Glasgow Kelvin College

Family Friendly and Flexible Working Policy

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The Board of Management (or any person/group with delegated authority from the Board) reserves the right to amend this document at any time should the need arise following consultation with employee representatives. This Policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment, which is published on our website: https://www.glasgowkelvin.ac.uk/equality-diversity/

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1. Introduction

This is the approved Policy of the Board of Management of Glasgow Kelvin College produced in partnership with staff, management and Trade Unions. As part of its commitment to Equal Opportunities and family-friendly measures, Glasgow Kelvin College supports the principle of work-life balance. The College is also committed to developing a working environment for its staff in which they are enabled to fully contribute to the service while feeling valued and respected. The College recognises that employees may have family and home responsibilities and obligations in addition to the responsibilities that they have to the College. This Policy aims to provide an opportunity for staff, regardless of protected characteristics or any other personal factors, to adjust their working pattern so that they can find a pace that enables them more easily to combine work with their responsibilities for home, family and life.

Work-life balance is about people having a measure of control over when and how they work. The College will provide a range of entitlements, family friendly and flexible working practices, which will enable employees to fulfil their family responsibilities by allowing them to care for, and spend time with, their family, to improve the working lives of staff and enhance service delivery. The College seeks to balance the needs of its staff with the requirements of delivering a high quality service for students and the communities it serves. Good working practices, and the benefits derived from them are key to delivering effective services, increasing morale, commitment and improving recruitment and retention of skilled and experienced staff.

2. Scope

This policy and associated procedures applies to all employees of Glasgow Kelvin College. Entitlement will depend on qualifying service or conditions. Leave entitlements contained within the Policy and procedures is pro-rated for part-time staff unless otherwise specified.

The College recognise that operating family friendly policies and offering more flexible working arrangements may attract a wider range of candidates for vacancies, people of all ages, people wishing to work part-time and those with caring responsibilities who may need a pattern of working that is flexible enough to fit in with the needs of their families or caring responsibilities. People with disabilities or health problems can also gain improved access to work.

3. Principles

The benefits of family friendly policies and flexible working practices for the College include the recruitment and retention of staff in keeping with its overriding purpose to ensure the delivery of a high quality educational experience for all learners. To ensure that the best interests of the students are given full consideration at all times the College recognises that there needs to be an equitable balance between the core business requirements of the College and the welfare of staff. The College's approach to family friendly and flexible working practices should assist employees balance work and non-work commitments.

The College has clear supporting procedures for assisting staff to achieve a work-life balance. The Policy and procedures are applied equally to all staff.
Although there is no legal framework for many other requests for time off, the College is committed to considering reasonable requests for time off not covered by this Policy and to ensuring that there is a consistent approach to managing such requests.

The College will treat sympathetically any request for time off. Staff may be enabled to take the time they need away from work by using paid leave, annual leave, TOIL or unpaid leave (or a combination of these).

Confidentiality must be maintained as many requests may be of a very personal and sensitive nature. The College will handle the details provided by staff in support of their request sensitively and appropriately.

The entitlements within this policy are pro-rated for part-time staff. A “working week” means the number of hours that an individual member of staff is contracted to work. For example, the working week of a member of staff contracted to work 35 hours per week, is 35 hours, while the working week for a member of staff contracted to work 20 hours per week, is 20 hours.

4. Family Friendly and Flexible Working

The College’s Family Friendly and Flexible Working Policy cover the following areas:

- Maternity Leave
    - Additional Maternity Leave
    - Shared Parental Leave
- Time off for Antenatal Appointments
- Time off for Fertility Treatment
- Paternity Leave
    - Additional Paternity Leave
- Adoption Leave
- Fostering/Kinship Care
- Parental Leave
- Dependant Leave/Carers Leave
- Flexible Working Patterns and the Right to Request Flexible Working
- Bereavement Leave
- Compassionate Leave
- Time off Work to Cope with Personal or Family Difficulties
- Domestic Emergencies
- Leave for Medical/Dental Treatment
- Trade Union Duties and Activities
- Service in Non- Regular Forces
- Examination and Study Leave
- Extreme Weather Conditions
- Time off for Civic Duties
- Moving House
- Weddings
- Religious and Cultural Observance

- Career Breaks/Sabbatical Leave
- Other Special Leave

Each of the above is supported by a college procedure which can be accessed on the College intranet or are available from the Human Resource Department. A brief outline of each area is detailed below:

4.1. Maternity Leave

Maternity leave is available to female employees who become pregnant. They are entitled to:

- time off work for antenatal care;
- a risk assessment;
- reasonable adjustments to ensure working conditions allow for a safe pregnancy;
- maternity leave; and
- protection from detriment and dismissal for a reason related to pregnancy, childbirth or maternity leave.

Eligible employees can take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave. This leave is detailed in the table below:

Type of leave	**Leave entitlement**	**Leave to begin**
Ordinary maternity leave	26 weeks	no earlier than the beginning of the 11th week before the employee's expected week of childbirth (unless the employee gives birth prematurely, in which case her ordinary maternity leave begins on the day following the one on which childbirth occurred).
Additional maternity leave	26 weeks	the day following the last day of the employee's ordinary maternity leave period.

Employees do not have to take 52 weeks, but they must take 2 weeks' leave after the baby is born and the earliest the employee can stop is 11 weeks before the due date.

The College operates a tiered approach to its maternity scheme. The scheme is dependent on salary and is aimed at providing the best financial solution for the employee. The employee however may choose which scheme they wish to apply. The details of the Scheme are available from the Human Resources Department.

The Scheme on offer is:

- Option 1
    - 6 weeks at 90% pay (inclusive of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP);
    - 12 weeks at 50% pay plus SMP; and
    - a further 21 weeks of SMP only.

or

- Option 2
    - 13 weeks full pay (inclusive of SMP); and
    - 26 weeks of SMP only.

Employees can choose when they want the SMP to start, this normally coincides with the period of Ordinary Maternity Leave. Unless the baby is born sooner, the earliest SMP can start is 11 weeks before the week the baby is due.

An employee who cannot get Statutory Maternity may be able to get Maternity Allowance instead. The College will provide the employee with a form SMP1 stating why it cannot pay the employee SMP.

4.1.1. Shared Parental Leave

Shared parental leave is designed to give parents more flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption. Parents can share the leave allocation and can decide to be off work at the same time and/or take it in turns to have periods of leave to look after the child.

Eligible parents can decide whether the benefits of Shared Parental Leave will work for them and how it could be used alongside, or instead of, traditional Maternity or Adoption leave.

In accordance with the legislation a mother must take at least two weeks' maternity leave following the birth of the child'. A Mother is defined as the woman who gives birth to a child or the adopter (the adopter means the person who is eligible for adoption leave and/or pay. They can be male or female). A partner is defined as the child's biological father or the partner of the mother/adopter. This can be a spouse, civil partner; or a partner who is living in an enduring relationship with the mother and the child.

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) can be taken as Continuous Leave or Discontinuous Leave. Continuous Leave is taken in one block for example four weeks' leave. Discontinuous Leave is a period of leave that is arranged around weeks where the employee will return to work for example an arrangement where an employee will work every other week for a period of three months.

To qualify, the mother or adopter must be entitled to some form of maternity or adoption entitlement, have given notice to curtail it and must share the main responsibility for caring for the child with the named partner. For a parent to be eligible to take Shared Parental Leave they must be an employee and they must pass the continuity of employment test. In turn, the other parent in the family must meet the employment and earnings test. If both parents are employees and both meet the qualifying requirements there will be a joint entitlement and the parents will have to determine how to divide the leave entitlement.

Shared parental leave may be taken at any time within the period which begins on the date the child is born/date of the placement and ends 52 weeks after that date. An employee is entitled to submit three separate notices to book leave. Leave must be taken in complete weeks and may be taken either in a continuous period, which the College cannot refuse, or in a discontinuous block, which the College would need to consider and agree to.

Shared Parental Pay

A mother, subject to certain criteria, will be entitled to statutory maternity pay/adoption pay/Maternity Allowance for up to 39 weeks. If the mother gives notice to reduce their entitlement before they have received it for 39 weeks, then any remaining weeks could become available as Shared Parental Pay.

If both parents qualify for Shared Parental Pay they must decide how it will be divided and they must each inform their respective employer of their entitlement.

For further advice or information please contact the Human Resources Department.

4.2. Time Off for Antenatal Appointments

Reasonable time off with pay will be granted for women to attend ante-natal care, parent craft, medical examinations and relaxation sessions/classes as advised by the midwife or medical practitioner. Requests for time off must be made in advance, it is not necessary for the employee to produce an appointment card on the first occasion, but on all subsequent appointments a card must be produced and shown to the line manager.

The husband, civil partner, partner, father of the expected child, maternity support partner or parents of surrogacy will be entitled to paid time off to accompany the pregnant woman to a maximum of two antenatal clinics up to a maximum of half a day for each appointment.

An employee has a qualifying relationship with a pregnant woman or her expected child if he or she:

- is the husband or civil partner of the pregnant woman;
- lives with the pregnant woman in an enduring family relationship, although is not her parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle;
- is the father of the expected child; and
- is an intended parent in a surrogacy situation who meets certain conditions (for example, is a potential applicant for a parental order in respect of the expected child).

4.3. Time off for Fertility Treatment

It is recognised that infertility is a medical condition and it is also recognised that time off for fertility treatment may be required for same sex couples.

An employee may need to take some time off during their normal working hours for appointments. The amount of time an employee is away from work will depend on the nature of the tests and treatments as well as the distance between their clinic and place of work and the timing of their appointments.

Medical appointments, where possible, should be out with normal working hours to minimise the disruption to service delivery but where this is impracticable reasonable leave with pay will be granted.

The College recognises that fertility treatment is a stressful and emotionally demanding experience. Employees may need additional support during the process and reasonable adjustments to their duties and responsibilities.

An employee will be entitled to a maximum of 5 days (pro-rated for part-time staff) paid leave in any academic year for investigations or treatment. These days may be taken as a block of 5 days or separately as full or half days as necessary. Additional paid time off may be granted depending on the circumstances and each case will be considered on its own merits. To be eligible for leave for fertility treatment, staff must have been continuously employed by the College for at least 12 weeks.

This entitlement applies equally to an employee whose partner is undergoing fertility treatment. If the employee requires time off beyond the permitted number of days, the employee can take time off out of his/her annual leave entitlement for this purpose or they may apply for unpaid leave of absence.

Time off for fertility treatment up to the permitted number of days will be paid at the employee's normal rate of basic pay.

4.4. Paternity Leave

Paternity leave is available to employees who are the father, husband or partner of the mother (or adopter) or child’s adopter. Paternity leave is a period of leave taken by an employee to take time off because their partner is having a baby or adopting a child.

The employee is entitled to a maximum of two weeks’ leave where one week is paid at full pay, inclusive of Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) and the other week at SPP only.

4.4.1. Additional Paternity Leave

Additional paternity leave allows employees who are eligible to take up to 26 weeks leave to care for their new baby.

Additional paternity leave is for a maximum of 26 weeks. Leave can be taken any time from 20 weeks after the child is born, but it must have finished by the child's first birthday. In the case of adoption it can start anytime between 20 weeks and 52 weeks after the child starts living with the adopter.

4.5. Adoption Leave

Adoption leave is available to employees who have been approved by the Adoption Agency or Social Services Department as an adoptive parent.

Employees have the right to take time off work to care for a child who has been newly placed with them for adoption. The period of available leave is up to 52 weeks, and the rules and procedures applicable to statutory adoption leave and statutory adoption pay are the same in many respects as those applicable to statutory maternity leave and pay.

4.6. Surrogacy

A member of staff who becomes a parent through surrogacy will be entitled to adoption leave if the following conditions are met:

a) a surrogate mother gives birth to a child who of biologically the member of staff's child, the child of his or her spouse or partner, or the child of both;
b) the member of staff expects to be given parental responsibility for the child under a parental order from the court, the child lives with them and a parental order is applied for within six months of the child's birth.

In advance of the legislation however the College will grant parents through surrogacy two ante-natal appointments during a pregnancy in accordance with section 4.2.

4.7. Fostering/Kinship Caring

4.7.1. Fostering

Where an employee fosters it is recognised that staff who take up fostering may require time off, for example, for appointments, training or settle the child into the home environment.

There are a number of different ways to foster:

- short-term fostering;
- long-term fostering;
- shared care and shared care plus;
- weekend care;
- caring for disabled children; and
- treatment fostering.

Staff are not entitled to adoption leave or the paternity/partner's leave or parental leave, other than in exceptional circumstances. The College may be willing to agree to a time off on a paid or unpaid basis and each case will be considered on its own merits. In the case of a request under these circumstances the employee should consult with the Human Resources Department for advice.

4.7.2 Kinship Caring

Kinship care means that relatives or friends look after children who cannot live with their parents.

Kinship care may include people who are not related to the child but who are still in the child's social network. For example someone the child knows well and trusts; a good neighbour, a parent of a school friend or a close family friend. Sometimes this type of care is called family and friends care because this more accurately describes what it is, and kinship foster carers are sometimes called connected persons.

Kinship care can be a private arrangement or formalised through a legal order. In the case of a request under these circumstances the employee should consult with the Human Resources Department for advice

4.8 Parental Leave

The legislative definition of Parental Leave is leave of absence to care for a child or make arrangements for the good of a child or children. The College is committed to assisting staff with family and parental responsibilities of children. Parental leave entitlement can be used between birth up until the child's 18th birthday.

The Policy uses the term 'parent' however the College recognises the broader definition of a parent to include all circumstances where an adult assumes the care of a child – natural parent, step-parent, adoptive parent or long-term foster parent (where a child is placed for a period of 12 months or more) and same sex partner, grandparent and legal guardian.

Under the Parental Leave Procedure an employee will be entitled to a maximum of 90 working days for each child. Part-time employees have the same entitlement on a pro-rata basis.

A maximum of 15 working days, of the 90 days entitlement, will be paid; and the remaining 75 days will be unpaid. The entitlement will be pro rata depending on the age of the child in accordance with the table below. In accordance with the legislation the entitlement is restricted to a maximum of 20 days (5 days paid and 15 days unpaid) per child, per employee, per annum.

An employee must have completed 13 weeks continuous service with the College before parental leave may be granted.

Age of Child	Entitlement Paid	Entitlement Unpaid	Total Entitlement
Birth - 13	15	75	90
14	15	65	80
15	15	45	60
16	10	30	40
17	5	15	20

A maximum of 20 days (5 paid and 15 unpaid) entitlement is permitted per year for each child. An employee whose child is 14 to 17 who commences employment during the academic year will be entitled to a proportion of the parental leave entitlement for that year for each child.

4.9 Dependant Leave/Carers Leave

4.9.1 Dependent/Carers Leave

Employees have the right to take a maximum of three days off, regardless of working hours, in an academic year to deal with an unforeseen situation involving a dependent. Whilst the statutory right to take time off to care for a dependent is in the event of an emergency the College recognises that staff may need time off in a non-emergency situation in the case of a disabled or elderly dependent. In these circumstances as detailed in section 4.7.2 the College will grant dependent leave in a non-emergency situation.

Time off work to care for a dependent applies to all employees of the College regardless of length of service or number of hours worked each week.

In cases where a dependant falls ill, is injured or assaulted, dies or gives birth or in certain other defined circumstances, employees may apply for up to a maximum of three working days paid leave in any academic year. Where appropriate, a reasonable amount of additional time off with or without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Principal. The entitlement is intended to cover unforeseen matters and not those that can be planned for in advance.

The definition of family member or dependant includes – spouse, partner, child, step child, foster child, parent (natural, step and foster) or relative, a dependant of the employee who lives in the same household as the employee (other than as their employee, tenant, lodger or boarder) or any person who reasonably relies on the employee to make such arrangements on their behalf.

4.9.2 Non-emergency Dependent/Carers Leave

Short Term Leave

Employees may be provided with reasonable time off up to a maximum of three days (21 hours) dependent leave in a non-emergency situation to care for a dependent in an academic year.

Disabled or elderly dependent for the purposes of, for example, to:

- accompany a dependent to a planned medical or dental appointment and rehabilitation or assessment appointments;
- make arrangements for the dependent to enter a care home or hospital;
- attend an appointment to discuss the care of the dependent, for example social work or hospital consultant; or
- make arrangements or care for a dependent when they come out of hospital.

Spouse, partner, civil partner, child for the purpose of, for example, to:

- accompany to hospital for day treatment or surgery;
- attend child care clinics is to help with normal health checks for children e.g. inoculations; or
- make arrangements or care for a dependent when they come out of hospital.

Each request will be considered on its own merits in relation to a reasonable amount of time off. Time off for emergency and non-emergency time off will not exceed a total of 3 days (21 hours) in an academic year.

Where appropriate, a reasonable amount of additional time off with or without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Principal.

Local support for carers.

Crossroads Caring Scotland, 24 George Square G1 2EG 0141 226 3793

Young Carers

Glasgow North East Carers Centre - 51 Trondra Place, G31 9AX 0141 781 0728

Long Term Leave

The right to request flexible working as detailed in section 4.9 below provides the possibility for employees to alter their contractual work pattern to enable their family life and work requirements to be balanced for an appropriate period. The procedure for flexible working and the right to request flexible working should be followed.

The definition of family member or dependant includes – spouse, partner, child, step child, foster child, parent (natural, step and foster) or relative, a dependant of the employee who lives in the same household as the employee (other than as their employee, tenant, lodger or boarder) or any person who reasonably relies on the employee to make such arrangements on their behalf.

4.10 Flexible working patterns and the right to request flexible working

The College recognise that it is not only working parents but others who may wish to obtain a better balance between work and their personal life. The College offer a range of options to staff. These include:

- part-time working;
- job-sharing;
- term-time working; and
- compressed hours.

All employees have a statutory right to ask for a change to their working hours. Employees must have worked with the College for 26 weeks continuously at the date the application is made. An employee can only make one statutory request in any 12 month period. Employees who have been employed for less than 26 weeks do not have a statutory right to request flexible working.

The College will consider the request carefully looking at the benefits of the requested changes in working conditions for the employee and the College and weighing these against the needs of the service and any impact of implementing the changes.

Employees do not have an automatic right to work flexibly as the College is under no statutory obligation to grant a request to work flexibly, qualifying employees are entitled to request flexible working and the College is obliged to give the request serious consideration.

The College is happy to consider an application from an employee made through the formal Procedure. An application form can be found at Appendix 1 to the procedure.

4.11 Bereavement Leave

Leave with pay shall be granted where the employee is an immediate family member or dependant of the deceased mother or father (natural, step, foster), brother, sister, child, step child, foster child, partner or spouse) and/or where the employee is responsible for

making arrangements in connection with a death. Up to a maximum of five days bereavement leave may be granted.

4.11.1 Parental Bereavement Leave

Parents or carers are entitled to two weeks' paid leave following the loss of a child under the age of 18 or a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

Employees with 26 weeks' continuous service will receive two weeks paid leave. Employees may receive statutory parental bereavement pay, where the statutory criteria is met and this will be off set against the employee's full salary. The employee should notify the College of the dates when the leave is to be taken as soon as reasonably practicable.

Parental bereavement leave can either be taken in one block or in two separate blocks of one week. It can be taken within a 56 week window from the date of the child's death, to allow time for moments such as anniversaries. At least one weeks' notice is required to enable the College to plan for service delivery however the sensitivity of the matter is acknowledged and the College will seek to be flexible to allow leave to be taken without prior notice where possible.

Parents will not need to provide the College with a death certificate as evidence. The death of more than one child will entitle the employee to a period of parental bereavement leave in respect of each child.

4.12 Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave may be granted in circumstances where a close member of the employee's family becomes seriously ill or died. A reasonable period of paid or unpaid leave may be granted. There may be other circumstances for which the College might consider granting compassionate leave such as an event in an employee's personal life that is causing severe distress.

4.13 Time off Work to Cope with Personal or Family Difficulties

The College will consider granting a reasonable amount of paid time off work to employees in a range of other situations. The College understand that such circumstances inevitably occur from time to time and that an employee may need support. Time off may be granted within reason at the Principal's discretion.

4.14 Domestic Emergencies

The College may grant up to a maximum of one day off with pay to assist staff who experience a domestic emergency. Time off may be granted in circumstances were an employee requires to make their home safe. Such circumstances may include:

- serious flooding;
- ensuring the safety of their home; and
- fire.

Additional time off with or without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Principal.

4.15 Leave for Medical/Dental Treatment

Employees requiring optical, dental, orthopaedic or other medical treatment should make arrangements to obtain such treatment out with normal working hours, but where this is impracticable, leave with pay will be granted.

An employee shall be entitled to reasonable time off with pay for the purposes of preventative medical examinations.

4.16 Trade Union Duties and Activities

a) Lecturers
Time off for Trade Union duties as per the Recognition and Procedures Agreement.

b) Support
Time off for Trade Union duties as per the Recognition and Procedures Agreement.

4.17 Service in Non-Regular Forces

An employee who is a member of the non-regular forces and attends an annual training camp for a period of not less than one week will be granted special leave with pay equal to the period which the employee actually attends the training camp but not exceeding a period of 15 days and subject to the deduction of service pay and allowances received for the period of special leave.

4.18 Examination/Formal Assessment and Study Leave

Leave with pay will be granted to employees for the purpose of studying, sitting appropriate examinations or formal assessments as follows:

a) One additional day of study leave will be granted for each formal assessment or examination being sat.
b) Leave with pay will only be granted on the day(s) of the formal assessment(s) or examination(s).

Time off for one resit of a formal assessments or examination may be granted. Each case will be dealt with on its own merits.

4.19 Extreme Weather Conditions

Where employees are unable to attend work due to extreme weather conditions, they must report, on their first day of absence, to the Human Resources Department. Each case will be dealt with on its own merits.

4.20 Time off for Civic and Public Duties

Where an employee holds a public office or public position, the College may grant a reasonable amount of time off work with pay so that the employee can perform the duties associated with that position.

Positions may include:

- a magistrate (also known as a justice of the peace);
- a local councillor;
- a member of any statutory tribunal (e.g. an employment tribunal);
- a member of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment;
- a member of a health authority;
- a member of a school council or board in Scotland;
- a member of the Environment Agency or the Scottish Environment Protection agency;
- a member of a board of prison visitors or visiting committees (Scotland);
- a member of Scottish Water or a Water Customer Consultation Panel; or
- a member of a children's panel.

Where, however, the amount of time off that the employee requires for public duties becomes excessive, or begins to cause operational difficulties for the College, the College has the right to refuse the employee further time off in the immediate future. Alternatively, the employee may be permitted to take time off out of his/her annual holiday entitlement for this purpose.

Employees should discuss with their line manager any dates on which they wish to take time off work for public duties and provide written notification of the dates to the Human Resources Department stating the expected length of their absence. This notification should be provided as far in advance as possible. An employee may continue to be paid at his/her normal rate of pay during periods of time off for public duties, subject to the deduction of any monies received from the relevant authority in respect of the duties performed, which the employee must declare.

4.21 Jury Duty

Time off for jury duty will be granted. You must give a copy of the letter confirming your jury service to the Payroll Officer, Human Resources Section.

If your absence will have a serious effect operational requirements the College may request a delay in your jury service.

The College does not have to pay you during your service however you shall not suffer loss of earnings. You are expected to claim for loss of earnings from the court and reimburse the College the amount you receive.

The College will fill out a Certificate of Loss of Earnings, which you get with the letter confirming your jury service. Send this as part of your claim for expenses once you have completed jury service.

4.22 Moving House

Leave required in connection with an employee moving home will be set against the employee's annual leave entitlement or the employee can apply for unpaid leave of absence by putting their request in writing to the Principal at least four weeks before the leave date.

4.23 Weddings

Leave for weddings, including an employee's own marriage, must be set against annual leave entitlement or the employee can apply for unpaid leave of absence by putting their request in writing to the Principal at least four weeks before the leave date.

4.24 Religious and Cultural Observance

There are some employees who have particular needs for time off in relation to religious and cultural observance. This may be on a daily or weekly basis for a small number of staff, but more often, will involve requests for time off for a particular religious or cultural occasion.

The College requires responsible Heads of Section to reasonably accommodate the religious needs of employees within the employees existing leave provisions. Employees are not entitled to additional leave to accommodate time off for religious and cultural observance.

Absences from work for the purpose of observance of religious or cultural holidays which do not coincide with designated official College or statutory holidays shall be off set against accrued leave, approved absence without pay, accrued time off in lieu, or accommodated by an alternate work schedule approved in advance by the appropriate member of senior management.

All employees who have needs for time off for religious or cultural observance may request the following:

- flexibility in the arrangement of rotas and working hours generally; and
- annual leave, flexi-days, TOIL or unpaid leave.

Employees may not be discriminated against because of their religious or cultural belief or practice, or absence of religious belief. Heads of Section must make a reasonable attempt to accommodate individual religious or cultural practices. Refusal to accommodate an employee's request for time off from work to observe religious or cultural occasions is justified only when College's operations would suffer unduly because of the employee's absence.

4.25 Career Breaks/Sabbatical Leave

4.25.1 Career Breaks

The College may, at its discretion and subject to certain conditions being satisfied, allow employees to take a career break and return to work afterwards at the same grade as the position they left. The conditions are as follows:

- A career break may be any period of time between four weeks and one year;
- Career breaks will be available to employees with a minimum of two year's continuous service with the College;
- The career break scheme will be open to all employees with the requisite service, including part-time employees;

- During the period of any career break, the employee will be required to keep in touch with the College at regular intervals;
- The employee will not be permitted to take up any other paid employment during a career break;
- Career breaks will be unpaid;
- The granting of a career break and the length of the break will be entirely at the Principal's discretion and will depend on the needs of the College at the time in question.

A career break can be used for a variety of purposes, for example:

- time off on account of childcare or other family responsibilities;
- time off to allow an employee to pursue a personal interest or undertake a personal project;
- overseas travel, for example for the purpose of visiting family; or
- any other purpose agreed with the College.

Employees who are granted an unpaid career break should be aware that their continuity of employment will be broken by the career break and that (after they return to work) this will have an effect on any statutory rights and contractual benefits that are linked to length of service.

4.25.2 Sabbatical Leave

The College encourages and supports the development and training of staff to meet both its and the employees current and future needs. It is the aim of the College to provide and support sabbatical opportunities in line with its strategic and operational objectives.

Sabbatical leave provides a facility where an employee can undergo specialist training/further education or seek work experience that enhances their skill/knowledge base.

All employees with at least two years' service with the College can apply for sabbatical leave.

Sabbatical leave aims to:

- provide staff with opportunities for personal development to maximise their effectiveness and meet the College's requirements, in line with it strategic and operational objective;
- help effective employee development enhancing experience, improving technical expertise and/or gaining an understanding of the College and its objectives in order to build confidence and develop competence;
- assist in the management of change, and support developments in either the College's structure or in service provision;
- provide staff with the chance to develop new skills and increase their potential by experiencing alternative career opportunities;
- help staff and managers to identify transferrable skills and competencies in the light of redeployment or redundancy situations.

4.26 Time Off in Lieu

On occasions staff will be needed to work outside recognised working hours. However, the College also acknowledges its duty to protect the health and safety of its staff by ensuring that they do not work excessive hours, and that any additional hours are agreed in advance and monitored appropriately. It is a line managers' responsibility to oversee their staffs' workload so that the work is done within the normal working week.

TOIL is time off which staff are allowed to take in lieu of overtime pay, for hours worked beyond the normal working day. TOIL should be taken as soon as practicably possible after it has been accrued. Up to a maximum 7 hours in one month may be accrued. If this is not possible it must be taken within 2 months of accrual.

TOIL accrued and not redeemed as outlined will be considered lost and no monetary compensation will be offered. TOIL not taken within 2 months of accrual will be lost, unless under exceptional circumstances and in agreement with the line manager. An appropriate timescale will be agreed by the line manager.

4.27 Citizenship Volunteering

Requests for time off to carry out voluntary work with or without pay may be authorised at the discretion of the Principal. All requests must be put in writing to the Principal allowing sufficient time to enable full consideration of the request prior to the date the leave is required.

4.28 Other Special Leave

Special leave with or without pay may be authorised at the discretion of the Principal. All requests must be put in writing to the Principal allowing sufficient time to enable full consideration of the request prior to the date the leave is required.

5 Implementation

In order to implement this policy, the College will ensure that:

- the policy is communicated to all employees, through induction training, management training, team briefings, displayed on notice boards, contained in the staff handbook, accessible through the College Intranet, referred to in the College Newsletter on a regular basis and made known to job applicants;
- managers will monitor and report on the impact of the Policy and associated Procedures on their team and the service their team deliver through their Self Evaluation Report;
- managers and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities through appropriate and regular training;
- consultation will take place with management, staff, recognised Trades Unions on the implementation of this Policy and any amendments to the supporting procedures and working practice; and
- reasonable resources are made available to fulfil the aims of this Policy.

6 Monitoring of Policy

The College will monitor and report on the use of this Policy and associated Procedures in terms of applications received and those approved.

The content, effectiveness and operation of the Family Friendly and Flexible Working Policy and associated Procedures will be reviewed, at least, on an annual basis at the end of each academic session by the Equal Opportunities Committee and Human Resources Committee. The Policy and associated procedures will be updated in partnership with management, Trades Unions and staff. Account will also be taken of any developments in legislation and case law.

The College's Mainstreaming Report shall report on employee use of the Family Friendly and Flexible Working Policy and associated Procedures to the College's Joint Consultative Committee, Human Resources Committee and the Board of Management.

The abuse of this Policy and associated procedures by any members of staff obtaining leave under false pretences will be considered serious and could result in the matter being considered under the College's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

7 Supporting Policies and Procedures

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
- Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Commendations and Complaints Procedure
- Menopause Policy