

University Funded (Paid) Research and/or Research Impact Leave for Academic Staff

Policy and Procedure

1 Introduction

The purpose of Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave is to contribute to the University's Research Strategy by supporting and enabling academic staff to further their research, leading to the highest quality of research outputs and/or significant impact in the wider community.

At St Andrews, research is and needs to be a continuous activity, built in to the academic life of all St Andrews academic staff and generating a culture of research-led teaching.

Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave is an important and valued aspect of St Andrews' support for academic research. It is not an automatic entitlement, but granted against an ambitious case for support and a record of high quality, and/or potentially high quality, research performance.

Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave that is specifically designed to lead to research impact is encouraged. One would expect the potential research impact from these activities to measure favourably against the best examples of the University REF 2014 impact case studies.

Permission to go on leave carries no automatic commitment by the University to contribute to, or meet, travel or other expenses.

Final approval for research leave will now be determined by the Vice-Principal (Research) once the Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave Application Form has been completed by the individual academic and the Head of School.

The right to apply for Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave does not imply that such leave will be granted. Schools are expected to develop and publicise local guidance and processes relating to considerations in deciding which research leave applications to put forward. We recognise that Schools may behave differently in terms of the frequency and timing of Leave and this should be clear and transparent within each School. The local guidance for each school should be reported to the Vice-Principal (Research).

The Vice-Principal (Research) may specify conditions on the granting of Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave, e.g. the completion of outputs from prior research and the planning and submission of research grants.

2 Eligibility to Apply

Eligibility to apply for Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave (Research Leave) is subject to the following considerations:

- 2.1 Full and part-time members of staff may apply for research leave after completing a certain number of semesters/years continuous service as a member of the academic staff of the University of St Andrews. The number of semesters/years will be specified in the School guidance referred to above, and will not exceed eight semesters/four years. In this context "service as a member of the academic staff" means service in the category of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader or Professor or in such other category as the Senate and Court on the recommendation of the Master may, from time to time, determine.
- 2.2 The period of Research Leave which can be granted is dependent on the length of continuous service. A maximum of 2 semesters' continuous, university-funded, research leave can be taken at any one time.
- 2.3 Calculation of how much research leave can be granted to a member of staff will be on a continuous basis, that is, periods of Research Leave will not be discounted in reckoning continuous service.
- 2.4 Periods of unpaid leave of absence will normally be discounted when calculating the period of research for which a member of staff is entitled to apply. The accrual of service for paid Research Leave purposes will be maintained during unpaid leave of absence for the purpose of holding a recognised fellowship (e.g. Leverhulme Research Fellowship).
- 2.5 Research Leave starts and ends on the dates published in the University Calendar for semesters unless agreement on any variation is reached with both the Head of School and the Vice-Principal (Research).
- 2.6 Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave is not normally granted to a member of staff known to be leaving the University's employment at the end of the period of leave and if a resignation is received after the granting of leave the Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave will normally be rescinded.

3 Procedure for Applications

- 3.1 Heads of School should invite applications for Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave from all staff who have completed the appropriate length of service.
- 3.2 Applicants should submit their applications for leave to their Heads of School, using the application form.
- 3.3 Applicants should specify the purpose for which the leave is sought, and the anticipated outputs and their timescales against which the effectiveness of the period of research leave can be evaluated. With the exception of individuals applying for the first time, applicants should show publications, research grants, new research programmes, impact or other achievements which have arisen from their last period of leave. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their case with collaborators, Director of Research, mentor and/or other colleagues, setting it within the School's research strategy.
- 3.4 The Head of School will be asked to comment on the application and confirm that the proposed teaching cover is adequate and within current teaching and learning guidelines.
- 3.5 The Head of School must also consider School research priorities when considering and prioritising leave requests.
- 3.6 In making any recommendation, the Head of School may well feel it is appropriate to share applications with the School's Research Committee and seek its advice.
- 3.7 Applications with the approval of the Head of School must be submitted to the Vice-Principal (Research), via the Research Policy Office (rpo@st-andrews.ac.uk) at least six months before the leave is due to begin.

- 3.8 Successful applicants and their respective Heads of School will be informed in writing by the Vice-Principal (Research). The Research Policy Office will aim to inform the Head of School of the decision within a week of the application being received.
- 3.9 If the member of staff is dissatisfied with the decision of the Vice Principal, they can make an appeal to the Master.
- 3.10 A copy of the approved form must be sent by the Vice-Principal (Research) to Human Resources.

4 After the Period of Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave

- 4.1 Staff who are granted leave are required to complete the report form after the period of leave. The form contains a reminder to indicate likely publications and/or other outcomes of the leave.
- 4.2 The completed report form should be returned to the Head of School within two months following the end of the period of leave. The Head of School will provide comments on the report in the specified box on the form. The report should then be signed off by the member of staff and the Head of School and a copy submitted to the Vice-Principal (Research), via the Research Policy Office (rpo@st-andrews.ac.uk).
- 4.3 Progression of research as a result of the leave will then be followed up in the annual Academic Review and Development meeting with the Head of School.
- 4.4 Should the Vice-Principal (Research) have any concerns with the report, this will be followed up with the Head of School and the individual member of staff.

5 Conditions of Research and/or Research Impact Paid Leave

- 5.1 As approval for a period of Research Leave will carry with it entitlement to full salary for the period of the leave, a member of staff on research leave will be subject to the University policy on external work in operation at the time.
- 5.2 A member of staff will be free to spend the period of Research Leave anywhere, but the University encourages staff to spend their research leave in other institutions or in library or field work out with St Andrews. The Head of School and Vice-Principal (Research) will have to be satisfied that the place(s) in which the period of research leave is/are to be spent is/are appropriate for the research programme outlined.
- 5.3 The member of staff will normally be relieved of all university duties, administrative, departmental, committee or otherwise during the period of Research Leave. In the case of Heads of School an Acting Head will normally be appointed.
- 5.4 A member of staff who suffers from a period of long-term ill health while on Research Leave should inform the University in the usual way. Where the absence is likely to affect their research, advice should be sought from the Head of School and the Vice-Principal (Research).
- 5.6 The following are rules governing the relationship between members of staff and their Schools during research leave:
 - i. Staff should not engage in any formal contact hours of teaching during their research leave;
 - ii. Staff may elect to engage in research student supervision during their Research Leave particularly where such supervision directly contributes to their own or their group's research output;

- iii. Staff should not be assigned any specific administrative functions during their Research Leave;
- iv. Licence to act outside these rules must be sought by the Vice-Principal (Research); and
- v. Heads of School should plan a colleague's leave so that it neither inherits previous workload nor is encumbered by immediate heavy responsibilities at its end.

Vice-Principal (Research)

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