

## Purchase of Additional Annual Leave and Procedure

### Document Control

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This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with changes in employment law and equality and diversity legislation. In the event that this policy or procedure is not compliant, the relevant legislation shall prevail.

**Changes to this policy will be subject to consultation with the University's recognised Trade Unions before implementation**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Brunel University London is fully committed to protecting the health and well-being of staff. This scheme is intended to support all colleagues to achieve a good work-life balance and allows staff to boost their current annual leave entitlement by purchasing up to four weeks' extra leave.

## **2. SCOPE**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all University employees with the exception of casual and hourly paid temporary staff. Any arrangements agreed last for the current leave year only.

## **3. NUMBER OF DAYS' LEAVE**

- 3.1 Staff have the opportunity to make one request per annual leave year in blocks of either one, two, three or four weeks.

## **4. PAYING FOR THE ADDITIONAL LEAVE**

- 4.1 A deduction will be made from your salary equivalent to the number of hours for each week you choose to buy times by your hourly rate (35 hours for a full time employee, or the normal number of hours scheduled to work for employees who have part-time working patterns) inclusive of any contractual allowances you receive and is calculated at the rate of pay as of the date of the agreement.
- 4.2 You may choose to have this deduction made either in one instalment from your next monthly salary payment, or payment in monthly instalments until the end of your current leave year (up to a maximum of 12 instalments).
- 4.3 If you are a member of one of the University's pension schemes, you will be required to continue to pay pension contributions on your full normal salary, before any deduction is made for the extra leave. This ensures continuing service of your future pension benefits.

## **5. APPLICATION PROCESS**

- 5.1 Requests should be made in the first instance to your line manager for approval using the application form "Purchase of Additional Annual Leave".
- 5.2 Any agreement is only made with your line manager's approval. Your line manager may specify periods when the additional leave can/cannot be taken.

- 5.3 Ideally, you should make the request at the beginning of the leave year but a request can be considered at any time during the year. The purchase value, however, must be repaid by the end of your leave year.

## **6. RULES APPLIED**

- 6.1 A request can only be made for either one, two, three or four complete weeks. Singular days or part weeks are not allowable under this scheme.
- 6.2 Additional purchased annual leave will be incorporated into WAM for academic colleagues, and similarly taken into consideration for Professional Services staff, so that workloads reflect the reduction in available working hours. The purpose of this scheme is not to address existing workload difficulties; if staff have concerns about their workload demands they should discuss this with their manager or WAM allocator so that workload is managed fairly and transparently. It is recognised that some staff may apply for additional leave to assist with caring commitments or health circumstances. Requesting additional annual leave is a personal choice and such requests will be considered in line with the process outlined in this scheme. However, staff should not feel pressurised into purchasing additional annual leave and are encouraged to explore with their manager whether other flexible arrangements can be accommodated if this would be helpful.
- 6.3 The additional annual leave must be taken within the leave year and cannot be carried forward.
- 6.4 Once agreement has been made and the deduction(s) have commenced, you cannot reverse your decision.
- 6.5 Any balance of annual leave at the end of your leave year will be lost and reversals of the deduction from your salary will only be made in exceptional circumstances and only with the approval of the CFO, CSSSO or Provost in discussion with the Associate Director of HR - Reward & Wellbeing.
- 6.6 If you leave part way through your leave year, any balance of annual leave should be taken prior to your last day of service. However, if you have chosen a monthly repayment plan that has not finished, the balance will be taken from your final salary payment. In the event the final salary payment does not cover the amount owed, the University reserves the right to recover the balance outstanding by other reasonable means
- 6.7 Managers have a responsibility to consider requests in a reasonable and consistent manner.
- 6.8 The University reserves the right to refuse an employee's request. There is no right of appeal.

## **7. GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS**

7.1 Managers should consider requests fairly and consistently with reflection on the requirements of the role, ensuring key objectives will not be compromised by the additional leave. Managers should balance the needs of the employee, the team and the business and where the request cannot be accommodated the line manager must provide clear reasoning as to why the request cannot be approved.

## **8. FAQs**

Q. Can I buy single days?

A. No, complete weeks only can be purchased up to a maximum of four weeks

Q. What if I move posts & have a new line manager?

A. Your new line manager should honour your full annual leave balance.

Q. How do I apply?

A. Firstly, consult with your line manager, if they agree to your request, you will need to complete an "Application for the purchase of additional annual leave" form.

Q. Can I take all my additional leave in one block?

A. This is at the discretion of your line manager. If you are intending to use the additional leave to take an extended period of leave (i.e. more than 2 weeks), you are required to discuss your intentions with your line manager to ensure your request can be met.

Q. Can I choose the maximum of 4 extra weeks' leave & have the deduction made in one instalment?

A. Yes, but please be aware you will have to pay your normal pension contribution for the whole period, so you could end up with very little or no net pay. Careful consideration should therefore be made as regards the repayment period as it cannot be reversed once the deduction has been made.

Q. Can I choose the repayment period?

A. Yes, you can choose the number of months over which you pay for the additional leave as long as the leave is paid within the same leave year as the leave is taken.

Q. Can my request to purchase additional leave be rejected?

A. Yes. Once your request has been approved and the deductions have been taken, the extra days cannot be refunded or carried over, it is therefore vital that your line manager can accommodate your request.

Q. How will I know how much my purchased leave amounts to?

A. On receipt of an approved purchase of additional leave form, the reward team will notify you of your repayment arrangements

Q. What happens if my salary changes during a leave year?

A. The agreed purchase amount will remain unchanged.

Q Will I pay less Tax and National Insurance?

A. Yes, because the deduction will be made from your gross pay, you will pay less Tax and National Insurance.