

Secondment Positions: Academic Support Staff

This policy is intended to apply to all support staff roles in Bands 1-10.

Rationale

The London School of Economics and Political Science aims to attract, recruit, and retain, high-quality staff in both academic and support roles.

In adopting these guidelines the School recognises that certain fixed term opportunities may become available at the school may be suitable for internal secondments.

Definition

The term secondment is used to broadly cover a **temporary** move of an employee to a different role or part of the organisation for a defined period of time, for the mutual benefit of all parties. Secondments are recognised as a valuable way of creating a more flexible organisation and increasing staff, knowledge, abilities and skills. Secondments develop employee skills and knowledge, enhance organisational flexibility and offer a way to 'plug' short and longer-term skills gaps. For the individual, the benefits include the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge enhancing their career development opportunities, whilst at the same time maintain the security of permanent employment.

This policy outlines the principles for recruiting to secondment positions, recognising and rewarding members of staff who are taking up secondment responsibilities and thereafter managing the transition of the member of staff back to their substantive role.

Principles

Secondments are regarded as career development opportunities that provide an additional means of career advancement. They allow the School to make full use of the skills and experience of staff across the School and a solution to time limited skills gaps.

Duration: Secondment positions are those positions that are available for a period of three months or greater, it is unlikely given the need for induction and training that a secondment of less than three would be practical. Secondments may arise from the requirement to cover vacancies whilst the recruitment process takes place, maternity arrangements, long-term sickness arrangements etc. They will normally be granted for up to twelve months in the first instance, and will not normally be for a period of longer than eighteen months in total. Secondments in excess of eighteen months are unlikely to be appropriate since by that time the employee will normally have developed beyond their original post. The same argument will apply to the extension of existing secondment arrangements.

If an opportunity in excess of eighteen months is available, staff obviously may apply for the fixed term role but will have no automatic right to return to their substantive role.

Eligibility: Staff in substantive salary posts can ask for a temporary move to be considered as a secondment opportunity. Staff in their probation period are not eligible to ask for this opportunity. Requests will be considered based on the operational viability of the move in the substantive department.

3. Internal Secondment Procedure

Secondments involve the successful applicant taking over the full responsibilities of the new role, with no requirement to fulfil any responsibilities of a substantive role. For partial role variation please see 'Responsibility Allowances' Guidance.

The application of the arrangements set out in this policy must comply with the Equality guidance. This includes both the immediate process of seeking applicants to fulfil the role and the broader considerations of encouraging under represented groups to make themselves 'available' for this sort of opportunity. Managers need to give consideration to succession planning and talent management so that staff are encouraged and equipped to be considered for opportunities that may arise.

a. Prior to the Secondment:

To fill the secondment opportunity, the recruitment process appropriate to the role will be undertaken.

This will normally be the normal recruitment procedures to ensure fair opportunities for development for all staff.

However, shorter-term, more immediate opportunities where specialist divisional knowledge is required may mean a more limited advertising process is undertaken, for example through internal advertising within a specific division. This will normally apply to secondments five months or under.

Prior to the employee applying for a possible secondment opportunity, the member of staff should discuss the opportunity available with their manager. Whilst official approval for the move will not be sought until later in the process, the manager should make the member of staff aware of any operational issues that may mean approval will not be granted.

If successful, the candidate will be offered the position by the Recruitment Panel in the normal way. If the individual then wishes to pursue the secondment route, returning at the end of the fixed term appointment to their substantive role, written approval will then be sought from the substantive line manager. All secondments will be considered carefully in the context of business needs, resources, and commitments and in some cases the recruitment difficulties that may be encountered by the need backfill a post by using a fixed term contract. Approval may be withheld for operational reasons. Where approval is given, this approval should be forwarded through to the Resourcing Team to make the arrangements. It is essential that the terms of the secondment are fully understood and agreed by all parties.

Human Resources will then issue a letter to confirm the secondment to the successful applicant.

b. During the Secondment.

The employee will be paid the pay band for the role determined by job evaluation through the recruitment process.

Salary for the secondment period will be determined by the School's Starting Salary Guidance.

There is no salary protection if the secondment post is at a lower grade than the individual's substantive post.

For the duration of the secondment, the terms and conditions of that post will apply.

If the terms and conditions of the secondment role would normally imply a change in superannuation arrangements, please contact Jenny Casey, the Superannuation Officer for advice.

It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure the workload of the individual is reasonable, that support is available (including suitable handover where possible) and that suitable training and development is discussed and provided.

The secondment may be terminated early by either party giving notice appropriate to the terms and condition of the role.

Any increments and pay awards due on the substantive post will be made as normal so that the employee returns to the same salary they would have received had the secondment not occurred.

c. End of Secondment

It is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that an appropriate and tailored 'exit strategy' at the end of the anticipated period is planned.

Liaison should then take place between the two managers to ensure arrangements are in place for a smooth transition to the substantive role.

The secondment will end on the date stated and the employee will return to their substantive post on its pay and terms and conditions.

4. Secondment Extension

If it becomes apparent that the period needs to be extended the matter should firstly be discussed with the individual in place to seek their agreement. An explanatory document, with revised end dates should then be sent to Human Resources who will review and arrange a letter to the individual and appropriate continuation of payment.

Short extensions may be approved, for example to deliver a completed project.

If at the end of the secondment an ongoing need is identified, the secondment opportunity will be re-advertised to give another employee the chance to apply.

5. Secondment Opportunity becomes an established Post

If the secondment opportunity subsequently becomes an established post, the position will be normally advertised in line with standard recruitment procedures. Where the secondment has previously been advertised fully in the previous 4 months exceptions may be made.