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**Title: Academic Study Leave Policy**

**Keywords: Study leave, academic**

**Description:**

**Publish date: Jan 2021**

**Review date: Jan 2023**

**Policy owner: HR/RDS**

**Audience: Staff**

**Academic Study Leave – Policy and Procedure**

**Introduction**

Academic study leave is a valuable benefit and demonstrates the University’s support for, and commitment to, ongoing innovative and meaningful academic work aligned to BU2025 actions. The University recognises that study leave represents a very significant investment in our academic staff which should be focussed on producing clear value-for-money strategic benefits. Consequently, applicants for study leave will need to show how their plans align with the [University Research Principles and](https://intranetsp.bournemouth.ac.uk/documentsrep/BU2025%20Principles%20Underpinning%20Research%20development.docx) Outcomes as set by the Research Performance and Management Committee. The following policy sets out the principles and procedures of academic study leave and expectations on return,

**What is academic study leave?**

Paid academic study leave may be granted to academic staff[[1]](#footnote-2), normally for up to one semester for the purpose of developing, progressing and enhancing research performance in line with BU2025.

Academic Study Leave is distinct from other leave including the right to request time off for development. Details of unpaid leave and career breaks, can be found on the staff intranet; [Staff Intranet](https://staffintranet.bournemouth.ac.uk/aboutbu/policiesprocedures/staffhandbook/).

**Eligibility**

All academic staff are eligible to be considered for Academic Study Leave once they have accrued the appropriate qualifying service since appointment or since their most recent BU period of Academic Study Leave.

* To be eligible, academic staff will have needed to have completed at least two years service with Bournemouth University. Normally one semester will be granted but a maximum application of the equivalent of two semesters may be allowed in exceptional circumstances.

Periods of family-related leave or sickness absence will be counted towards the calculation of complete years’ service. Career breaks will be deducted from the calculation.

Academic study leave will not normally be granted to academic staff who have resigned, from the University, (and, therefore within a period of notice), or who have agreed voluntary severance. The University reserves the right to withdraw academic study leave if the academic staff member subsequently resigns after the offer has been made.

**Priority for Academic Study Leave**

Academic study leave within any given academic year will be limited in terms of the numbers of applications granted and prioritised in terms of the applications made.

Each Faculty will be responsible for covering the teaching commitments of the person on study leave.

Where limits apply, academic study leave will be prioritised in the following order subject to a suitable application being approved:

1. Academics who have made a sustained and significant contribution over a number of years to research and leadership within the Faculty;
2. Members of staff without Doctorates who are registered for a research degree, either at BU or elsewhere, will have remission in respect of their workload planning in order to study, but there may be occasions where a period of study leave might enable them to accelerate completion;
3. Early Career Researchers (ECRs)[[2]](#footnote-3)
4. Staff returning from [family-related leave,](https://staffintranet.bournemouth.ac.uk/workingatbu/humanresourcesstaffhandbook/supportingfamilywork-lifebalance/) (which may include, maternity, paternity/partner leave, adoption leave or leave deemed relevant to particular individual circumstances;
5. Professional and support staff undertaking doctorates as there may be occasions where a period of study leave might enable them to accelerate completion.

**Applying for academic study leave**

Staff wishing to apply for academic study leave should complete the application form (Appendix 1).

The application should include a clear and explicit statement of the proposed activities, describe the purpose of the leave ***and*** list the intended outcomes. Applications should clearly demonstrate how the planned activities are consistent with, and aligned to, the University’s Strategic Plan, the Principles Underpinning Research Development and the Resultant Research Development Outcomes. The application should outline how the period of leave will add value over and above activities that can be expected during the normal course of employment. The application may be returned if this information is not included.

Applications from academic staff must be supported by the staff member’s line manager and the Deputy Dean (Research & Professional Practice) (where this is not the staff member’s line manager). Supported applications will be considered for approval by the Head of Department, the Executive Dean of Faculty and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Their decision is final.

Applications from professional and support staff must be supported by the staff member’s line manager. Supported applications will be considered for approval by the Head/Director/Executive Dean of Professional Service/Faculty and the appropriate UET member. Their decision is final.

Applications may be submitted at any time and as much notice as is reasonably practical is required, ideally there should normally be a minimum of one semester’s notice required from the date of application to the date of commencing academic study leave, although exceptional circumstances will be considered. For staff returning from family-related leave, applications should be made in conjunction with the normal notification to return to work.

A register of leave requested and granted will be retained by Human Resources and will be available to the Executive Deans, Heads/Directors of Professional Service and UET to ensure fairness and equity when applications are considered.

Once an application for academic study leave has been granted, it is good practice for staff to provide relevant and appropriate teaching materials to those providing teaching cover. The HoD in conjunction with the staff member taking leave will ensure that all current duties are covered.

**Academic study leave and returning to the University**

Whilst on academic study leave, staff are required to maintain formal and regular contact with their line manager. Such arrangements should be made prior to the commencement of the study leave period and be relevant to the particular circumstances.

At the end of the academic study leave period the member of staff is required to submit a report using the Academic Study Leave Report template (Appendix 2) to their Executive Dean of Faculty. This report should normally be submitted within **one month after the end of the period of academic study leave.**

The report should indicate: how the leave has fulfilled the aims specified in the application; what output has been produced or will be produced resulting from work during the study leave, including (forthcoming) publications; and what future endeavours may result from the study leave activities in line with BU2025.

**APPENDIX 1**

**APPLICATION FOR ACADEMIC STUDY LEAVE**

**Section A: Applicant Details (to be completed by applicant)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NAME:** |  |
| **POSITION HELD:** |  |
| **DATE OF APPOINTMENT AT BU:** |  |
| **DEPARTMENT:** |  |
| **FACULTY / SERVICE:** |  |

**Section B: Details of Leave**

Please tick the proposed period of leave

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ACADEMIC YEAR | STUDY LEAVE |
| **Semester 1** |  |
| **Semester 2** |  |
| **Semester 3** |  |

If leave is to be taken between particular dates please specify;

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Start date:** |  |
| **End date:** |  |

**Section C: Application**

In this section you must outline clearly and explicitly the proposed objectives for the period of study leave. Please indicate how these are aligned to the BU2025 strategic plan and actions, Strategic Investment Areas, UN Sustainable Development Goals and the [BU2025 research principles and outcomes](https://intranetsp.bournemouth.ac.uk/documentsrep/BU2025%20Principles%20Underpinning%20Research%20development.docx). This statement will include expected outcomes and you will need to refer to these objectives when you complete your report at the end of your study leave.

**Section D: Financial Details**

Please provide details of any expected additional income or expenses anticipated during the period of study leave. If you become eligible to receive payment from an outside source after this application has been approved, you must notify your Faculty Operations Manager.

**Section E: Declaration**

I am applying for the study leave as set out above.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Section F: (to be completed by the Line Manager)**

Do you recommend the approval of this leave application

YES  NO

Please detail your response below:

Has appropriate consideration been given to how cover will be provided if study leave is granted?

YES  NO

Other comments

Name of Line Manager \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Line Manager \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Section G: (for requests from academic staff this should be completed by the Deputy Dean (Research and Professional Practice) where this is not the Line Manager)**

Do you recommend the approval of this leave application

YES  NO

Please detail your response below:

Has appropriate consideration been given to how cover will be provided if study leave is granted?

YES  NO

Other comments

Name of Deputy Dean \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Deputy Dean \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE FORWARD THE APPLICATION TO THE EXECUTIVE DEAN OF THE FACULTY[[3]](#footnote-4)**

**APPLICATION APPROVED?** YES  NO

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Head of Department \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Executive Dean or Head/Director of Professional Service

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of UET member \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments:-

**On**

**ONCE COMPLETED A COPY OF THE FORM SHOULD BE SENT TO HUMAN RESOURCES**

**THE ORIGINAL SHOULD BE RETAINED BY THE FACULTY**

**APPENDIX 2**

**ACADEMIC STUDY LEAVE RETURNING REPORT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NAME:** |  |
| **DEPARTMENT:** |  |
| **FACULTY / SERVICE:** |  |
| **PERIOD OF STUDY LEAVE:** |  |

You should provide a detailed description of the activities undertaken during the period of study leave and attach any relevant documentation to support evidence of outcomes in relation to the original objectives (as stated on your application)

Would you be prepared for your experience to be made into a case study? Yes/ NO

This report should be submitted to your Executive Dean or Head/Director of Professional Service no more than one month after the end of the Academic Study Leave.

1. Including professional and support staff who are undertaking doctorates [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. An ECR in this context is defined as an individual who is within eight years of the award of their PhD or equivalent professional training, or an individual who is within six years of their first academic appointment. These durations exclude any period of career break, e.g. for family care or health reasons. The ‘first academic appointment’ is defined as the first paid contract of employment, either full-time or part-time, which lists research and/or teaching as the primary functions. The award of PhD is defined at the point of successful PhD viva. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Forward to the Head/Director of Professional Serive if not based in a Faculty [↑](#footnote-ref-4)