

Flexible Staff Resourcing/Temporary Staff Assignments

Policy

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1 Background

The University's vision as a leading international technological University requires modern, flexible staff resourcing policies. This policy framework is designed to assist in ensuring that the University has the appropriate blend of internal knowledge and skills and external expertise to support service delivery, and to contribute to the University's internationalisation agenda. It is also designed to provide opportunities for staff, in the context of Accountability and Development Review meetings, to discuss ways of developing new skills and experiences outside their current area of expertise, thus enhancing employee engagement.

In introducing this framework, it is recognised that where Departments/Schools have already experienced considerable staff movement and there is a need for a period of stability, opportunities under this framework may be more limited. Accordingly a minimum period of service of two years in post will normally be required prior to consideration of a job move. There may also be areas within the University where job movement would not be practical for job skill, confidentiality or health and safety reasons.

2 Scope

This policy statement covers the following scenarios:

2.1 Shadowing

Where an employee gains a deeper understanding of a different role or the workings of another Department/School and builds partnership working relationships by observing the incumbent post holder for short period of time, typically half a day or a day a week for two or three weeks. Normally identified as a development activity following the annual Accountability and Development Review meeting.

2.2 Internal Job Swaps

To apply on a temporary or permanent basis where two employees exchange jobs to develop new skills, improve motivation and enhance organisational contribution. Normally identified as a development activity following the annual Accountability and Development Review meeting.

2.3 Internal Secondments

To apply where opportunities are created that last normally no longer than 12 months with the substantive post being held open for return at the end of the secondment period. Typically includes maternity/sickness absence cover, short-term project roles. Secondments may be considered on a full-time or part time basis.

2.4 Internal Project Resourcing

To apply where opportunities for University staff are created as part of long-term projects expected to last a minimum of 12 months and typically up to 3 years and where the knowledge and skills required can be found internally. Where roles are established to work on critical strategic projects requiring a commitment of more than 12 months, an appropriate retention bonus will be considered, typically between 1 and 3 months' salary, payable on successful completion of the individual's role within the project. Where roles are fixed term linked to project delivery timeframes, individuals will be placed, wherever possible, in a comparable role at the end of the project (i.e. status and terms and conditions will be in line with the original role as a minimum) with formal consultation starting a minimum of 3 months before the project end date. An appropriate trial period lasting no longer than 3 months may apply to the new role.

2.5 External Development Secondment Within or Outside the UK

Focused on the personal development of the secondee and often linked to an opportunity to contribute to a University or national strategic priority or to enhance industry collaboration. Normally identified as a development activity following the annual Accountability and Development Review meeting. This may also be used during restructuring/rightsizing so that an individual may gain additional knowledge, skills and abilities to lessen the impact of redundancy and open up the possibility of a more permanent job move.

2.6 Secondment into the University from Within or Outside the UK

Where specialist skills and knowledge or industry experience is required which is not available within the University or where there are staff shortages or limited organisational capacity. UKVI rules will apply to potential secondments out with the European Economic Area.

3 Key Benefits for the University and the Individual

- To build and retain the right mix of skills and experience for the future.
- To provide career development and promotion opportunities and retain staff through short and/or long term project roles or secondments, often working within multi-disciplinary teams and/or alongside partner organisations and external consultants.
- To provide opportunities to contribute to broader University strategies and projects and to develop future leaders.
- To increase the external visibility and profile of the University.
- To enable the identification and development of internal talent across the University to meet anticipated future organisational requirements.
- To expose staff to different experiences, new ways of working, different cultures and leadership styles thus enriching personal and professional development and contributing to the University's internationalisation agenda.
- To add a fresh stimulation to work thereby reducing the effects of career plateauing and enhancing employee engagement, motivation, learning and development.
- To avoid or mitigate redundancy issues arising through organisational restructuring/rightsizing.

4 Arrangements

4.1 Secondment Opportunities

Internal secondment opportunities will normally be graded, advertised and appointed to in accordance with the University's recruitment policy and procedures and will be potentially available to all staff who have the relevant skills and experience identified as necessary for the opportunity. Ultimately however it will be for the current Head of Department/School of the potential secondee to determine, having due regard to issues of cost, impact on service delivery, ability to reorganise work among existing staff and/or ability to recruit backfill staff, whether there is a business case to offer a secondment. Expectations must therefore be managed and no guarantees of secondments can be made.

In the event that it is not feasible to agree an internal secondment, the member of staff may still apply for the post on a fixed term basis. However it will not be a secondment with the right to return to a post of a similar level. In this circumstance, the University will attempt to secure a suitable post at the end of the fixed term contract period at a similar grade to the post formerly occupied by the individual, in line with its Redeployment Policy.

Where a secondment or similar placement is agreed, the University will put in place the necessary arrangements to provide support and recognition to staff and will make every effort to ensure staff are not disadvantaged. A formal secondment agreement will be drawn up to cover the necessary details, which will normally include the following:

- Duration of the secondment and agreement with regard to return to substantive role, if applicable.
- Terms and conditions, including any changes to salary. Assuming the secondment is of grade equivalency, staff can expect to receive a salary and conditions of employment which are no less favourable than those that apply within their substantive post.
- Line Management arrangements during the secondment.
- Details of the seconded role including key performance/development outcomes and agreement on how these will be realised.
- Arrangements for effective handover and progress review meetings.

Staff who are seconded externally will remain employees of the University of Strathclyde and will receive their salary, including any contractual allowances, subject to normal tax, NI and pension deductions from the University. The University will normally invoice the host organisation on an agreed basis for reimbursement of all costs incurred, plus VAT if applicable. If excess travelling and/or subsistence expenses are agreed these will normally be paid directly to the secondee by the host organisation. Secondees may be expected to sign a confidentiality agreement with the receiving organisation, which protects the misuse of information that may be considered to be of a sensitive or confidential nature.

Where agreement is reached to second an individual from another organisation into the University or where a University employee is seconded externally the attached template inward/outward secondment agreement and schedule should normally be completed. It is important that finance are consulted at an early stage where a secondment into or out of the University is contemplated so that issues relating to the applicability of VAT can be appropriately considered and factored into the secondment agreement where relevant. The contact address for this purpose is vat.enquiries@strath.ac.uk

If there is a justifiable reason for an internal secondment to end before the agreed end date, e.g. early completion of a project, a minimum of one month's notice will be given to the secondee. Any proposed extension to the secondment period will be mutually agreed by the relevant parties, including the secondee's line manager in their substantive post. Where it is proposed that a seconded post becomes an ongoing post discussion should take place with Human Resources as to the appropriate way forward in the context of the University's recruitment policy and procedures.

Should the secondee wish to terminate their employment with the University at any time during the secondment period, the notice period stipulated within their contract of employment with the University will apply.

4.2 Shadowing and internal job swaps

Staff are encouraged to discuss the possibilities for shadowing with their line manager in the first instance during Accountability and Development Review meetings. Where it is agreed that job shadowing would be of benefit, discussion will take place with the relevant manager and member of staff within the Department/School. Shadowing will require the agreement of both members of staff and their respective line managers and will require to take into account potential issues of staff/student confidentiality.

It is envisaged that job swaps will occur in an intra-organisational manner within the University. The job swap, where discussed and agreed by the two members of staff and their Heads of Department/School, could take place on a temporary or permanent basis and will normally involve an agreed trial period to assess suitability. Effective handover arrangements should also be put in place to ensure an efficient transition.

5 Obligations

The University's recognises the need to ensure all job moves are carefully planned and that any individual or organisational impact issues are appropriately considered and managed. In this context job moves will be managed as a key component of the University's staff learning and development strategy.

During both internal and external secondments and internal job swaps, the secondee's original line manager will ensure that the secondee is kept up to date with any significant developments in the Department/School or changes in University policy. This will ensure that the secondee can make a smooth return to their original post once the secondment is complete.

In the event there are fundamental changes in the original Department/School during the secondment, e.g. a restructuring, the secondee will be included in the consultation process in the same way as other staff in the affected Department/School. On return to the original area, the original manager will have an Accountability and Development Review meeting with the member of staff to discuss their development during the secondment and to agree objectives and any further development needs for the coming year.

At the end of any job move a debrief will take place with the individual to discuss what was learned and to ensure that outcomes achieved are aligned to organisational and individual requirements.