



Polasaí agus Nósanna Imeachta/Policies and Procedures

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| Code | QA101 |
| Title | Annual Leave Policy |
| Policy Owner | Director of Human Resources |
| Date | Effective 27/01/2015; Review : June 2023; Review: 01/02/2026 |
| Approved By | University Management Team |

1.0 Purpose and Scope

University of Galway is committed to ensuring that all employees maintain a healthy work-life balance. This policy aims to ensure that employees are taking regular breaks from work in the form of paid annual leave and are well informed of their annual leave entitlements as a statutory entitlement.

This policy specifies the arrangements in place regarding annual leave entitlements, approval, recording, and reporting.

This policy is underpinned by the [Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997](#) and is applicable to all employees of the University, whether they are full time, part time or temporary who are working under a contract of employment.

2.0 Description

Annual leave forms an integral part of each employee's contract of employment with the University. The University's leave year operates from the 1st of January to the 31st of December. All annual leave should, saving exceptional cases, be taken within the same leave year.

3.0 Annual Leave Entitlement

The times at which annual leave is granted to an employee shall be determined by the University having regard to work requirements and taking into account:

- (i) the need for the employee to reconcile work and any family responsibilities.
- (ii) the opportunities for rest and recreation available to the employee.

University employees' annual leave entitlement is detailed in Table 1 below. The maximum number of days annual leave available to university employees employed post 7th January 2014 is 30 days.

Annual leave entitlements are granted in accordance with the terms of the Organisation Working Time Act, 1997.

3.1 Carrying Annual Leave

In the interest of a healthy work-life balance, and to ensure adequate rest breaks throughout the year, it is recommended that annual leave should be taken regularly within the year that is accrued. Except in exceptional circumstances, any annual leave carried over should be limited to a maximum of 5 days.

In the instances of leave being carried over, this should be closely monitored by Line Managers to ensure that employees are availing of their annual leave entitlements and not accumulating substantial amounts of unused leave. Line manager approval is required to carry over any outstanding leave beyond the above 5-day limit. Such outstanding leave must be taken at the earliest opportunity but no later than six months from the start of the following leave year.



The University reserves the right to assign any outstanding annual leave to the employee, subject to one month's notice.

3.2 Statutory Leave and Annual Leave Entitlements

While an employee is on statutory leave they are treated as being in employment. They will continue to accrue annual leave, and no adjustment will be made to annual leave balances for the period that they are on statutory leave. Current statutory leaves include:

- Maternity leave or unpaid maternity leave
- Paternity leave
- Parental leave
- Parent's leave
- Adoptive leave or unpaid adoptive leave
- Carer's Leave (for the first 13 weeks)

3.3 Carrying over annual leave after Statutory Leave

When returning from long-term Statutory leave, such as maternity leave or adoptive leave, employees may need to carry over a large amount of annual leave from one year to the next. This leave should be taken prior to the employee's return to work as agreed with their line manager.

3.4 Non-Statutory leave Entitlements

Should an employee take non-statutory leave or unpaid special leave (example : Shorter Working Year Scheme Policy), this may lead to a pro rata reduction in an employee's annual leave entitlement. The onus is on the employee to check annual leave impact with the Human Resources (HR) Office in advance of application for such leave schemes.

3.5 Part-time Employees & Annual Leave Entitlements

Part-time employees will have their yearly entitlement on a pro-rata basis using the amount detailed in Table 1 according to their situation/grade.

Part-time employees will have their annual leave calculated as Annual Leave Hours and displayed on Core Time if applicable.

Teaching Support Staff (TSS) are entitled to 8% of hours worked as annual leave and is included in pay.

3.6 Change of Grade & Annual Leave Entitlement

Employees who change grade and annual leave entitlement mid-year shall have their entitlement adjusted accordingly. When transitioning from one position to another there are two options regarding annual leave balances to be agreed upon between the Line Managers.

1. All accrued annual leave is utilised prior to the transfer date.
2. The annual leave balance is added to the new position and becomes the responsibility of the new Line Manager.



3.7 Sick Leave & Annual Leave Entitlement

If an employee gets sick while on annual leave, they should follow the [Sick Leave Policy](#) and inform their Line Manager immediately providing the documentation and medical certification required. The days that the employee was sick will then be recorded as sick leave days and the annual leave for those days returned to their balance.

While an employee is on paid sick leave (full or half pay) they will continue to accrue annual leave as normal, and no adjustment will be made to annual leave balances for the period. While on unpaid sick leave or TRR the employee will accrue annual leave at the statutory rate of 20 days per annum.

3.8 Carrying over Annual Leave after Sick Leave

Annual leave accrued during sick leave must be availed of within 15 months of the end of the leave year to which it relates.

Employees who are unable to take their annual leave at the appropriate time due to certified illness and who terminate their employment/reach the end of contract/retire within 15 months of the end of the year in which annual leave is accrued, may be entitled to payment in lieu of this leave.

3.9 Taking Annual Leave

Annual leave is managed locally and should be requested from your line manager in advance. All requests for annual leave should be submitted via Core Portal or the Annual Leave Form.

[Forms / Foirmeacha](#)

3.10 Cancelling Annual Leave

If an employee needs to cancel annual leave, this should be done as soon as possible. The employee should consult with their Line Manager. If using Core Portal, the request should be cancelled by the employee to allow the leave to be returned to their balance. If using the Annual Leave Form, it should be marked that this leave is cancelled to ensure an accurate annual leave balance is recorded.

3.11 Public Holidays

In addition to annual leave, the following days shall be extra leave:

- New Year's Day (1st January)
- First Monday in February, or 1 February if the date falls on a Friday
- Saint Patrick's Day (17th March)
- Easter Monday
- First Monday in May
- First Monday in June
- First Monday in August
- Last Monday in October
- Christmas Day (25th December)
- St. Stephen's Day (26th December)



3.12 Public Holidays Entitlements

All employees of the University are automatically entitled to public holiday benefits. If the public holiday falls on a day when an employee is scheduled to work, then they are entitled to an equivalent day off. If the public holiday falls on a day when an employee is not scheduled to work, then they are entitled to one-fifth of their normal working week off in lieu.

Part-time/casual staff members who have worked at least 40 hours in the five weeks ending on the day before the public holiday will be entitled to benefit.

Any time off in lieu of a public holiday should be taken at the earliest opportunity as arranged with the Line Manager.

Payment will not be made in lieu of untaken public holidays or annual leave days except in the case of cessation of employment.

3.13 Employees who are required to work on Public Holidays

Employees required to work on public holidays will receive public holiday premium pay or shift allowance and will receive a day off in lieu of the Public Holiday and should be taken at the earliest opportunity as arranged with the Line Manager.

3.14 Public Holiday and Sick Leave

If an employee gets sick on a public holiday, they should follow the [Sick Leave Policy](#) and inform their Line Manager immediately providing the documentation and medical certification required by the Sick Leave Policy. The days that the employee was sick will then be recorded as sick leave days and the Public Holiday should be taken at a later date in agreement with the line manager.

3.15 Good Friday

The University closes on Good Friday, and employees scheduled to work will receive this day off as a concession day. Employees required to work on Good Friday will receive the day in lieu as a concession day and should be taken at the earliest opportunity as arranged with the Line Manager.

Employees not scheduled to work will not receive a day in lieu of Good Friday.

3.16 University Closure Dates

These are days on which the University will close for business between Christmas and New Year, and employees will be required to take leave from their total annual leave allowance for these days. The dates and amount of annual leave days required to take can be found on the HR website : [Christmas Closure Dates](#)



4.0 Outstanding Leave Notification for Employees Not Using CORE to record annual leave

Employees, predominantly Academic and Research employees, who are not using the CORE system for recording annual leave are required to notify their Line Manager of any outstanding leave balances at the end of the leave year (excluding the annual leave days required for the Christmas closure period outlined in Section 3.16).

In line with University policy:

- A maximum of 5 days of annual leave may be carried over into the next leave year unless exceptional circumstances apply (refer to Section 3.1).
- This carryover limit does not apply to leave deferred due to statutory leave (see Section 3.3) or certified sick leave (see Section 3.7), where separate arrangements are outlined.
- Where no notification is provided, it will be assumed that the full annual leave entitlement has been used. Retrospective claims for untaken leave, where leave balances were not reported in advance, will not normally be accepted, except where statutory or certified sick leave applies.

5.0 Leaving the University

In the event of retirement, resignation, contract expiry or any other relevant termination it is expected that the accrued annual leave is used before the employees' last day of employment.

Any outstanding annual leave which cannot be taken before the employees' last day of employment will be paid in lieu. The Line Manager is required to request this payment using the [Annual Leave & Public Holiday Pay Request Form](#).

Where the number of annual leave days exceeds 10 the line manager will be required to provide an explanation as to why the employee could not take the annual leave prior to leaving the University.

Any annual leave and/or public holidays taken by the employee but not accrued will either be arranged to be worked back by adjusting the employees' last day or deducted from their final pay.



6.0 Responsibilities

| Name | Responsibility |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Director of Human Resources | Policy Owner |
| Head of School/Unit | Approval of Application and Return of completed forms |
| Line Manager/ Head of School / Unit | Read & understand the annual leave policy, entitlements and line manager obligations. Engage with direct reports for planning annual leave to minimise disruption to business operations Ensure annual leave entitlements for direct reports are taken in line with annual leave policy Review and approve annual leave requests for direct reports. Provide HR with annual leave balance data (where Core HR not in use) Contact HRESS@universityofgalway.ie to arrange set up of annual leave balance on Core HR. |
| The Employee | Read & understand the annual leave policy, entitlements and employee obligations. Provide reasonable advance notice when requesting annual leave. Engage in planning discussions regarding leave & business requirements. Record Annual Leave |
| Human Resources Office | Support understanding of the annual leave policy for employees and managers. Provide system support for leave administration on Core Portal (where applicable) Support recording of annual leave balances at end of year (where Core Portal not in use) |



Table 1. Schedule of Annual Leave Allowances

| Annual Leave Allowances for New Staff Employed or Existing Staff Promoted after 7th January 2014 | | |
|---|--|---|
| Academic Staff | All Grades | 30 Days *Contractual or collectively agreed variances may apply. |
| Administration Staff | Administrative Assistant Grade 1 | 22 Days |
| | Administrative Assistant Grade 2 | 23 Days |
| | Administrative Assistant Grade 3 | 25 Days |
| | Administrative Assistant Grade 4 | 27 Days |
| | Administrative Assistant Grade 5 & above | 30 Days |
| Technical Staff | Trainee Technical Officer | 22 Days |
| | Technical Officer | 25 Days |
| | Senior Technical Officer | 29 Days |
| | Chief Technical Officer | 30 Days |
| Library Staff | Library Assistant | 22 Days |
| | Senior Library Assistant | 23 Days |
| | Assistant Librarian 2 | 27 Days |
| | Assistant Librarian 1 | 29 Days |
| | Sub Librarian & above | 30 Days |
| Research Staff | Research Assistant | 22 Days *Contractual or collectively agreed variances may apply. |
| | Postdoctoral Researcher | 27 Days *Contractual or collectively agreed variances may apply. |
| | Research Fellow/ Senior Research Fellow | 30 Days *Contractual or collectively agreed variances may apply. |
| Buildings Supervisor | Supervisor | 27 Days |
| General Operative | All Grades | 22 Days |
| Craft Workers | All Grades | 24 Days |

Leave will be granted in accordance with normal conditions and practice.



| Annual Leave Allowances for Staff Employed before 7th January 2014 | | |
|--|---|---------|
| Academic Staff | Leave will be granted in accordance with normal conditions and practice. | |
| Administration Staff | Administrative Assistant Grade 1 to Admin Officer (inclusive) | 29 Days |
| | Assistant Secretary & above | 32 Days |
| Technical Staff | Trainee Technical Officer | 27 Days |
| | Technical Officer / Senior Technical Officer/ Chief Technical Officer | 28 Days |
| | Pre 1971 Technical Officer / Senior Technical Officer | 32 Days |
| Library Staff | Library Assistant to Sub Librarian inclusive | 31 Days |
| | Librarian | 32 Days |
| | <i>Library staff employed in library grades who are required to work unsocial hours will continue to have an additional 8 days leave per year. Library staff should normally take their leave outside of term time.</i> | |
| Research Staff | All Grades | 29 Days |
| General Operative/Craft Workers | All Grades | 28 Days |

Note: Existing staff maintain their current leave entitlement if the leave entitlement for the grade to which they are promoted is lesser than their current entitlement, subject to a maximum entitlement of 30 days annual leave. Staff with a current annual leave entitlement of greater than 30 days will have their leave entitlement reduced to 30 days on promotion.

7.0. Related Documents

[QA105 Sick Leave Policy](#)

[QA321 Remuneration & Payroll Policy](#)