

## Secondment Policy/ Procedure

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## 1. Policy

- 1.1 St Mary's University is committed to developing the skills, knowledge and experience of its employees and enhancing organisational flexibility.
- 1.2 Secondments are part of the University's approach to managing existing talent and succession planning, and can contribute to partnership working with other organisations and strengthen networks.
- 1.3 Secondments can offer a number of benefits for employees and the University. They can:
  - a. Enable employees to gain experience of a different part of the University or of another organisation, and to share their knowledge and learning from the secondment with colleagues
  - b. Strengthen relationships and develop external networks
  - c. Provide career development opportunities for employees, developing employees' skills and expertise
  - d. Improve workforce engagement, morale and motivation

## 2. Scope of the Procedure

- 2.1 A secondment can be described as the loan of an individual from one organisation, or one part of an organisation, to another, for a specific purpose and period of time, before returning to the substantive post.
- 2.2 There are three types of secondment which the University supports:
  - a. **Internal Secondment** - A University employee temporarily moves to another role in another Faculty / Directorate, or within the same department, for example to cover for a period of maternity leave
  - b. **External Secondment, Inward** - An employee from an external organisation (e.g. NHS or another University) temporarily carries out a role at the University, whilst maintaining their contract with their substantive employer
  - c. **External Secondment, Outward** - A University employee remains under contract to the University but carries out a temporary role based in another, external organisation
- 2.3 Secondments are offered for a fixed period but the member of staff is not employed on a fixed-term contract because the employee is expected to return to his or her substantive role at the end of the placement. The placement constitutes a temporary, mutually agreed variation to the contract of employment for a set period of time.
- 2.4 When an internal candidate applies for a fixed-term role, they can request that this be regarded as a secondment by their line manager. The University will seek to facilitate the granting of a reasonable request but any request must consider the need for the University to achieve its objectives efficiently.
- 2.5 Back fill roles for seconded individuals will be offered on a fixed-term basis to reflect the period of the secondment.

## 3. Secondment Terms

### 3.1 Qualifying period

Secondments are open to substantive University employees who have successfully completed their probation period and have usually been employed by the University for a minimum of 12 months.

### 3.2 Duration of Secondment

The duration of a secondment will vary but it is expected the duration will normally be up to 2 years. The length of the secondment should be specified at the outset and it can be filled on a part-time or a full-time basis.

An extension to a secondment should not exceed a total secondment period of two years and would need to be agreed with the original department (where the substantive role is) as they would need to consider the impact. If the original department do not agree to the extension then the individual should return to their substantive post on the date originally agreed.

Tenured academic secondments to senior academic posts (e.g. Head of School) will normally be for a duration of up to 5 years. By exception the role holder may be extended for a second term of up to 5 further years, subject to a competitive recruitment process.

### 3.3 Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions of the placement role will apply during the secondment. Continuous service will be maintained during the period of the secondment.

### 3.4 Pay

It is expected that internal secondments on the same grade will be at the same rate of pay / spine point.

Secondment to a higher graded post will result in a change in salary for the duration of the secondment. The salary offered should be at the minimum spine point for that grade unless the minimum spine point is lower than the employee's current salary, in which case they will be appointed at the first spine point above their current salary.

During the secondment, incremental progression will take place as normal, if the employee is eligible.

### 3.5 Pensions

The applicable pension scheme will be determined by the role. If pension arrangements differ between the substantive and placement role, options will be discussed with the employee, but it is the employee's responsibility to ensure they are aware of any implications for their pension.

### 3.6 Recruitment

A secondment may be advertised as part of an internal recruitment process, where the opportunity is limited to University employees as it is a career development opportunity.

Alternatively, secondments may be set up to meet the particular development needs of an individual without a recruitment process. However, this would need to be evidenced through the employee's appraisal and associated personal development plan.

Where a post is identified as an internal secondment opportunity and within existing headcount, it should be advertised locally within the relevant team via expressions of interest.

Normal contractual notice would be applied to secondment roles. A reduced notice period would require the agreement of all parties.

### 3.7 Right to Work Considerations

Individuals sponsored under the points-based system need to ensure the secondment does not contravene the terms of their visa.

Human Resources should be consulted at an early stage to seek advice if the sponsored individual's duties, remuneration or hours would change for the duration of the secondment, to ensure the implications of these changes are clear both for the sponsored individual and the University (e.g. legal reporting requirements).

### 3.8 End of the Secondment / Return to Substantive Post

Employees will return to their substantive post on their substantive terms and conditions, as if they had remained in post. This includes any terms that are linked to length of service such as an increase in annual leave entitlement or incremental progression.

However, if the substantive role is a fixed-term contract and the placement ends after the fixed-term contract expires, the employee will not be entitled to return to their substantive post.

If the substantive role is considered for redundancy or subject to substantial change, the employee will be involved in the normal consultation process and available redeployment opportunities should be explored. Restructures are conducted in accordance with the University's Redundancy and Redeployment Procedure.

### 3.9 Permanence

Where an internally seconded role becomes available on a permanent basis, the incumbent in the seconded role could be offered the role on a substantive basis if there was a full recruitment process at the start of the secondment and the grade of the role has not changed.

If a recruitment process was not undertaken, a full recruitment process will be required.

### 3.10 Ending a Secondment Early

If any party, including the secondee, wishes to terminate the secondment prior to the agreed end date, this should be discussed as soon as possible between all the parties and Human Resources.

If it is agreed that the secondment should be terminated earlier than the original end date, a revised end date should be agreed and communicated to relevant parties. This should be in line with the contractual notice period for secondee and appointed back-fill arrangements in the releasing Faculty or Department.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1 The employee is responsible for:

- Discussing the possible secondment with their existing line manager before applying

- Maintaining reasonable contact with their substantive line manager

#### 4.2 The substantive line manager has a responsibility to:

- Coordinate negotiations with the partners organisation and seek advice and agreement from HR, Legal and where appropriate Research Office on the possible secondment and secondment agreement
- Take part in meetings to discuss progress and issues as appropriate
- Keep the secondee informed of any developments in their team / department, and ensure they are consulted on any changes which affect the secondee's post
- Engage with the secondee when they return to their substantive post to discuss skills and learning gained during the secondment, and how these can be implemented in the duties of the substantive post
- Arrange the cover for the substantive post as required

#### 4.3 The host line manager is responsible for:

- Inducting the secondee to their new role and agree a work / development plan including any relevant training and support
- Normal line management duties – one to one meetings, authorising annual leave, monitoring sickness, evaluate and monitor performance
- Providing a debriefing at the end of secondment and supporting the secondee's return to their substantive post

#### 4.4 Human Resources are responsible for:

- Issuing relevant contractual documentation to employee and managers
- Ensuring the HR system is updated, including any salary amendments for the secondee

## 5. External Secondments

### 5.1 Introduction

External secondments should be supported by a formal legal secondment agreement provided by the releasing organisation, which sets out the key implications for the University, secondee and the partner organisation.

Documentation should include; clarification of the communication requirements of both organisations, supervision, pay and conditions, arrangements for performance and conduct management, and the return process from the secondment should be included.

If an external secondment agreement is adopted, the University will seek legal advice before the secondment agreement is signed.

The timing and method of reclaiming costs should be determined with the external organisation prior to the secondment being agreed.

### 5.2 External – Inwards

- Day-to-day management will normally be delegated to the University secondment manager

- To realise maximum benefit from an external secondment, the hosting line manager will need to complete significant preparation in advance to identify a role suitable for a secondee, onboard and be clear on expectations
- The relevant policies and procedures of the releasing organisation such as Grievance and Disciplinary procedures will continue to apply to the secondee. However, whilst working for the University, the secondee must have regard for the relevant policies and procedures of the University which will apply during the period of the secondment e.g. health and safety, dignity at work
- It is the responsibility of the secondment manager to make the secondee aware of the relevant policies and procedures
- Faculties / departments should note that the secondment fee will normally be subject to VAT, which will increase the costs of inward secondments

#### External - Outward

- The employee will retain the terms and conditions of their current contract and continuity of service. Any increments and pay awards due will be made as normal
- The University will normally continue to pay the employee for the duration of their secondment and will recharge the external organisation for any salary and incurred costs. Arrangements for recharge should build in the salary on costs and any increments/pay awards that will fall during the period of secondment
- Any additional pay or allowances associated with the role will be agreed between the parties
- It is important that any key issues are discussed and agreed in advance of the secondment. Areas for consideration may include whether there is a higher salary being paid, and how the performance review process will be managed
- Whilst on external outward secondment, day-to-day management will be delegated to the seconding organisation. The relevant policies and procedures of the St Mary's University, e.g. Grievance and Disciplinary procedures, will continue to apply to the secondee and will be managed by the substantive line manager, as appropriate
- Whilst on secondment, the secondee must have regard for the relevant policies and procedures of that organisation which will apply during the period of the secondment e.g. health and safety. In these circumstances it is the responsibility of the external organisation to make the secondee aware of the relevant policies and procedures
- The substantive line manager must seek advice from the relevant HR Business Partner and agree, having taken advice, the details of the secondment with the external organisation

#### Relevant Policy Headings

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