

Research Leave

Academic staff who are employed under the terms and conditions of the New Academic Career are entitled to a period of research leave following long-term absence from the School in a number of specific circumstances. The purpose of research leave is for Academic Staff members to re-establish their research trajectory following a long period of absence. Research leave mirrors sabbatical leave in character, i.e. staff members will be relieved of their teaching and administrative duties, but differs in both its operation and the circumstances in which it can be taken.

Research leave is an entitlement and Academic Staff are not required to have accrued service in order to access this provision. However, whilst research leave is an automatic entitlement, it is not mandatory.

As research leave is an entitlement, Heads of Department are expected to facilitate periods of leave under this provision for those Academic Staff who qualify.

Research leave will apply in the following circumstances:

Type of Absence	Leave Entitlement
Maternity/paternity/adoption leave for a total period of 18 weeks or greater	One term (i.e. four months)
Long-term sickness absence	Determined on a case-by-case basis as part of an individual's return to work plan by the Head of Department, with HR Partner advice (up to one term)

Absences of less than eighteen weeks in total will not normally attract research leave.

Where a staff member has a long-term period of absence that falls outside one of these categories, their Head of Department can make a discretionary case for research leave to the Deputy Director and Provost. The Deputy Director and Provost's decision is final and there is no right of appeal.

As the purpose of research leave is to re-establish a faculty member's research trajectory, research leave must normally be taken within one year of the employee returning to work. Research leave not taken during this timeframe will be lost, unless the Head of Department and Deputy Director and Provost approve an alternative arrangement in the individual case.

Should an Academic Staff member leave the School before having taken any research leave they are entitled to, there will be no payment in lieu of untaken leave.

Academic Staff members who are taking a planned period of parental leave should discuss and agree the timing of their research leave with their Head of Department before they embark upon their planned maternity/paternity/adoption leave. Heads of Department may be willing to allow for later agreement, but this is at their discretion.

Whilst Academic Staff do not need to 'make a case' for taking this type of research leave, it is implicit within this leave type that staff on research leave

will be primarily focusing upon their research activities. As such, the leave should not be taken to enable the staff member to take up teaching, or other remunerated activity, at an alternative institution or establishment. Equally, it is not expected that staff will use this leave as a substitution for other childcare arrangements.

Research leave will normally commence on the first day of term for the full term allowance. Heads of Department can, as a matter of discretion, choose to vary this requirement should the operational needs of the Department permit this, e.g. to enable research leave to be taken immediately following parental leave.

Academic Staff do not need to submit a formal application for research leave, but leave should be agreed in advance with the Head of Department. The Head of Department and the Academic Staff member should notify the HR Division, via their HR Partner, of the arrangement that they have agreed. HR Partners are also available for advice at an earlier stage of the process where this is needed.

It is generally expected that colleagues will cover the duties of staff on research leave, but it is accepted that the expertise of the member of staff on leave will not necessarily be replicated within the Department and that, in these cases, replacement teaching expertise may need to be bought in. In these cases, Departments can make an application to the Replacement Teaching Fund for additional resource; however, the staff member's ability to take the research leave will not be contingent upon the receipt of such funds.