

Internal Secondment Policy

Purpose

Secondments offer valuable opportunities for both staff and the University.

By supporting placement of staff in different work situations we recognise that secondments offer the chance to improve and enhance skills and experience. Secondments also support the university to up-skill staff for now and the future, talent management, succession planning, business plan delivery and career exit

This policy sets out how the University will encourage and manage secondments in a fair and consistent manner

Scope

This policy applies equally to full-time and part-time employees on open ended or fixed-term contracts. However, secondments for staff on fixed term contracts may not be possible where there is no post to return to at the end of the secondment period

This policy intends to support internal secondments only and does not cover external secondments to outside organisations

Definitions

A **secondment** is a temporary transfer to another role or department away from a substantive role. It allows a staff member to get first-hand experience of another department, job role or skillset or allows a department within the university to gain a skill set from a staff member that can be utilised for the delivery of a specific role or project.

Below are some examples of when to consider internal secondments:

- Short-term opportunity that might involve delivery of a specific project work for, say, one day per week for a period of three weeks or three months
- short-term secondment for up to six months to cover vacancy while recruiting to a permanent role
- longer-term secondment not normally exceeding 12 months to cover a role or specific project

Internal secondments will not usually exceed 12 months unless special circumstances apply.

Key Principles

The following key principles are the foundation for secondment opportunities:

- all secondment opportunities will be advertised internally to staff
- where there is a requirement for a specific knowledge or skill for the secondment, this must be specified in the eligibility criteria of the advertised secondment.
- the period of secondment must be agreed and clearly defined in the secondment agreement
- the line manager of the secondee will take all reasonable steps to release the staff member to take up the opportunity of a secondment and hold a role at an equivalent level and salary for them to return to

Eligibility Criteria

To apply for a secondment opportunity, you should be:

- on an open-ended contract or
- on a fixed-term contract with sufficient time left on your contract to complete the proposed secondment period
- employed for a period of at least twelve months and not have any current performance issues or formal disciplinary warnings
- unless expressly stated in the advertised opportunity, you must be able to meet the minimum criteria required or demonstrate transferrable skills to competently fulfil the requirements of the role or project

Manager responsibilities

Managers who are looking to fill roles through secondment options should:

- adopt a positive approach to secondment opportunities and make them part of their consideration when for example, looking at filling shorter term vacancies or commencing projects
- send details of secondment opportunities to HR to be advertised internally

Managers supporting staff applying for secondments should:

- consider the overall benefit this will have to the organisation and the individual, along with the impact this will have on the department/team and organisational objectives. Should there be a requirement to backfill the post duties as a result of a secondment, consideration of available resources must be made, e.g. replacement costs
- if there are business/operational requirements which may make it difficult to release a staff member to take up a secondment they should review the situation flexibly and consult with their HR Business Partner as appropriate, before reaching a decision.

Staff member responsibilities

Unlike applying for roles outside of the University, secondments are internal opportunities that are for a limited time and your substantive role is kept open for you to return to at the end of the secondment. On this basis it is important that when considering and applying for a secondment opportunity, that this is discussed openly with you manager so that they can plan for and support your development

Staff members should: consider their own eligibility before applying for a secondment

- discuss their intention to apply for a secondment opportunity with their line manager in advance and
- notify their manager of an application for a secondment opportunity at the earliest possible opportunity.

Process

- secondment opportunities will be advertised internally
- applications for secondments will ordinarily be through a shortened expression of interest process rather than full applications
- shortlisted applicants can normally be required to have an interview

Terms and conditions

All seconded staff will remain under their substantive contract of employment and are entitled to maintain their terms and conditions of employment. A secondment agreement will be provided to cover the term of the secondment and where applicable any change to grade or salary for the term of the secondment.

Secondment opportunities should normally be allowed to run their course; however, the University reserves the right, in exceptional circumstances, to end the secondment prematurely if required. Termination, prior to the expiry of the secondment, will normally be subject to a mutually agreed period of notice.