

Guidelines on academic staff holiday entitlements and arrangements

These guidelines are produced as an interpretation of the contract of employment to assist both managers and individual members of staff and have been agreed with the [University and College Union \(UCU\)](#).

The guidelines set a framework within which schools and services should establish detailed local arrangements to give effect to the principles set out below. Heads of College and Service should publish the local scheme of implementation and it should be available to all staff and managers.

Annual leave

Principle 1: There is a leave entitlement

The holiday entitlement is 35 days in addition to the 8 statutory Bank Holidays and between 4 and 5.5 extra statutory/Christmas closure days when the University is also closed.

The only extra statutory day to fall outside of the Christmas period is the day after Easter Monday. When employment commences or terminates during the holiday year holiday entitlement is accrued on a pro-rata basis for each complete month of service.

Principle 2: Leave should be taken within the leave year

The holiday year runs from January to December, unused holiday entitlement may not be carried forward into the next holiday year except by agreement with the manager. The normal expectation is that there will be no carry over of holiday entitlement.

Principle 3: The time of leave is constrained

The taking of holidays is subject to the agreement of the manager. In those circumstances where this requires the replacement of direct teaching or other time-constrained activities, individuals requesting leave are expected to provide possible and realistic solutions as to how this might be done. Leave cannot be granted until appropriate plans have been put into place.

Holidays may be taken at any time of year as long as the individual meets their professional responsibilities and has the agreement of their manager. Given the nature of the academic year the taking of holiday during teaching periods can present particular problems and

therefore would need careful forward planning and liaison with the immediate line manager and other relevant colleagues.

Managers will also need to balance the number of requests for leave at any one time of the leave year. Thus it may not always be possible to grant leave either during the times requested or for the amount requested.

The University runs on a year round basis and there are tasks and roles to be performed on the same basis. As professional academics, staff have a collective responsibility to ensure that the reasonable expectation of the University is met at all times and in a manner that is reasonably fair and equitable in relation to their colleagues.

For individuals to meet this expectation they need to have an understanding of the tasks and roles that need to be covered, in particular during the popular holiday periods, and there needs to be some oversight of holiday booking.

Principle 4: Leave arrangements need to be managed

As early as possible after 1 September each year, the College/Service will set out the expectation for cover during the coming calendar year and staff will be invited to indicate the periods that they wish to take as holiday. This will usually involve some form of leave logging system.

No later than the end of November the pattern of holiday requests will be reviewed to identify any problems of cover and managers will then work with individuals and teams as necessary to resolve the problems. The intention will be to resolve matters to the satisfaction of all parties wherever possible.

Principle 5: There are contractual obligations on the University

When seeking to ensure that appropriate cover is provided, managers will bear in mind that staff have a right to expect to take their full holiday entitlement within the year.

The contract states that an individual will be granted up to 6 weeks of their normal holiday entitlement in one continuous period during the summer holiday period and, subject to the organisational requirements of the institution, such a request will not be unreasonably refused.

However, it needs to be recognised that organisational requirements may be such that it might not be possible to meet all requests for this length of continuous leave. However, it is highly unlikely that all staff would wish to adopt this leave pattern.

Further, the University is committed, as far as possible, to continuing with its practice of minimising those organisational requirements that require academic staff to be present at work during the summer period, mid-July to early September.

In agreeing to any request for such a block of leave, managers will need to consider the fair distribution of such authorisation between competing requests both within a leave year and over a number of years.

When considering leave requests, managers must also give special regard to staff with family responsibilities to help them, where possible, to balance work and caring roles. Once again, the need for a fair distribution of such support must be kept in mind when requests are considered.

Principle 6: Leave must be set in the context of the complete workload

It can be difficult to manage holiday schedules effectively without having some insight into the scholarly activity being undertaken by an individual and their other duties.

In considering holiday requests managers must consider these in relation to the planned and authorised scholarly activity of the individual and other responsibilities to ensure there is the opportunity to accommodate both work and holiday and that it is clear when each is to be undertaken within the year.

Please refer to UWE Bristol's [Scholarly Activity guidelines](#).