

# Special Leave for Voluntary Public Duties

## 1. Introduction

Under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act, 1996, members of staff who undertake certain public duties are entitled to a 'reasonable' amount of time off to carry out those duties.

In recognition of its wider social responsibilities however, and the value such experience can bring to the workplace, the University will allow up to a maximum of five days paid additional leave, subject to the leave year, to undertake qualifying duties, subject to the provisions below.

## 2. Qualifying Duties

Staff are allowed 'reasonable' time off for public duties if they act as one of the following:

- a magistrate
- a local councillor
- a school governor
- a member of a local police authority
- a member of any statutory tribunal
- a member of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment

## 3. Eligibility

- i) Subject to prior management approval, staff who undertake any of the public duties listed in paragraph 2 may be granted up to five days special paid leave of absence to undertake these duties. Where a daily fee for the public duty is payable, unpaid time off only will be granted.
- ii) Time off will only be granted for attendance at, and travel to and from meetings/sittings etc, not for any preparatory work that needs to be undertaken. Periods of leave may be taken in multiples of half days.
- iii) These entitlements are pro-rated for part-time staff.
- iv) Any further additional time off required will be taken out of annual leave allocations, unless a request is made for unpaid leave. Requests for unpaid leave must be made in writing to Line Managers who will take into account work requirements before deciding whether it can be granted. The University may refuse requests for unpaid leave that are considered unreasonable or which cannot be accommodated within work requirements.

## 4 Notification

Staff engaged in any of the qualifying voluntary duties will be required to produce documentary evidence of their public duty appointment and should discuss in advance with their Line Manager any schedules, rotas, timetables etc that apply.

- 5 All requests for time off must be made in writing to Line Managers and with sufficient notice to allow for the request to be properly considered. Managers have the right to refuse requests for time off which are judged unreasonable and excessive.

**NB:** "These provisions do not preclude managers from exercising reasonable flexibility when performance of these duties only requires consent for an individual to leave work early or start work late (e.g. leave an hour early)".