

Interim Associate Lecturer Secondment Policy

1. Introduction

It is in the interests of the University and staff to provide career development opportunities through secondments to alternative duties and jobs. Heads of Units and line managers are encouraged to support secondments where operationally feasible.

This interim secondment policy will be effective up until a review of the institutional secondment policy has taken place, planned for 2022/2023.

2. Conditions of secondment

Secondments (both internal and external) can be for a maximum of two years.

Where a temporary job of two years or less is established, this will be open to all University staff on a secondment basis. A secondment is not appropriate where the initial requirement is for longer than two years except in the cases below:

- Staff who are undertaking secondments for only part of their time
- Academic staff appointed to University Office such as Pro- Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean, or Associate Dean
- Academic staff who are seconded to other academic appointments, subject to the agreement of the respective Heads of Unit, are able to have an overall maximum secondment of three years
- Associate Lecturer staff seconded to an academic role, subject to the agreement of the respective Heads of Unit, are able to have an overall maximum secondment of three years.

3. Associate Lecturer secondments effective from October 2021

Any Associate Lecturer can apply for a secondment to a temporary University appointment. This will be for a maximum of three years for secondment to an academic role and a maximum of two years to another staff category. The Associate Lecturer's substantive role will be backfilled on a temporary basis.

Where an Associate Lecturer has a small FTE, they may choose to have either a fixed term contract in addition to their Associate Lecturer role or a secondment from the Associate Lecturer role. For example, if the Associate Lecturer has an FTE of 0.4FTE and the other role is 0.5FTE, they could either:

- request a secondment from their Associate Lecturer role. They would leave their Associate Lecturer work for the duration of the secondment and their total FTE would be 0.5FTE.

Or:

- continue with their Associate Lecturer role and carry out the other role as a fixed term contract. This would mean their total FTE for the duration of the fixed term contract would be 0.9FTE. When the fixed term contract role ends, their FTE would go back to 0.4FTE.

If a member of staff has an Associate Lecturer role and another role in the University, for example an Academic or Academic Related role and wishes a secondment from one or both roles, the following will apply:

- Secondments can be to either full time or part time roles.
- The total number of hours worked should not exceed 1.0FTE. The only exception to this, is where the staff member is retaining the Associate Lecturer role. In this case, the total FTE for the Associate Lecturer role and the other role must not exceed 1.3FTE. The FTE for the non-Associate Lecturer role cannot be more than 1.0FTE.
- For example, if an Associate Lecturer works 0.5FTE in their AL role and is successful in being appointed to a fixed term Staff Tutor role at 1.0FTE, they could continue with some of their AL work if they wished to do so. As the total FTE would be 1.5FTE, they would be seconded out of 0.2FTE so that their total FTE is 1.3FTE. When the Staff Tutor role ends, their Associate Lecturer FTE will return to 0.5FTE.
- If a secondment becomes permanent, and the Associate Lecturer wishes to remain in the seconded role, they would have to permanently give up any Associate Lecturer work which would mean their total FTE for both roles exceeded 1.3FTE.
- If a secondment continues for longer than the two or three years applicable or becomes permanent, the principles set out in Section 5 below regarding the continuation of work must be followed.

4. Secondments to fixed term Associate Lecturer roles

On the rare occasion that a fixed term Associate Lecturer role becomes available, a member of staff wishing to carry out a secondment to this role may have to reduce their hours in their substantive role in order to carry out the Associate Lecturer work and ensure their FTE is not higher than 1.3FTE. For example, if a full-time member of academic staff wants to take on a seconded Associate Lecturer role at 0.5FTE, they would have to be seconded out of 0.2FTE of their academic role, reducing it to 0.8FTE.

5. Internal secondments – continuation of work

Where there is a requirement for a role which was initially covered by a secondment to become permanent, the incumbent may be confirmed as permanent in the role providing the following criteria are met:

- The initial secondment was advertised at least internally to the University and the incumbent took part in a competitive selection process for the role;
- The incumbent's performance in the role has been satisfactory and they are not subject to any formal performance measures;
- There are no other fixed term contract staff undertaking the same or similar roles approaching expiry of their contract (i.e. who have received their notice letter) within that Unit. Where there are other potential candidates on fixed-term contracts within the Unit, there may be a need for a further interview or other

competitive process between those at risk of redundancy This should be made clear to the secondee from the outset.

Where the requirement for a role which was initially covered by secondment extends beyond two years (or three years for academic or Associate Lecturer staff seconded to other academic appointments) but is still time-limited, the receiving Unit will be expected to make a permanent commitment, subject to the above criteria being met. This means that the individual will become a permanent member of the receiving Unit, who will find alternative duties for them within that Unit at the same grade and terms and conditions after the initial time-limited work has ended.

Where the original term of the secondment was for less than two years and the work is continuing for a further period (up to the two year maximum), the receiving Unit must discuss the need for continuation of the secondment in advance with the individual and their substantive Unit to gain agreement.

Where the requirement for a role which was initially covered by secondment is continuing, it is in the interests of all parties that action is taken in good time prior to the end of the secondment.

6 External secondments

Staff on full-time external secondments will be expected to return to their substantive Unit after the end of two years. No further extension of external leave of absence would be considered except that an exemption may be made for academic staff seconded to other academic institutions subject to the agreement of the Head of Unit of the seconding Unit, and to an overall maximum of three years. There are tax implications for relocation/disturbance expenses for secondments lasting more than two years (see References section below).

Members of staff from other organisations may fill jobs advertised by The Open University on a secondment basis. If a secondment is being considered, all contact on contractual matters with the other institution must be directed through the People Hub.

7. Supporting secondments

Heads of Units and line managers are expected to encourage and support secondments, but where a secondment would cause severe operational difficulties the Head of Unit may refuse support. The final decision will be made by the 'Executive Dean or their nominee of the seconding Unit.

8. Additional expenses

Should staff on secondments incur any additional expenses as a result of the secondment, please refer to the 'Relocation Expenses Policy' for clarification of reimbursable expenses.

9. Equality, diversity and inclusion

Policies are inclusive of all Open University staff, regardless of age, care experience, caring status or dependency, civil status, disability, family status, gender, gender expression, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, marriage and civil partnership, membership of the Traveller community, political opinion, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or

trades union membership status.

10. Useful references

Secondment Guidance

Expenses Claim Form

Relocation Expenses Policy Expenses Policy –

External Appointments

Relocation Expenses Claim Form

Relocation Expenses Claim Form – External Appointments from

Overseas Relocation Expenses Claim Form - External Appointments

within the UK Procedure for Converting Fixed Term Appointments to

Permanent