



# Time Off and Special Leave

## Policy and Procedures.



We understand that from time to time you may need to take time off beyond that catered for by our annual leave and absence policies. We have a range of leave provisions to help you achieve an appropriate balance between paid work and personal life.

**We are Super Supportive.**

Version: Oct 2020 (HR)

## **Time Off and Special Leave Policy and Procedure**

### **1 Introduction**

This policy and procedure is discretionary in nature. Whilst the University expects its employees and staff to comply with it, it does not confer contractual rights or form part of any contract of employment and may be amended by the University or replaced at any time following appropriate consultation and negotiation with recognised trade unions.

Breach of this policy and procedure may be addressed via the University's disciplinary and code of conduct policies.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed by the Human Resources ('HR') department on a 3 year basis or amended in response to changes in future legislation and/or case law.

From here on the University of Northampton is referred to as 'UON' or 'we'.

### **2 Ownership**

The HR department owns and manages this policy on behalf of UON.

### **3 Organisational Scope**

This policy is a corporate policy and applies to all workers and employees of UON including wholly owned subsidiaries.

### **4 Policy Statement**

- 4.1 UON has a range of leave provisions available to help employees achieve an appropriate balance between paid work and personal life, as follows:

- Compassionate Leave (6.1)
- Parental Bereavement Leave (6.2)
- Domestic Leave (6.3)
- Dependency/Carers Leave (6.4)
- Longer-Term Dependant Care Leave (6.5)
- Parental Leave (6.6)
- Travel Disruption/Severe Weather Leave (6.7)
- Leave for Medical/Health Related Appointments (6.8)
- Disability Leave (6.9)
- Leave for Elective Surgery (6.10)
- Leave for Fertility Treatment (6.11)
- Leave for Public Duties (6.12)
- Leave for Jury Service and Victim/Witness Provisions (6.13)
- Leave for Members of Reserve Forces (6.14)
- Leave for Trade Union Duties (6.15)
- Sabbatical Leave (6.16)
- Study Leave (6.17)
- Volunteers Leave (6.18)

4.2 This policy aims to inform employees and managers of both employment rights and the University's provisions relating to special leave and time off, and to make clear how associated decision-making processes should be made.

## 5 Key Principles

5.1 We understand that from time to time you may face a situation where leave is required beyond that catered for by our annual leave and absence policies; some of which may be predictable and some which may not. However, we will be supportive and will endeavour to find a suitable solution for both you and your department, wherever possible.

5.2 Those supporting you at work during such a time will need to do so with empathy and understanding; particularly if you are experiencing personal distress or bereavement. In such situations you have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for additional support, details of which can be found on the HR pages of the intranet or from your HR representative directly.

5.3 If your line manager is unsure about the most appropriate way to support you with your request for leave, they should speak to Human Resources (HR) before making a decision.

- 5.4 A request for leave described in this policy, should be made to your line manager in advance (where possible) by fully completing the Time Off and Special Leave Form found in Appendix A of this policy. The form can be completed in retrospect where appropriate (for example with domestic leave) in order for the leave to be recorded correctly and for it to be authorised.
- 5.5 A copy of all leave request forms, whether leave is paid or not, should be signed by your line manager and forwarded to HR where they will be kept on your personal file. Any leave taken will also be recorded on the local absence return by your line manager reporting it to the appropriate person within your faculty or professional service.
- 5.6 We reserve the right to monitor and where appropriate investigate employees who take regular or frequent time off to establish the circumstances and ensure you are supported appropriately. (This does not apply to disability leave for which there are separate, appropriate provisions).
- 5.7 Unauthorised recording of any conversations related to Time Off and Special Leave is prohibited. Anyone in breach of this may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **6 Procedure**

### **6.1 Compassionate Leave**

We recognise that you may be faced with difficult personal circumstances during your employment with UON, and that you may need time away from work. You may be granted a period of paid compassionate leave for:

- Death of a close relative (including time to deal with practical matters which may arise as a result, such as arranging a funeral)
- Attending the funeral of a close relative or friend
- Severe personal distress - resulting from the critical illness of a close relative, or the breakdown of a marriage or long-term relationship

A 'close relative' for the purposes of this policy is defined as a spouse or partner, child, stepchild, grandchild, parent, step-parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, or brother or sister-in-law. (See parental bereavement leave specifically regarding the death of a child under the age of 18).  
Requesting Compassionate Leave

If you need to take compassionate leave you should inform your line manager as soon as reasonably practicable or, at the latest, on the first day that you are absent from work.

Up to 5 days compassionate leave can be granted on any one occasion. If you work less than 5 days a week you will be granted leave on a pro-rata basis. Additional time off is dependent on individual circumstances and management discretion, in conjunction with discussion with HR.

If you take compassionate leave you are encouraged to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for additional support, if you feel that may be beneficial. Details can be found on the HR pages of the intranet or from your HR representative directly.

Leave should be recorded by your line manager using the form in Appendix A.

## **6.2 Parental Bereavement Leave**

If you have parental responsibility for a child under the age of 18 who has died, you may take 2 weeks parental bereavement leave. This includes parents who suffer a still birth 24 weeks or more into pregnancy.

All employees are entitled to this leave unpaid.

However, you will be entitled to be paid at your normal rate for the 2 weeks if you:

- have been employed by UON for at least 26 weeks continuously on the Saturday prior to the child's death, and
- have received pay above the lower earnings limit for the previous 8 weeks (before tax)

You can take either 1 or 2 weeks' leave which can be taken either in one block of 2 weeks or as 2 separate blocks of 1 week each. Your leave must be taken within 56 weeks of the date of the child's death.

If you lose more than one child, your entitlement to leave is for each child.

### Requesting Parental Bereavement Leave

You must tell us (give 'notice') if you need to take parental bereavement leave, letting us know the following (this notice does not have to be in writing):

- when you want the leave to start

- whether you want to take 1 or 2 weeks leave
- the date your child died

Notice requirements depend on how long it's been since your child died.

### **Taking leave in the first 8 weeks**

If you want to take leave within 8 weeks (56 days) of your child dying, you can begin your leave as soon as you give notice but you must tell us before your leave commences. This can be on the first day of leave, as long it's before you're due to start work. If you've started work and give notice to start leave straight away, your parental bereavement leave would start the following day.

You can cancel the leave as long as you tell us before the leave commences. This can be on the day the leave is due to begin, as long it's before you're due to start work. Any cancelled leave can be taken later by giving notice again.

### **Taking leave after the first 8 weeks**

If you want to take leave more than 8 weeks (56 days) after your child has died, you will need to give us 1 weeks' notice to take the leave or to cancel it. Any cancelled leave can be taken later by giving notice again.

If you take parental bereavement leave you are encouraged to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for additional support, if you feel that may be beneficial. Details can be found on the HR pages of the intranet or from your HR representative directly.

You will also be entitled to [compassionate leave](#) if you wish to take it and anything beyond that will be at your line manager's discretion.

Leave should be recorded by your line manager using the form in Appendix A.

## **6.3 Domestic Leave**

We recognise that there are occasions when you may need time off to attend to urgent domestic situations/incidents, such as burst pipe, gas leak, flood, fire or burglary etc. If you experience a genuine domestic emergency, you can take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to deal with it.

Domestic leave does not apply to planned events such as domestic repairs, refurbishments, building work, installation of appliances etc. It is the sudden unforeseen nature of the event that qualifies it.

## Requesting Domestic Leave

If you become aware of the situation while you are at work, speak to your line manager immediately. Explain the situation and how long you expect to be absent.

If you are not at work, contact your line manager as soon as reasonably practicable or, at the latest, on your first day absent from work.

If you are unable to contact your manager before you need the leave to commence, make contact as soon as possible, but no later than two hours after your normal start time at work.

Your line manager will not unreasonably refuse your request.

If your job allows, you may be able to work from home or to work flexibly in order to deal with the situation (which would be paid). See the Working Off Premises policy for further details.

The above approach is intended to enable you to deal with the immediate situation. You will need to actively seek alternative longer-term arrangements as soon as possible after the emergency occurs, if they are necessary. If you are unable to make alternative arrangements and the emergency is ongoing, contact your line manager and explain the situation. They may be able to agree a period of annual leave or unpaid leave for you.

Leave must be requested/recorded using the form in Appendix A.

## **6.4 Dependency/Carers Leave**

You may take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off to deal with an emergency involving someone who depends on you. This could be a spouse, partner, child, grandchild, parent, or someone who depends on you for care.

This leave is to manage unforeseen or emergency situations, and to make any necessary arrangements for the longer-term.

Unforeseen or emergency situations could be for example:

- If a dependant falls ill, is involved in an accident or is assaulted
- To make longer term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured

- An unexpected disruption or breakdown in care arrangements for a dependant.

Your situation will be considered individually by your line manager, dependent upon the circumstances and will not be unreasonably refused.

#### Requesting Dependency/Carers Leave

If you become aware of the situation while at work, speak to your line manager immediately. Explain the situation and how long you expect to be absent. If you are not at work, contact your line manager as soon as reasonably practicable or, at the latest, on your first day absent from work.

If you are unable to contact your manager before you need the leave to commence, make contact as soon as possible, but no later than two hours after your normal start time at work.

If your job allows, you may be able to work from home or to work flexibly in order to deal with the situation (which would be paid). See the Working Off Premises policy for further details.

The above approach is intended to enable you to deal with the immediate situation. You will need to actively seek alternative longer-term arrangements as soon as possible after the emergency occurs, if they are necessary. If you are unable to make alternative arrangements and the emergency is ongoing, contact your line manager and explain the situation. They may be able to agree a period of annual leave or unpaid leave, or if you are the dependent's parent, parental leave.

Leave must be requested/recorded using the form in Appendix A.

### **6.5 Longer-Term Dependant Care Leave**

If you are the primary carer for a dependant who is suffering from a long-term or terminal illness, you may need a longer period of leave. Your manager will need to discuss your needs with you and how they might be accommodated.

Additional leave may be granted by agreeing an extended period of unpaid leave, a temporary reduction in working hours or change in work pattern.

Leave must be requested/recorded using the form in Appendix A.



## 6.6 Parental Leave

If you need time off work to look after your child's welfare, you may be entitled to take unpaid parental leave, for example to:

- spend more time with your child/children
- look after them during school holidays
- look at new schools
- settle them into new childcare arrangements
- spend more time with family, such as visiting grandparents

You are entitled to unpaid parental leave if all the following apply:

- You are a UON employee, and have been for more than a year
- You are named on the child's birth or adoption certificate, or have a parental order for surrogacy or have legal guardianship
- You have parental responsibility
- You are not a foster parent (unless you have secured parental responsibility through the courts)
- The child is under 18

You are entitled to 18 weeks leave for each child/adopted child, up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Parental leave applies to each child, not to your job, so it will be carried over from one employer to another.

### Requesting Unpaid Parental Leave

Unless the child is disabled, leave must be taken in blocks or multiples of one week, with a maximum of 4 weeks allowed per year for each child.

You need to give at least 21 days' notice to your line manager (using the form in Appendix A), specifying your intended start and end dates. If you or your partner is having a baby or adopting, it is 21 days before the baby/child is expected.

Any leave taken of less than one week will be treated as one full week, for the purposes of parental leave.

## 6.7 Travel Disruption/Severe Weather

We acknowledge that travel disruption, such as a traffic collision on your route or severe weather conditions, may occur from time to time. This may make your

commute difficult or even impossible. In such a situation you should make every reasonable effort to attend work for your normal hours, at your normal location (or another location if instructed by your line manager).

For temporary disruptions, you should make every effort to attend work later in the day, letting your manager know of any absence/lateness in advance.

If your job allows, you may be able to work from home or from another location, if agreed by your line manager. See the Working Off Premises policy for further details. If you can work remotely you will be paid as normal.

### How Pay Might be Affected

Whether you will receive pay will depend on whether UON is officially declared closed as follows:

- at the *beginning* of a working day, it will be classed as a closed day and no pay will be withheld.
- *during* a working day, it will be classed as a closed day from the point of closure and no pay will be withheld.

If UON is open but you arrive late or are unable to attend work at all, you will need to make up the time lost as per the flexi-time policy (if applicable to job grade), or it should be taken as annual or unpaid leave.

If you need to leave work before we close, e.g. if the weather could prevent you from getting home if you were to stay for your normal hours, you should take flexi (if applicable to job grade), annual or unpaid leave.

### Care for Dependants Resulting from Travel/Weather Disruption

If you have to provide unexpected care for your dependant/s due to school/nursery closures etc, please see Dependency/Carers Leave above. However, where you know that the school/nursery will be closed in advance, e.g. for a second consecutive day, you should request flexi (if applicable to job grade) annual or unpaid leave as normal.

If your job allows then you may be able to work from home, with agreement from your line manager, depending on the age and needs of your dependent/s.

Any unpaid leave taken should be recorded using the form in Appendix A of this policy.

## 6.8 Medical/Health-Related Appointments

You should try to arrange health-related appointments e.g. GP, physiotherapy, dentist, optician, chiropractor etc, outside your core working hours. If that is not possible, make sure you give your line manager sufficient notice and make every effort to minimise disruption to UON. If your absence is likely to cause disruption, your line manager may ask you to reschedule the appointment, unless that might jeopardise your health or recovery.

Working time lost should be made up using flexi-time (if applicable to job grade) or taken as annual or unpaid leave. Any unpaid leave should be recorded using the form in Appendix A of this policy.

Any absence from work caused by attendance at a medical/health-related appointment should not be recorded or monitored as sickness absence.

### Entitlement to Paid Time Off to Attend Appointments

Time off for the following types of appointments will be paid:

- Antenatal care (see also Maternity Policy and Procedure)
- Disability-related care (see section 6.8 below)
- Hospital appointments - to be agreed with the line manager and HR on a case by case basis, considering the nature and frequency

Employees will be required to produce letters, appointment cards, etc. to verify such any appointments for which time off will be paid.

## 6.9 Disability Leave

If you have informed us that you have a disability and you need to take time off work because of it, that requirement for leave can be considered as disability leave, rather than normal sickness absence or absence to attend a medical/health-related appointment (as outlined above in 6.7).

We recognise that disability is not synonymous with either sickness or absence from work.

The ability to take disability leave may be considered a 'reasonable adjustment' under the Equality Act (2010) and could include the following examples (this is not an exhaustive list):

- attending appointments for treatment, rehabilitation or monitoring, for which rescheduling to take place out of work time is not possible;
- recovering after a blood transfusion, dialysis, chemotherapy or radiotherapy;
- adjusting to a new or worsened disability or medical condition;
- attending training for the use of specialist equipment or with a guide dog;
- completing an assessment related to possible reasonable adjustments;
- to allow adaptations or reasonable adjustments to be made

### Requesting Disability Leave

To request disability leave please complete the form in Appendix B of this policy and return it to your line manager. They will usually discuss the request with both you and HR to ensure you are supported appropriately.

Any agreement made for disability leave should define the period of leave or the timeframe over which it will be required, provide for regular assessments to review the situation to see how it is working for both you and UON, and to identify if any other support might be required. We may seek the advice of our Occupational Health provider to aid this process.

Disability leave is distinct from sick leave however, and relates to time taken, usually planned, as leave from work for a disability-related reason.

Disability leave does not apply to absence through sickness, whether it is related to a disability or not, (as determined by either self or medical certification). In certain cases, if you have a disability, then reasonable adjustments may be made in relation to any associated sickness absence that you have (see also Absence Management Policy and Procedure).

Disability Leave will not be included in assessing attendance, performance, promotion, selection for redundancy or other employment related issues and any period of disability leave will be counted as continuous employment.

## **6.10 Elective Surgery**

For the purposes of this policy, elective surgery is surgery that is not considered medically necessary or that is for non-medical reasons.

If you wish to request time off it must be reasonable, and agreement will be at your line manager's discretion, based on your individual circumstances. To ensure consistency, your line manager may discuss your request with their HR representative before confirming anything with you.

Leave should be requested using the form in Appendix A.

## **6.11 Fertility Treatment**

If you anticipate needing to take some time off work due to fertility procedures, and any associated medical appointments, please discuss it with your line manager.

Your request will be treated sympathetically and in the strictest confidence, although your line manager may speak with their HR representative to ensure they are following a suitable approach in response to your request, and that their approach will be consistent with practice in other areas of UON.

Your line manager will determine if and how your request can best be accommodated; in order to meet your needs and ensure disruption to the UON is kept to a minimum.

As a consequence of the personal nature of such situations each case will be duly considered on its own merits and on an individual basis.

Leave should be requested/recorded using the form in Appendix A.

## **6.12 Public Duties**

If you hold a public position you may be able to take reasonable time off work to perform the duties associated with the position, however it will be unpaid.

Public duties are defined as duties of a lay magistrate/justice of the peace, membership of a local authority, a school governing body, a statutory tribunal, a police authority, a board of prison visitors or a prison visiting committee, a local health body, a local education body, or the Environment Agency.

For magistrates/justices of the peace specifically, you can take 13 full days (or 26 half days) per year for that purpose.

Please complete the form in Appendix A of this policy, detailing the dates and expected length of the absence, and give it to your line manager.

Your line manager will consider how much time off you are requesting, how much time you have already been granted for those duties, and the impact of your absence on UON. A request will not be unreasonably refused.

### **6.13 Jury Service and Victim/Witness/Defendant Provisions**

If you are summoned for jury service or as a victim, witness or defendant please let your line manager know immediately and provide them with a copy of your confirmation letter/any other relevant paperwork.

Once on jury service or in court as a victim, witness or defendant, keep in touch with your line manager to update them on expected duration of your absence so your manager can plan and ensure business continues as usual at UON.

Leave should be requested/recorded using the form in Appendix A.

#### Jury Service

If you are serving as a juror you will be paid a daily allowance directly by the jury service for loss of earnings. You must inform Payroll of the number of days served and the daily allowance received (see below), so your salary can be adjusted accordingly the following month.

You must claim for loss of earnings under the Juror's Allowance Regulations, via a Certificate of Loss of Earnings which is issued by the court or available online. This form should be sent to Payroll (in the HR department) before starting the jury service. On completion of jury service send your remittance form to Payroll to ensure the right adjustments to salary are completed.

We will pay you your normal salary, plus any enhancements or allowances which are part of your normal work pattern, less the daily allowance paid by the jury service.

You retain any payments made by the court for daily travelling, subsistence, or child minding (outside your normal childcare arrangements), to which you are entitled.

We reserve the right to request that you delay your jury service if your absence will have a serious effect on UON business.

#### Victim/Witness/Defendant in Court

If you are summoned to attend court as a victim, witness or defendant you will usually be given a fixed date on which to go to court. Sometimes you will be given

a 2 - 4 week period that you must keep free, known as a 'warned period' or 'floating trial'. If that happens, you are usually given 1 working day's notice before you are due to go to court. In those circumstances we appreciate that notice will be minimal. However, if you are informed of a warned period or floating trial, please tell your line manager immediately so they can make provisional plans.

You may be able to ask for expenses when you go to court - they should be able to provide you with relevant details.

We will pay your normal salary, plus any enhancements/allowances which are part of your normal work pattern, less any allowance claimed via court expenses. This will be capped at 3 days. If you require more time off it will be at the absolute discretion of your line manager. Otherwise you will need to take annual leave or unpaid leave.

You retain any payments made by the court for daily travelling, subsistence, or child minding (outside your normal childcare arrangements), to which you are entitled.

#### **6.14 Members of Reserve Forces**

If you are a member of the Reserve Forces you are required to declare this at the start of your employment with UON, or to inform your line manager of your intention to join if that occurs during your employment with us.

If you have declared membership of a reserve force you can request one week's paid leave for attendance at training/annual camp. Any additional requests will be considered and, subject to approval, granted as unpaid leave.

We will support you if you are compulsorily mobilised for service in the Armed Forces; you will need to show us your call up notice. We will however, exercise the right to appeal the decision if we think your absence will cause serious problems or harm to UON.

Leave should be requested using the form in Appendix A.

The Ministry of Defence will cover your salary and contractual benefits during mobilisation. If you are a member of a pension scheme administered by UON and you choose to remain in it, the Ministry of Defence will make the employer contributions.

You have no entitlement to accrue annual leave whilst mobilised.

### Returning to work

After service, reservists are given a period of leave. If you want to return to work before the end of your leave you must get permission from either your commanding officer or the demobilisation centre.

You should tell your line manager as soon as you know when you can return to work. This must be no later than the third Monday after your last day of service. You will then be re-employed by UON as soon as possible thereafter.

At the end of the military service, you have a legal right to return to the same type of job that you were doing before you were mobilised, on the same terms and conditions. If your job no longer exists, you are entitled to a reasonable alternative.

You will also be entitled to be re-employed for a minimum period, depending on length of employment with UON prior to mobilisation, as follows:

<b>Weeks of employment before mobilisation</b>	<b>Number of weeks reservist must be re-employed for</b>
Up to 13	At least 13
Between 13 and 51	At least 26
52 weeks or more	At least 52

## **6.15 Trade Union Duties**

If you who are a union representative of an independent trade union recognised by UON, you are entitled to reasonable paid time off to carry out certain trade union duties. Reasonable time off can be taken for duties relating to or connected with the subjects of collective bargaining.

Trade Union representatives are statutorily entitled to take a reasonable amount of paid time off to accompany a worker at a disciplinary or grievance hearing as long as you are certified by the union as being capable to act as a worker's companion.

Union representatives are also entitled to reasonable paid time off to undergo training in aspects of employee relations relevant to your trade union duties. The training must be approved by the Trades Union Congress or the independent trade union of which you are a union representative.

The amount and frequency of time off should be reasonable in all circumstances and you should provide your line manager with as much notice as possible of the timing and duration required. You should seek to minimise business disruption by being prepared to be as flexible as possible when requesting time off.



## 6.16 Sabbatical Leave

We recognise the importance of work-life balance and personal development, such as via life-long learning, charity work, travel or other interests. However, we must also ensure staffing levels are aligned to demands of the business.

If you have a qualifying service of 1 year, you are eligible to request a sabbatical to, for example, fulfil caring responsibilities, undertake studies or training, pursue a project, carry out research, travel, or other reason.

All periods of sabbatical leave will be unpaid and must last more than 3 months but no longer than 1 year.

If you wish to take less than 3 month's leave, you should request holiday in the usual way or consider whether flexible working or an alternative type of leave (as listed above in this policy) may be more appropriate.

### Requesting Sabbatical Leave

You must make your request at least 3 months before the start of the requested leave start date, using the form in Appendix A of this policy. Please include your preferred start date, duration, and proposed objectives of the sabbatical, as well as a statement about how UON might be affected by your proposed absence and how any potential problems might be overcome.

We will consider your request based on the following points (not an exhaustive list), based on the situation at the time of your request:

- whether you are under any performance management or disciplinary proceedings;
- we are able to secure temporary cover for your role;
- customer demand and whether your specific skills must be retained or must continue to manage a key customer relationship or project.

The decision as to whether to approve your request will be entirely at our discretion and there is no right of appeal against the decision.

Sabbatical leave may be granted more than once during the course of your employment, but only in exceptional circumstances, and only where a period of at least 5 years has passed since your return to work following your previous period of sabbatical leave. The decision of whether to grant more than one period of sabbatical leave is entirely at our discretion.

## How Pay and Contract Might be Affected

Your continuous service with UON will not be affected. However, you will not be paid any salary/wages during the sabbatical, nor be entitled to bonuses, commission, incremental increases, or any other benefits. Please be aware that membership of occupational pension schemes will be suspended during a sabbatical but depending on the scheme, it may be possible to buy back equivalent benefits on return to paid employment. We advise you to talk to a member of the HR Payroll and Pensions team for further advice.

You will continue to accrue statutory annual leave while on sabbatical but not contractual annual leave. You must take any accrued but untaken annual leave up to the point when your sabbatical begins. Leave accrued while on sabbatical must be taken within the first 2 months of your return to work.

All other terms of your contract of employment will remain in force throughout your sabbatical, including your notice period and the duty not to disclose confidential information.

If you wish to take up any other paid employment during your sabbatical leave or provide consultancy services to other organisations on a self-employed basis, you must obtain our agreement in advance. Failure to do so may result in a break in your continuous service.

In advance of your sabbatical, your line manager should arrange to keep in contact with you during your leave. Typically, this would be at least once every 2 months, although that is to be agreed between you and your line manager.

Your manager should contact you to let you know of any important workplace developments, such as a reorganisation. Similarly, you should let your line manager know of any changes in personal circumstances of which we should be made aware, such as a change of address.

## Returning to work

On completion of sabbatical leave, you will return to the same job as before or, if that is not reasonably practicable, to a job of equivalent seniority and on terms and conditions not less favourable than those that would have applied had the sabbatical not been taken.

You will have continuous service for all statutory purposes. However, your service

will be treated as paused for the purposes of service-related benefits, including long-service awards.

If you wish to return earlier from your sabbatical than originally requested, you must give at least 8 weeks notice to ensure arrangements can be made.

## **6.17 Study Leave**

You may be able to request time off work to train or to study, as long as you have been employed by UON for at least 26 weeks. In addition, your training must help you to do your job better.

Your study leave could be for example, to study course materials, carry out research/project work, revise for exams, etc.

### Requesting Study Leave

A request for study leave should be made using the form in Appendix A. You must include when the leave would start, its duration and frequency of days.

The decision on whether to approve a request (paid or unpaid) is at your line manager's discretion. However, it must be consistent with the approach taken with other team members who carried out comparable training/study.

When considering your request, your line manager will look at the following:

- what the request entails in relation to the duration/intensity/complexity of the training/study leave being requested – for example, does the request seem reasonable in light of the training/studying taking place
- the impact on your colleagues
- the timing of the requested study in relation to key events in the workplace or peaks in workload
- whether UON is able to secure temporary cover for your absence
- customer demand and whether your specific skills must be retained or must continue to manage a key customer relationship or project.

## **6.18 Volunteers Leave**

We recognise that volunteering can provide a range of benefits for both you, the recipients of your time, and for UON. We encourage you take an active involvement with a cause that you care about. Such an opportunity enables you to

share your skills, talents and creativity whilst also supporting your own personal development and your health and wellbeing.

You can take 15 paid hours per year to carry out volunteering (pro-rated for part time staff). Volunteering hours run in-line with the holiday year (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> August – 31<sup>st</sup> July). You will not be able to carry any unused volunteering hours into the next holiday year.

Your line manager may choose to plan a whole team volunteering day. If they do, they will agree that at the beginning of the year and limit it to one day in the year, in order to allow you and your colleagues to engage in other volunteering if you wish to (the team day hours would come out of your 15 hours entitlement).

If you are in an academic role with an academic workload, you may take time off in lieu of any time spent volunteering (up to your 15 hours entitlement).

To request volunteers leave, you will need to meet the following criteria:

- the activity that you want to do should have a connection to the Changemaker Challenges
- the organisation you are volunteering with must be a registered charity, community group, social enterprise, or other appropriate organisation
- you must be employed on a permanent contract
- you must not have a live warning on your personal HR file

### Requesting Volunteers Leave

A request for volunteers leave should be made using the form in Appendix A of this policy. The form will need to be approved by your line manager and will be subject to the needs of UON at the time.

You should obtain documentation of the time you have spent volunteering from the organisation that you volunteer with – this can be on paper or an e-mail from the registered organisation e-mail domain. Documentation should be sent to your line manager and may be recorded in your personal HR file.

## **7 Associated Documents**

Absence Management Policy and Procedure  
Flexi-Time Policy  
Maternity Policy and Procedure

## 8 Version Control

Version Control		Approval record	
Author:	HR	Approval:	Board Approval
Date written:	November 2013	Updates:	June 2015, 2016. 2020

### Record of Amendments

<i>Date</i>	<i>Version number</i>	<i>Details of Change</i>	<i>Approval</i>
April 2015	2	Addition of Disability Leave Legislative changes to Parental Leave	23/06/2015
June 2016	3	Update to pensions implications of career breaks/sabbaticals  Inclusion of option to select career breaks/sabbaticals on form (appendix A) – was previously omitted	Summer 2016
Sept 2020	4	Addition of Parental Bereavement Leave, Study Leave, attending court as a victim/witness/defendant, info about being a reservist, Volunteers Leave and an 'other' category on the form in appendix A to cover situations such as Coronavirus.  Removed ref to career breaks from sabbatical section so accurate to entitlement detailed  Updates to level explanation to all sections to make clearer, plus mention of EAP as relevant  Change of overall language and tone - more 'Super Supportive' and written in 2nd person.  Contents hyper-linked to each section.  Separation of requests for disability leave onto its own form – now appendix B and update to leave request form in appendix A to enable more detail to be captured.	Sept 2020 (TUL), JCNC and UMT 20 <sup>th</sup> April 2021.

**9 APPENDIX A**
**Time Off and Special Leave Form**

<b>Full Name:</b>	
<b>Job Title:</b>	
<b>Faculty/Professional Service:</b>	<b>Employee Number:</b>

**Type of Leave (please tick appropriate box)**

Compassionate		Parental Bereavement	
Domestic		Dependency/Carers	
Longer-Term Dependant Care		Parental	
Travel Disruption/Severe Weather		Medical Appointments	
Disability		Elective Surgery	
Fertility Treatment		Public Duties	
Jury Service and Victim/Witness		Members of Reserve Forces	
Sabbatical		Study	
Volunteers		Other	
<b>Number of Days Leave:</b>			
<b>First Day of Leave (date):</b>			
<b>Date of Return:</b>			

**Full details regarding leave**

(See relevant section of policy above for details on what should be included for your specific leave request/record)

**Authorisation**

Employee Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Days Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Days Unpaid \_\_\_\_\_

Authorising Manager Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***Human Resources Use Only***

Processed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

