

## **Faculty of Media, Arts and Humanities Internally Funded Leave Guidelines**

### **Faculty Commitment to Internally Funded Leave**

The Faculty of Media, Arts and Humanities views periods of leave as essential to the achievement of excellence in research and scholarship.

### **The allocation of internally-funded leave is designed to:**

- Actively support the research strategies of Departments in line with the research strategies of the Faculty and of the University.
- Be responsive to the needs of faculty members at different career points.
- Support the creation of outputs of the highest quality.
- Support work leading to external grant funding.
- Support work that results in impact.
- Support excellence in scholarship.
- Embed MAH's principles of equality and transparency.

### **GUIDELINES**

1. Academic staff on permanent contracts are eligible for the provision of one term of funded leave after a 3-year cycle of teaching and administrative service, normally understood as six semesters of service followed by one semester of leave.
2. Periods of maternity/paternity leave and sick leave will contribute to this eligibility to ensure that MAH's leave policy reflects best EDI practice.
3. Periods of externally funded leave and unpaid leave do not contribute to this eligibility.
4. Flexible working arrangements will also be considered, but eligibility must reflect an equivalent period of service.
5. Faculty on fixed-term contracts will be deemed eligible for leave only if their contract extends beyond the usual leave cycle. Faculty moving from fixed term to permanent contracts should consider their start-date for leave purposes to be when their fixed term contract began.
6. Those undertaking Senior Faculty Leadership Roles (Heads of Subject and Associate Deans) are eligible to apply for one term's leave in the usual way. For appointments made *before August 2023* local agreements on automatic or additional periods of leave following a leadership role will be honoured. For appointments made since August 2023, there is no automatic entitlement to leave and no entitlement to additional periods of leave *unless* the term in the leadership role has resulted in 5 years or more with no internally-funded leave. (For information on other mitigations for leadership roles, please refer to the [Reward and Recognition for Leadership Roles policy.](#))
7. Holders of all administrative roles (including leadership roles) are normally expected

to complete their term in the role before taking leave. In exceptional cases, this may be varied if requested, as long as the variation meets both the Faculty's and the University's business needs.

8. Any given three-year period of service begins immediately after the faculty member's appointment start date, or immediately after a term of internally-funded leave. Faculty members are not able to 'bank' or carry forward terms of service from before their last period of leave to count towards eligibility for a future period of leave.
9. If a period of leave is disrupted by unanticipated events (for instance a period of severe illness) then the faculty member concerned should discuss with their Head of Subject a potential reduction in the following year's PAW to mitigate that disruption (subject to teaching commitments). Disrupted leave cannot normally be carried forward.
10. Up to a maximum of 10% of FTE staff on internally-funded leave in any given term can be supported across MAH. Staffing and financial resources in a given area may have a bearing on the quantity of leave awarded in that area.
11. In cases where more faculty members apply for leave than can be accommodated in a year in a given subject area, applications will be ranked based on the following criteria:
  - ❖ *Planned outcomes and their relevance to the Faculty's strategic priorities, notably REF and external grant income.*
  - ❖ *Relevant operational considerations for the subject group and Faculty.*
  - ❖ *Length of time since the applicant last had leave.*
  - ❖ *Career stage of the applicant, with priority given to early career academics.*
  - ❖ *Relevant EDI considerations (applicants with a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010, those returning from periods of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave).*
12. Final decisions on leave awards are made by the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee, chaired by the Associate Dean for Research and Innovation.
13. A 'return from leave' report will be required within a month of the leave period ending. Failure to supply a report, or a substantial and unexplained discrepancy between the work proposed and the work completed, will impact the success of subsequent applications for leave.

## **PROCESS**

1. Subject Heads should use the leave tracker to construct a rolling five-year plan for leave allocation in their area, bearing in mind the criteria listed above, including the Faculty's strategic priorities, and talk to the relevant faculty members about when leave might be possible within the context of this five-year plan. The Associate Dean for Research and Innovation is available to help.
2. Applicants should talk to their Subject Head before sending their application to [mah-research@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:mah-research@sussex.ac.uk) by the deadline, as circulated in the Faculty Update. Late applications without mitigating circumstances will not be considered. In the case of mitigating circumstances, these will need agreement from the Subject Head or

Associate Dean for Research and Innovation before an application can be considered.

3. Subject Heads will assess the applications according to the criteria and send a recommendation, providing reasons and a ranking where necessary, to the Associate Dean for Research and Innovation, within two weeks of the application deadline.
4. If the applicant wishes to share confidential information (e.g. relating to EDI criteria) in support of their leave application, it is recommended that they write or speak in confidence to their Subject Head so that this can be taken into account when considering leave applications.
5. The Faculty Research and Innovation Committee will review the Subject Head's recommendations and make a final decision on the leave allocation for the subject group in question.
6. Faculty members whose applications are approved by the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee will be formally contacted to confirm the period of leave awarded, with a copy sent to the Subject Head and Human Resources.
7. Faculty members whose applications are not approved will receive a short explanation and a recommendation for next steps, which will normally involve them applying for leave in the next round of applications.
8. Appeals against decisions are only possible in the case of alleged procedural irregularity and should be taken up through the University's central complaints process.

## **Appendix: Other information relating to internally funded leave**

[Assessment marking responsibilities while on leave](#)

[Reward and Recognition for Leadership Roles policy](#)

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