

Annual Leave Policy

1. Introduction

An individual's total annual leave entitlement includes the contractual holiday entitlement, Bank and Public Holidays, and University closure days.

Members of staff must arrange dates of holiday periods in consultation with the appropriate Line manager as notified by Head of Unit or Sub-Unit (or nominee).

2. Entitlements

The annual leave year runs from 1 August to 31 July.

In addition to 59.5 hours (8 days) pro-rata paid Bank or Public Holidays¹ and 22.5 hours (3 days) pro-rata University closure days over the Christmas period, internal staff are entitled to contractual leave as follows:

244.5 hours (33 days) pro-rata: Academic, Academic-Related and Research Staff.

222 hours (30 days) (plus 22.5 hours (3 days) pro-rata* after 5 years continuous service): Support Staff.

*The 22.5 hours (3 days) pro-rata long service entitlement for support staff are included in the leave year in which the anniversary falls and each year thereafter.

Where a Bank or Public Holiday falls on a weekend, the next working day is considered a closure day in lieu of the Bank or Public Holiday.

Leave taken in addition to normal Bank or Public Holidays for purposes of religious observances (e.g. Ramadan, Diwali, the Jewish New Year etc.) should be allowed by Heads of Unit but taken as part of the contractual holiday entitlement.

Other reasonable accommodation for religious observance could include:

- Adjusting working hours/days.
- Allowing staff to work part of their lunch break in exchange for early departure (paying attention to Working Time Regulations).
- Allowing time-off to be made up.
- Allowing the swapping of shifts.

Employers are not obliged to give time off for religious observance where the time is not made up. Some religious or belief festivals are aligned with the lunar phases and therefore dates change from year to year. The dates for some festivals do not become clear until quite close to the actual day.

¹ The dates of Bank or Public Holidays may differ between the four countries of the United Kingdom due to local variations.

3. Starters and leavers

A new member of staff joining part way through a leave year is entitled to a proportion of the full year's leave entitlement based on the date of joining.

A member of staff leaving the University part way through a leave year is entitled to a proportion of the full year's leave entitlement based on the date of leaving, plus any accumulated leave from previous years (subject to the relevant restrictions on accumulating leave), less any leave already taken during that leave year.

With the agreement of the line manager as notified by the Head of Unit, outstanding leave may be taken during the notice period, or be paid as part of the final salary settlement, or a combination of both. Payment for untaken leave is only made to members of staff whose employment is terminating.

4. Part-time/part year staff

Part-time/part year staff are entitled to a proportionate amount of leave (including Bank Holiday and closure day leave) based on the number of days, weeks or hours worked.

Part-time staff should use their Bank Holiday and closure day leave entitlement (which includes pro-rata Bank Holiday entitlement) on Bank or Public Holidays or closure days which fall on their normal working days.

Please refer to the Annual Leave Guidance for the formula used in calculating annual leave for part-time staff.

5. Accumulating and anticipating annual leave

It is important that staff have a proper and regular rest from contractual working commitments. Line managers as notified by Heads of Unit/Sub-Unit should, wherever possible, encourage all staff members to take their annual leave in the year in which it accrues, and not to accumulate entitlements from one year to the next.

However, a member of staff is entitled to carry forward 74 hours (10 days based on a 5 day working week) of their current entitlement into the next leave year for personal reasons. This will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time staff.

Exceptionally, in addition to this, where a member of staff is unable to take some of their holiday in a particular leave year due to requests made of them by the University, they are entitled to carry such outstanding holiday into the following leave year by agreement with the Head of Unit or Sub-Unit, subject to the reasonableness of the request and the impact on operational requirements. While standard OU carry over policy does apply, managers are being asked to listen and act reasonably, taking individual circumstances into account.

Staff are reminded that where annual leave has been booked, they are expected to take their annual leave as usual in accordance with the Annual Leave Policy. The purpose of leave is to have a rest from work, so having this break is really important.

A member of staff may also be permitted to anticipate up to 74 hours (10 days) pro-rata of their entitlement from the next leave year, provided that they agree to return to their job for at least the minimum period necessary to earn the full entitlement to the leave anticipated. If a member of staff leaves before the minimum period is worked, a deduction of the proportionate amount from their final salary will be made.

6. Booking part-day

Any amount of leave is permissible to a minimum of 1 hour, and in 15 minute increments thereafter, subject to line manager approval, and only in circumstances where operational requirements permit.

7. Sickness during annual leave

Support staff:

Where sickness absence occurs during an agreed period of contractual holiday entitlement, compensatory holiday will be granted.

Academic, academic-related and research staff:

Where sickness absence occurs during an agreed period of contractual holiday entitlement, or where holiday entitlement has been taken consecutively with University closure days, the University will consider sympathetically granting compensatory holiday (including days in lieu of the closure days) if the illness has been serious and over a substantial period of the holiday.

For all categories of staff:

- Compensatory annual leave may only be granted on production of a self-certification form, and a medical certificate in the case of illness of 8 calendar days or more.
- Any compensatory days annual leave granted, must be taken at a time convenient to the University and the individual.
- Where sickness absence occurs during Bank or Public Holidays or University closure days only, compensatory annual leave will not be granted.

8. Useful references

Annual Leave Guidance
Christmas Closure Policy
Guide to Managing Sickness Absence
Unpaid Leave Policy
Guidance on Part-Year Appointments