

Secondments at LSE

Guidance for staff: applying for and
working secondments

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Sourcing a secondment

Secondments can come about in a number of different ways:

- You may see a secondment advertised. Secondments are advertised on the School's jobs webpage and are also sent to service leaders to be circulated within their own organisational units. *Or*
- You may have discussed secondments with your line manager as a career development option. *Or*
- You may proactively source an opportunity for yourself or you may be approached about one.

However the secondment opportunity has come about, you should first have a conversation with your line manager. This could be in a scheduled one-to-one meeting or at another convenient time. The School supports secondments in principle; however, clearly, your manager needs to consider what a secondment could potentially mean for the rest of the team before they can formally approve a move. It will help if you've already identified how you expect the secondment to benefit your development, including how you might apply any new skills or knowledge to your substantive role.

Whilst you will, no doubt, have previously discussed your career development aspirations with your manager in one-to-ones and performance and development reviews, this discussion will also be beneficial in helping them understand how the secondment fits with your broader career development. Your manager will also let you know at this stage if they have identified any significant issues that will need to be considered if they are subsequently asked to approve a secondment.

Can I apply for a secondment?

You can apply for a secondment provided that:

- You're a member of professional services staff, and
- You've completed one year's continuous service

You should also have a conversation with your line manager before applying.

Is there a limit to the number of secondments that I can work?

There is no set limit to the number of secondments you can work, and you can apply for more than one secondment at the same time. As mentioned earlier, you should speak with your manager before making an application so that it does not come as a shock if they are subsequently asked to approve a secondment.

Keep in mind that it takes time and effort to make a secondment successful, and they are most valuable when they really add to your knowledge and skills - undertaking a number of unrelated secondments may not benefit your career development in the long run.

Applying for a secondment

For an internal secondment, you normally apply through the School's e-recruitment system, unless the secondment is being advertised to a specific group of staff in which case the advert will specify the application procedure.

If you are shortlisted, the recruiting manager will invite you to an interview. After the interview, you will be notified of the decision, normally in writing. If you are not successful, you can always ask the recruiting manager for feedback; this can help to guide any applications that you make in the future. You can also speak with your manager to see whether they know of any other upcoming opportunities that might meet your development interests.

If you are successful at interview, the recruiting manager will ask your line manager to approve the secondment in writing. Where your manager approves the secondment, you will be sent a change of contract letter which sets out the terms and conditions of the secondment, including the start date and expected end date. You should then return a signed copy of the letter to confirm your acceptance of the secondment. You may also find it useful at this stage to contact the HR Pensions team to confirm the pension arrangements for the duration of the secondment, especially if your secondment is at a different grade from your substantive role.

The School encourages managers to consider secondments positively and approval is normally only withheld where there would be significant difficulties in covering your role. If this happens, your manager will be expected to meet with you to explain their reasons. This discussion is also an opportunity to see whether your development interests can be met in any other way. You can find details on the [Organisational Learning team's webpages](#) about what other training and development opportunities are available.

Before a secondment starts

You should have a handover with your substantive line manager before your secondment starts. The duration and nature of the handover will vary depending on circumstances; however, it should be sufficiently comprehensive that the work can be picked up with minimal disruption.

During a secondment

For the duration of the secondment, you report to and are managed by the manager of the seconded post. This includes one-to-ones and other review meetings, as well as the approval of annual leave via MyView.

What happens if my substantive role becomes at risk of redundancy while I'm on secondment?

During your secondment, the manager of your substantive role should keep you updated about any significant changes that happen while you are seconded. If, for whatever reason, your substantive role becomes at risk of redundancy during secondment, you'll be involved in a process of consultation in the same way as if you were still working in the substantive role. This may require some flexibility on the part of your secondment manager, for example to enable you to attend any group or individual meetings that happen as part of the redundancy process.

What happens if the role I'm seconded into becomes at risk of redundancy?

In the event that the role you're seconded into becomes at risk of redundancy, you'll be consulted in the normal way, including being invited to group and/or individual meetings.

Extending a secondment

The manager of the seconded post will discuss with you if they propose to extend the secondment for any reason, for example if the secondment is covering a period of maternity leave and that leave is extended. They will also seek the agreement of your substantive line manager. If you agree to an extension, you will be asked to sign and return an amended change of contract letter.

Do I have to agree to my secondment being extended?

You do not have to agree to your secondment being extended. Remember that you have the right to return to your substantive role, unless that role has become unavailable as a result of organisational change. You should let both managers know if you do not agree to an extension so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Before the secondment ends

The manager of the secondment will meet with you before it ends to discuss your experience. The learning and development outcomes of this discussion can subsequently feed into future one-to-ones and reviews in your substantive role.

After the secondment ends

After your secondment ends, you normally return to your substantive role with its terms and conditions (including salary). A discussion about what you learned from the secondment should be part of your next one-to-one with your substantive line manager; your previous discussions with the secondment manager can also feed into this conversation. Not only does this help your line manager to appreciate the value of the

secondment, it also helps you to focus on how you can use the skills that you gained during the secondment in your substantive role.

Where a subsequent performance and development review includes the secondment period, the secondment manager may contribute to (or even complete) the report, and an overall rating will be agreed by both managers.

What happens if I don't return to my substantive role at the end of the secondment?

Secondments are normally agreed on the understanding that you return to your substantive role when the secondment ends. However, of course, there might be other events or opportunities that arise during that time, which mean that you no longer wish to, or are unable to, return.

You may of course secure another role directly after the secondment ends, or be offered the secondment role on a permanent basis after a recruitment process. If either of these happens, you should let the manager of your substantive role know as soon as possible so that they can start the recruitment process to fill the role.

If you decide to leave employment with the School during or at the end of a secondment, you should give the notice period which is in your substantive contract of employment (or the notice in your secondment role if this is greater). You should make both your substantive and secondment line manager aware of your resignation in writing.



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Photography: Nigel Stead, LSE School Photographer.