FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP LEAVE (FFR&S) GUIDANCE

Contents

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FFR&S LEAVE

GUIDANCE

1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF GUIDANCE

This guidance should be read alongside the Family-Friendly Research & Scholarship Leave Policy (the "Policy"). It is intended to be used to support:

- Academic Staff and Teaching staff who undertake scholarship duties taking Family-Friendly Research & Scholarship Leave ("FFR&S Leave"); and
- departments who have staff taking Leave and who have to backfill their teaching duties.

2 REQUEST TO TAKE FFR&S LEAVE

To better support departments with arranging backfilling teaching, staff are encouraged to apply for FFR&S Leave as soon as they have decided that they intend to take it.

Staff taking FFR&S Leave must have a clear plan of research or scholarship tasks which are scheduled to be undertaken during the period of leave. Staff taking FFR&S Leave should notify their line manager/Head of Department and the Human Resources team using the FFR&S Leave Request Form. The request must take place at least three months in advance of the FFR&S Leave commencing. A request for FFR&S Leave can be made before taking or returning from a Relevant Family Leave.

Completed forms should be emailed to HR. Once received, HR will process and record the details of the request, to support monitoring.

3 GUIDANCE ON TEACHING BACKFILL ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Responsibility for engaging teaching backfill member of staff

As per the Policy, the overall responsibility and final decision on a teaching backfill appointment rests with the Head of Department for the relevant area.

Departments are encouraged to take early action to engage with:

- Their HR contact about the new appointment, to ensure that the practicalities of recruiting the teaching backfill member of staff are in place;
- The member of staff, where appropriate, to discuss the identity of potentially suitable teaching backfill candidates; and
- Their Faculty Management Accountant, to ensure that the funds are in place to make the teaching backfill appointment at the relevant time.

Staff wishing to take FFR&S Leave are:

- Encouraged to assist with the search for a suitable teaching backfill candidate, wherever possible; and
- Put forward names of potentially suitable candidates, wherever practicable.

3.2 Duration of teaching backfill

Staff can expect to have their teaching duties backfilled for the duration of their FFR&S Leave, which will three calendar months.

In many circumstances, the member of staff will take three months' FFR&S Leave upon return to work from Relevant Family Leave meaning that a teaching backfill member of staff would be employed for that period.

Where the staff member returns to work during a period in which they do not have any scheduled teaching duties, the FFR&S Leave will be deferred until teaching begins. Furthermore, a member of staff may defer their FFR&S Leave from their return from Relevant Family Leave, provided that it is taken within either (i) one calendar year; or (ii) two complete semesters (whichever is greater) from the date upon which the member of staff returns from the Relevant Family Leave. To support this, teaching responsibilities will be distributed among members of the existing team.

The Head of Department or their nominee should ensure that, wherever possible, the teaching backfill is in place by the commencement of the member of staff's FFR&S Leave.

3.3 Scope of teaching backfill duties

The intention of FFR&S Leave is that the member of staff receives genuine relief from their normal duties so as to enhance their return from a period of Relevant Family Leave. As a result, Departments should not schedule teaching duties to coincide with their return from FFR&S Leave. Rather, the teaching backfill should be engaged to cover all teaching responsibilities (including marking and preparation) of the member of staff for the duration of their FFR&S Leave.

The teaching backfill member of staff can be asked to take on additional duties, but this should not impact upon their cover for the member of staff's teaching schedule.

3.4 Accessing central fund to meet partial cost of teaching backfill

The cost of the teaching backfill is met by a budget which can be accessed by requesting funding from the relevant Faculty Management Accountant.

4 GUIDANCE ON CONTENT OF PART 1 OF THE FFR&S LEAVE STATEMENT

Part 1 of the FFR&S Leave Statement ("Part 1 of the Statement") is intended to assist the member of staff to structure their return to work after Relevant Family Leave. The focus of Part 1 of the Statement will be on the activity the member of staff intends to undertake during the FFR&S Leave, in order to re-engage with their research (and knowledge exchange and citizenship).

Staff are asked to include 2-5 SMART objectives (i.e., Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound), that can be worked towards within the 3-month FFR&S Leave period. It should be noted that the main purpose of the objective setting is to focus the activity, rather than create a target that must be met.

Some non-exhaustive examples of objectives for Part 1 of the Statement are contained below:

- To meet with XYZ to discuss prospective research funding application / existing research status / etc., by X date;
- To re-establish networks with internal and external research groups, by X number of face-to-face/Skype meetings, by X date;
- To prepare a detailed plan to increase research income by £X, by X date;
- To prepare a detailed plan to develop research in X area, by X date;
- To attend X conference / Y training / Z workshop, by X date;
- To commence work on X research funding application.

Staff are encouraged to set objectives that are relevant to their area of work and which take into account the fact that they are coming back from a period of Relevant Family leave. The objectives should be focused to ensure that they facilitate high quality research output and successful grant applications in the longer term.

Once Part 1 of the Statement has been submitted to the line manager / Head of Department, a meeting should take place to discuss the content. The line manager / Head of Department is free to make suggestions on the content of Part 1 of the Statement and ways in which the member of staff could use their FFR&S Leave, whilst always striving to maintain a supportive environment which recognises the new demands of the member of staff's family life.

5 GUIDANCE ON CONTENT OF PART 2 OF THE FFR&S STATEMENT

Part 2 of the FFR&S Leave Statement ("Part 2 of the Statement") should summarise the following matters:

- Activities undertaken during the FFR&S Leave

  In most cases, it is expected that the member of staff will be able to list the objectives set out in Part 1 of their Statement. Where the focus of activity has changed and/or additional activity has taken place, this should also be listed in this section.

- Extent to which the activities matched Part 1 of the Statement
  Where the activities have not matched Part 1 of the Statement, the member of staff should include a short explanation of why the focus of their FFR&S Leave changed.

- Benefit to both the member of staff and department
  A short summary of the benefit to the member of staff of each activity should be included. It will often be the case that the benefit to the member of staff has a follow-on benefit for the department (e.g., re-establishing networks with research groups will make it more likely that the department can gain benefits from high-quality research output at an earlier stage).

Once Part 2 of the Statement has been submitted to the line manager / Head of Department, a meeting should take place to discuss the content and any further support the member of staff needs post-FFR&S Leave. The member of staff is also encouraged to use this meeting to discuss ways in which they can build on the activity undertaken during their FFR&S Leave.

6 GENERAL GUIDANCE ON FFR&S LEAVE

For general queries regarding Family-Friendly Research Leave, please speak to your usual contact in the Human Resources team or email the Human Resources Team on humanresources@strath.ac.uk.