



Academic Planning and Resource Committee

Guide-Lines and Procedures for Unpaid Leave of Absence for Fulltime Members of Academic Staff

1. The University considers that it may be in the interests of its own overall development that individual staff members have the opportunity to take unpaid leave of absence to pursue their academic and personal development, to acquire new skills, or to apply their expertise, and gain an extra dimension of experience, in an industrial or other professional setting, or for personal reasons.
2. Unpaid leave of absence should not impose undue burdens on students, colleagues, or on the University generally, during the period over which it is taken. While the University will endeavour to facilitate staff, refusal of some applications may be necessary.
3. The terms of this scheme apply to applications for leave of three months or more.
4. (a) With the exception of well-established practice, as in the case of membership of Dáil Éireann, unpaid leave will not normally be granted for a period longer than two years. A further application for such unpaid leave will not normally be considered until seven years have elapsed or, in the case of a staff member to whom the normal maximum of 2 years has been granted, until 10 years has elapsed.

(b) Údarás na hOllscoile may, in special circumstances, relating principally to exceptional occasions of public or national service, extend the normal period of leave to a period not greater than three years.
5. Part-time unpaid leave may be granted on a *pro rata* basis.
6. A person will not be eligible for unpaid leave until (s)he shall have served not less than four years in a fulltime capacity in the University.
7. Applicants for unpaid leave are required to include information on the purposes for which the leave is sought with their application.
8. Applications for unpaid leave of absence must be made to the Academic Planning and Resource Committee in accordance with these Guide-Lines and Procedures. The Committee, having considered the application, will make a recommendation to Údarás na hOllscoile. If Údarás na hOllscoile grants the leave in principle, the details relating to the leave will be determined by the Committee. In making recommendations to an tÚdarás, the Committee will deal with each case on its own merits but it will bear in mind the general circumstances in which the applicant has held his/her post in the University and the overall staffing situation of the department concerned.
9. Applications must be submitted to the Committee not less than nine months before the date on which it is proposed to commence the leave; applications for an extension/further period of leave must be submitted at least six months before the expiry date of the initial period.

It would be the Committee's intention to make recommendations in principle to the next succeeding meeting of Údarás na hOllscoile and, before doing so, it will consult with the Head of the Department concerned.

An application for leave should be made directly to the Academic Planning and Resource Committee. The application must be made on the Committee's Application Form (APR/UPL/1).

10. At a further meeting, not later than two months, after the date of the Údarás na hOllscoile meeting at which permission in principle for the unpaid leave is granted, the Committee will give consideration to the substitution arrangements, within the budget allocated by it, proposed by the Head of Department, for the carrying out of the teaching and advising of students, examining and administrative duties which would normally be carried out by the applicant for leave. The Committee must be satisfied that the proposed arrangements, including any persons who may be proposed as substitutes, are satisfactory and fall within the budget made available for the substitution provision. All arrangements must receive the approval of the Committee and the leave will not be confirmed until the Committee is satisfied with all of the arrangements.
11. Normally not more than one member of an existing department shall be permitted to be on unpaid leave at one and the same time and in considering applications for unpaid leave of absence the Committee will also have regard to any arrangements for sabbatical leave which may be in place or in prospect in the relevant department.
12. The Committee shall keep a register of persons granted unpaid leave.
13. A member of staff who is on unpaid leave shall not be allowed resign his/her post except in accordance with his/her Conditions of Appointment.
14. Unpaid leave shall not be taken into account for the purpose of computing service in post in relation to pension, incremental placing, eligibility for promotion or for any other purpose of computing service in post.
15. This scheme will be reviewed five years after coming into operation.

