

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
POLICY ON TIME OFF FOR PUBLIC DUTY

1 ELECTION FOR PARLIAMENT OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1.1 Parliamentary Membership

The University Court has agreed that up to three weeks' paid leave for the period of an election campaign be granted to staff who are adopted as candidates for a Parliamentary seat. A member of staff who intends to become a candidate for a parliamentary seat should notify the Secretary to the University through his Head of School/Administrative Section of his adoption and in due course give an indication of the period to be taken as paid leave of absence.

No decision has been made on the position when a member of staff is elected to Parliament, but it has been agreed that the question of unpaid leave for a member of staff be considered in each case on its merits - due regard being given to the interests of the individual concerned, his School/Administrative Section and his replacement.

1.2 Local Government Councillorship

A member of staff who stands as a candidate for election as a Local Government (District/Regional) Councillor is not entitled to any special paid leave of absence during election periods but should advise the Secretary to the University, through his Head of School/Administrative Section, at a very early date in his adoption as a candidate since the role of candidate may necessitate time off or redistribution of workload. Unpaid leave or leave against holiday entitlement may be taken by arrangement with the Head of School/Administrative Section who should notify the Secretary to the University of any special pay arrangements that are required.

The time-off to which a member of staff is entitled in the event of election to a Local Authority is set out under Time-off for Voluntary Public Service.

1.3 Agent in Local Government Elections

No provision is made for paid leave of absence for a member of staff wishing to act as an agent in a Local Government election, and accordingly any time-off required for such activities must be taken as unpaid leave of absence or against holiday entitlement after consultation with the Head of School/Administrative Section who should advise the Secretary to the University of any arrangements affecting the payment of salary.

2 JURY DUTY

Members of staff summoned for jury service should inform their Head of School/ Administrative Section of their summons as soon as possible. When called for jury service staff should make a claim for loss of earnings by completing the Certificate of Loss of Earnings. Please refer to the HR Handbook for further information. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/leave-and-absence-183.php#jury-duty>.

Any queries on this matter should be referred to the Human Resources Office.

3 SERVICE IN VOLUNTEER RESERVE FORCES

A volunteer member of the Volunteer Reserve Forces who attends an annual camp (or exercise) for a period of not less than a week is granted for that purpose additional leave equal to the period for which the employee actually attends the training camp not exceeding a period of 15 days.

In addition to leave, full pay for one week of attendance at a camp or exercise is granted - this pay being in addition to pay received by the member of staff from HM Forces. The remaining period can be taken as unpaid leave of absence or against holiday entitlement.

4 TIME OFF FOR VOLUNTARY PUBLIC SERVICE

The University wishes to encourage all categories of staff to participate in public duties as defined below provided that the amount of time-off is reasonable in all the circumstances, having regard in particular to the effect which such absences may have on the smooth running of the School/Administrative Section and on the workload of colleagues in that School/Administrative Section. In order to assist individual members of staff and Heads of School/Administrative Section, the University Court has attempted to define the amount of time-off for this purpose which may be regarded as "reasonable".

Employees should obtain the agreement of the University before undertaking voluntary public service. For such employees, the University shall grant, subject to the need to ensure that the service of the School/Administrative Section is properly maintained, special leave with pay not exceeding 18 days in any period of 12 months for the purpose of carrying out those public duties defined in Section 59 of the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978, - namely:

- a Justice of the Peace;
- a member of a local authority;
- a member of any statutory tribunal;
- a member of a health board;
- a member of a school or college council or the governing body of a central institution or a college of education;
- a member of the Scottish Environment Protection agency
- a member of the prison visiting committees (Scotland)

The number of days quoted in paragraph above is exclusive to any absences which may be compensated, where appropriate within conditions of appointment, by work outside normal hours or during holiday periods, by prior arrangement with the relevant Head of School/Administrative Section.

Any special leave authorised for public duties may be taken in days or half-days, as required, with the prior agreement of the employee's Head of School/Administrative Section or nominee. Such agreement will not be unreasonably withheld. An employee who is appointed Chairman, or equivalent, of a public body and thereby attracts additional duties may be granted up to an additional 6 days' paid leave for carrying out such additional duties, including magisterial duties.

Employees who are granted paid special leave in accordance with paragraphs above are not required to refund to the University any fees or attendance allowances received, although the University Court reserves the right to reconsider this question. No travelling or subsistence allowances shall be paid by the University. If in exceptional circumstances the total of 18 days (or for a Chairman 18 + 6 days) should prove insufficient for the duties concerned, consideration will be given to the granting of a further period of leave of absence, which may be unpaid.