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SPECIAL LEAVE AND COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

POLICY

The University recognises that there are special circumstances in which an individual may seek an absence from duty outside of their normal annual leave. Such special leave may be granted as paid or unpaid depending on the circumstances. Advice from HR should be sought for unusual cases.

EXAMPLES OF SPECIAL LEAVE

Special leave with pay shall be granted to an individual who is required to attend a court, tribunal or other official enquiry as a witness. This will not apply in cases of civil or personal litigation.

Compassionate leave

Compassionate leave with pay shall be granted on the death of a relative, dependant or individual for whom the individual has direct responsibility, or life-threatening illness of the above, which necessitates caring or compassionate responsibilities of the individual (including same sex couples, irrespective of gender identity).

Dependency leave

Where staff require unplanned, emergency time off for dependents the [Dependency Policy](#) shall apply.

Carers leave

If a member of staff who has caring responsibilities has exhausted their entitlement to dependency leave or has caring responsibilities otherwise not in the intended scope of the dependency policy, they may be entitled to take 'carers leave'.

Carers leave is a type of unpaid leave available from the first day of employment. To be eligible you must:

- Be an employee of Middlesex University or MU Services Ltd
- Have caring responsibilities for someone who has a physical or mental illness or injury that means they're expected to need care for more than 3 months AND/OR who has a disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) AND/OR who needs care because of their old age.

Be requesting leave to either organise or provide care for this person or persons.

Eligible colleagues can take up to one normal working week's worth of carers leave in any 12 month period; a 'normal working week' being five working days for a full time colleague and pro-rata for part time colleagues. Leave can be taken in a block or as separate days – the minimum period that can be requested is a half day (half of your normal working day). If you or your

manager are not sure of your entitlement because your working hours have changed or you work irregular hours then you can contact your HR Adviser for guidance.

If you wish to take carers leave then you should request this from your manager, You will need to provide whichever is the greater of three calendar days notice or notice that is at least twice the length of the period of carers leave being requested e.g. you would need to give six calendar days notice if requesting to take three days of carers leave. For emergency time off you should refer to the dependency policy in the first instance.

While the expectation is one of flexibility, there may be circumstances where your manager asks you to take carers leave at a different time to the one that you have requested. This may be the case where your absence on the requested date would cause serious disruption; in such a case your manager will inform you in writing that your requested dates cannot be agreed and the reasons for this. You will be informed before the start date of your requested leave and with as much notice as possible. If this happens you and your manager should agree an alternative date for you to take carers leave – this should be within a month of the date you originally requested.

Other circumstances

Examples of circumstances whereby unpaid special leave is likely to be granted includes dealing with domestic issues such as visits from service engineers, planned school days off which necessitate staying home to care for children etc. However, the employee is expected to exhaust annual leave first before requesting unpaid Special Leave.

PROCEDURE

The Dean or Director may grant paid leave of usually five working days and up to a maximum of ten working days. This should be recorded on PAFIS as “Personal Leave” with the sub-option of either “Compassionate” or “Other Paid Leave”. Requests for paid special leave in excess of ten working days shall only be exceptionally granted at the discretion of the relevant University Executive Team (UET) member.

Special leave in excess of ten working days but **without pay** may also be granted by the Director or Dean. As can other unpaid forms of special leave. This should be recorded on PAFIS as “Unpaid Leave” and the appropriate absence reason should be selected e.g. “Carers Leave”.

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