical leave will normally be required to return to the University for a period at least equal to the period of sabbatical leave. Payment, or otherwise during the leave will depend on the purpose for which the leave is granted and the form the absence takes. However there shall be no appreciable additional financial cost to the University through the operation of a sabbatical leave policy.

Application Procedure for Sabbatical Leave

An application for Sabbatical leave should be prepared by the individual. This application should be in writing [using the attached form](#). Applicants may find it beneficial to discuss their application with the Director of Human Resources and are encouraged to consult him/her prior to preparing an application to the Head of School. The application should be submitted by the applicant to the Head of School for approval in the first instance. The Head of School will then forward the application for leave to the Executive Dean, where appropriate, for further approval. Following recommendation by the Head of School and Executive Dean, (whether positive, negative or modified) the application should be forwarded to the Finance Officer and a meeting arranged between the applicant and the Finance Officer to consider the financial details of the proposed leave, including e.g. superannuation. The application should then be submitted to the Director of Human Resources for approval. The Head of School and the member of staff will be advised in writing of the outcome of the application and of the associated arrangements by the Director of Human Resources. Unsuccessful applicants may appeal their unsuccessful application by communicating with the Executive Dean and/or the Director of Human Resources through their Head of School. Applicants should give as much notice as possible of their intention to apply for leave. It is expected that such notice will be preferably 6 months and not less than 3 months. Faculty granted sabbatical leave will be required to complete at least one



year's service on return to the University. On completion of the sabbatical leave, faculty will be required to submit a report to the Head of School.

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