

1. Introduction

Under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act, 1996, members of staff who undertake certain public duties are entitled to a 'reasonable' amount of time off to carry out those duties.

2. Qualifying Duties

2.1 Jury Service

Jury service and other forms of public duties are separated in this policy as jury service is not an activity where the employer can limit the amount of time taken to fulfil their duty.

In relation to jury service, employees are entitled to receive unpaid time off work to undertake jury service however as an employer the University does have the right to ask you to delay your jury service if your absence will have a serious effect on business.

2.2 Other Public Duties

Employees are allowed 'reasonable' unpaid time off for public duties if they act as one of the following:

- a magistrate
- a local councillor
- a school governor
- a member of a local police authority
- a member of any statutory tribunal
- a member of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment
- a member of the voluntary Emergency Services e.g. RNLI

In recognition of the wider social responsibilities however, and the value such experience can bring to the workplace, the University will allow up to a maximum of 3 special days paid leave of absence in total per annum to undertake qualifying voluntary duties, subject to the leave year, and the provisions below.

3. Terms of special paid leave

- i. In some circumstances an individual will be able to reclaim an attendance allowance for undertaking public duty. Special paid leave will be paid on an individual's average days' pay. If the attendance allowance or compensation for loss of earnings is greater than a day's pay then unpaid leave shall be given.
- ii. Time off may only be granted for attendance at, and travel to and from meetings/sittings etc, not for any preparatory work that needs to be undertaken. Periods of leave may be taken in hours and should be recorded in AberPeople.
- iii. Any further additional time off required will be taken out of annual leave allocations, unless a request is made for unpaid leave. In the case of unpaid leave, as no pay is involved, the member of staff will be free to claim and retain any allowances for which he/she is eligible.
- iv. Requests for unpaid leave must be made via Self Service to Line Managers who will take into account work requirements before deciding whether it can be

granted. The University may refuse requests for unpaid leave that are considered unreasonable or which cannot be accommodated within work requirements. All periods of leave for public duties will be recorded on AberPeople by the nominated administrator within a Department or Institute.

4. Part-time staff

In the case of part-time members of staff, it is anticipated that a proportion of any public duties are performed during the period when they are not required by their contracts of employment to be working for the University, but if in fact the public duty is performed during such time then the provisions of this scheme shall operate on a pro rata basis.

5. Notification

Staff engaged in any of the qualifying voluntary duties will be required to produce documentary evidence of their public duty appointment and should discuss in advance with their Line Manager any schedules, rotas, timetables etc that apply and any mandatory training requirements that are required as part of that duty.

All requests for time off must be made through AberPeople and with sufficient notice to allow for the request to be properly considered. Managers have the right to refuse requests for time off that are judged unreasonable and/or excessive.

6 Policy Review

The Director of Human Resources will co-ordinate a review of the University's Time off for Public Duties Policy as required in order to maintain compliance with legislation and good practice.

The review will be undertaken in liaison with the recognised trade unions and any proposed amendments will be submitted to Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee for consideration and Professional Development Staffing and Equality Committee for approval.

7 Equality Impact Assessment

The University is committed to embedding the Equality Scheme into its policies, procedures and practices. This policy has been equality impact assessed in accordance with this scheme.