

Applying for and Managing Annual Leave

Leave Entitlement

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Overview

These procedures describe how to:

- prepare for the leave year
- apply for annual leave
- approve annual leave
- refuse requests for annual leave
- postpone or cancel annual leave
- handle leave files when staff transfer or resign/retire

Audience

This policy applies to UK-appointed staff. It can provide good practice guidance for country/territory TACOS and/or English and Exams/ OAS staff contracts, subject to local law and conditions.

Responsibilities

- These procedures are carried out by managers and staff.
- Heads of departments and units must ensure that procedures exist within their workgroups for the authorisation and recording of annual leave.

Policy

All staff should be issued with a leave sheet which records all leave requested and taken. Staff should ensure they take their full entitlement or carry over no more than ten days to the following year.

Preparing for the Leave Year

The annual leave year is the calendar year, starting in January. At the beginning of each leave year, heads of department must:

- see that new leave forms are prepared for each member of their staff. These should show annual entitlement and any carry-over of leave or leave anticipated
- issue the new leave forms to staff
- delegate authority to approve leave if they do not wish to approve it themselves.

Heads of department may also find it helpful to draw up leave plans of proposed long leave at the start of each year to avoid operational difficulties.

Applying for Annual Leave

This procedure should be clearly explained to all staff when they join a department. Staff can apply for annual leave at any time up to the limit of their entitlement.

1. The member of staff must:
 - a. Complete the Annual Leave form in advance of their request
 - b. Use the Online Calculator to work out leave entitlement, if necessary, and show it to the delegated authority
 - c. Attach a printout of the leave calculation results to the form, if appropriate
 - d. Pass the form to the delegated authority for approval; in most cases this will be the line manager.
2. The manager or delegated authority considers the request according to operational constraints. You must:
 - be sympathetic to requests for leave for the observance of holy days. Refusal for such requests may be discriminatory on the grounds of religion

- only refuse a request for annual leave on grounds of over-riding operational necessity.
3. Is the request being refused? If no, go to step 4. If yes:
- the delegated authority must explain the reasons for any refusal to the individual concerned
 - any appeal against a refusal to grant annual leave should be made up the appropriate line management chain.
4. The manager or delegated authority must:
- a. Initial and date the form
 - b. Ensure that the details are recorded on a copy of the form and retain it within the department for 12 months after the end of the leave year to which they refer, in case of any queries.

Postponing or Cancelling Leave

As a manager, you may postpone or cancel leave that has been authorised, and recall a member of staff from leave:

1. Consult your Human Resources (HR) Services team first as the enforced cancellation or postponement of authorised leave may cause personal hardship.
2. Only invoke these measures in the most exceptional circumstances.

Note: Members of staff may be compensated for actual losses.

When Staff Transfer within Country or Leave the British Council

1. Is the member of staff transferring? If **no**, go to step 2. If **yes**, the manager must:
 - a. Send copies of the staff member's leave forms directly to the staff member's new department/office.
 - b. Take no further action.
2. When a member of staff resigns or retires, the manager must:
 - a. Draw up a leave statement using the information on the form (see *Resignation*).
 - b. Retain a copy of the form in the department for 12 months after the end of the leave year, in the usual way.