

Leaving the University Policy

1. Introduction

Termination is defined as the cessation of the employment of an individual.

It should be noted that managers are required to follow relevant Open University procedures before moving to terminate an employee for all reasons other than an employee resignation.

2. Employee to employer responsibility

Letter of resignation

All employees who wish to resign are required to give the appropriate period of notice in writing to their line manager.

If an employee wishes to give a shorter period of notice than contractually required to do, they must seek consent from their line manager.

Periods of resignation

The periods of notice required from each category of staff are specified in full in the Terms and Conditions of Service and are normally as follows:

Academic and Research Staff	6 months'
Associate Lecturer	3 months'
Academic-Related Staff (up to grade 10)	3 months'
Grade 10 Academic-Related Staff	6 months'
Additional Duties Contract	1 month
Limited Engagement Worker	1 month
Support Staff (excluding hourly paid)	1 month (one week notice during probationary period)

3. Employer to employee responsibility

Notice of termination of employment by the University to the employee will be as follows unless specified otherwise:

Academic and Research Staff	This is not dependant on length of service	6 months*
Associate Lecturer	This is not dependant on length of service	3 months
Academic-Related Staff (other than grade 10)	This is not dependant on length of service	3 months*
Grade 10 Academic-Related Staff	This is not dependant on length of service	6 months*
Additional Duty Contract	This is not dependant on length of service	1 month
Limited Engagement Worker	This is not dependant on length of service	1 month
Support Staff (excluding hourly paid)	During probation up to 4 years continuous service up to 8 years continuous service up to 12 years continuous service	1 week 1 calendar month 2 calendar months 3 calendar months

*See Duration and Termination of Appointment clause in Terms and Conditions of Service.

4. Effective date of termination

The effective date of termination is determined by one of the following:

- the date that the period of notice expires
- the date that the payment in lieu of notice is made
- the date dismissal takes effect where the employee is dismissed without notice
- the date the term expires without being renewed where the employee is on a fixed-term contract
- the date the individual is dismissed at the end of the final hearing where an internal appeal has taken place and the individual has been suspended waiting the outcome of the appeal.

How to calculate the termination date

Example: Where notice is given on the 14th of the month, the notice period is applied as per the Terms and Conditions of Service. Therefore, the effective date of termination would be the 13th of the appropriate month based on the notice periods above.

Exceptions

Notice periods given prior to a weekend, public holiday or closure day will result in the termination date ending on Sunday, providing this period ends within the same month.

Staff working a part week, for example Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, whose notice expires on a Wednesday, would have their termination date revised to the following Sunday.

Associate Lecturer staff do not have specific working patterns; therefore, the notice period expires 3 months after receipt of the written notification.

5. Prior to termination

Conduct an exit interview

Normally, line managers will conduct the exit interview for staff who are resigning. However, a member of staff may request that the Head of Unit (or nominee) conducts the interview.

The purpose of the exit interview is to:

- establish the reason for the resignation (this can assist with identifying any areas of concerns or areas of improvement within the unit)
- determine whether any outstanding leave is to be taken prior to the termination date or to be paid as part of the final salary settlement
- agree the last day of working
- confirm the last day of employment
- offer expression of regret, good wishes, etc. (as appropriate).

All staff who resign will be contacted by the University asking them to complete online exit questionnaires. Completion is optional. Questionnaires are anonymous and allow the collection of University-wide data on exit.

Staff leaving event

Heads of Units may, at their discretion, pay for light refreshments for staff leaving events, provided sufficient funds are available and the charges are made to the appropriate cost centre which is funding the event. Heads of Unit need to ensure consistency in the application to avoid any claims of discrimination or favouritism.

University funds should NOT be used to purchase or contribute towards any collection or form of gift (including flowers, food, alcohol or a cheque/cash gift). Leaving gifts should be fully funded through colleagues' voluntary contributions.

6. Withdrawal of resignation

The withdrawal of a resignation prior to the termination date may be permitted, subject to the agreement of the Head of Unit and the job still being vacant. The employee should submit a request in writing to the Head of Unit for approval. If the Head of Unit has approved the withdrawal and the termination date has not been passed, the employee's service will be considered as continuous.

7. Termination procedure and documentation

Guidance on termination is available on the People Services Intranet or via Ask People Services.

8. 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.

9. Useful references

Retirement Policy
Fixed Term Contract Policy
Redundancy Policy
Annual Leave Policy