

Information about the policy

Note: 'Policy' includes any strategy, policy (proposed/amended/existing) or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten.

Name of the policy

Sabbatical Leave Policy and Procedures

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

NEW

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The purpose of the Sabbatical Leave Policy is to enable the University to successfully achieve its academic excellence priorities as set out in the Five & Fifty Strategic Plan:

- To enable academic/research staff to have dedicated time to focus on research and other academic excellence activities;
- To ensure that academic/research staff are supported in their research career development;
- To respond and contribute to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and to the enhancement of taught provision; and
- To enhance the University's academic reputation.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

No

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

Head of Research Performance, Research & Impact

Who owns and who implements the policy?

PVC Research & Impact

Part 2

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? (Please select one answer)

Yes

No

If yes, are they

financial? (Please specify _____)

legislative? (Please specify _____)

other? (Please specify Five & Fifty Strategic Plan)

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

Academic/Research Staff

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

Policy Name	Policy Owner
Research & Impact Strategy	PVC Research & Impact
Learning & Teaching Strategy	PVC Education

Part 2

Available evidence

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? (Please specify details for each of the Section 75 categories)

Note: evidence can come from many sources. Examples include the University's management information systems, internal or external research, surveys or consultation exercises. Anecdotal evidence such as feedback from service users may also be used.

The following evidence was considered in the development of this strategy:

- Ulster University Staff Equal Opportunities Data 2017, by Staff Category;
- Breakdown of staff data on sabbatical leave over the past 3 years (sourced from the faculties as sabbatical activity was managed locally until now);
- THE Article - <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/sabbaticals-no-longer-so-open-ended-or-available/2019616.article>
- Note that no source of national data on the availability and take-up of sabbaticals or study leave in UK universities has been identified.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	Faculty data indicates that over the last three years, only Academic staff took sabbatical leave. Of these, 55.55% were Catholic and 44.44% were Protestant. The University's Equal Opportunities data for 2017 shows that 55.59% of Academic staff were Catholic and 44.41% were Protestant.
Political opinion	N/A. The University does not collect information on political opinion.
Racial group	100% of academic staff who took sabbatical leave over the last 3 years were White. However, the Staff profile for 2017 indicates that 5.76% of Academic and 21.52% of Research staff were Black and Minority Ethnic (BME).
Age	The majority of Academic staff who took sabbatical leave over the last 3 years (39.39%) were in the 46-55 years age range. The University's Equal Opportunities data for 2017 shows that 38.49% of Academic and 14.56% of Research staff were aged 46-55. However, the greatest proportion of Research staff were aged 26-35 (47.47%) and the greatest proportion of Academic staff were aged 46-55 (38.49%).

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Marital status	The University's Equal Opportunities data were reviewed. Marital status was found not to impact on, or have any relevance to this policy.
Sexual orientation	The University's Equal Opportunities data were reviewed, but were found to be unreliable. Sexual orientation was found not to impact on, or have any relevance to this policy.
Men and women generally	The University's Equal Opportunities data for 2017 shows that 54.40% of Academic and 50% of Research staff were male. However, Faculty data indicates that over the last three years, 76.47% of those staff who took sabbatical leave were male.
Disability	The University's Equal Opportunities data for 2017 shows that 4.85% of Academic and 3.16% of Research staff were disabled. Faculty data indicates that over the last three years, 8.82% of those staff who took sabbatical leave were disabled.
Dependants	The University's Equal Opportunities data for 2017 shows that 53.27% of Academic and 26.58% of Research staff have dependants. Faculty data indicates that over the last three years, 55.88% of those staff who took sabbatical leave have dependants. Dependants was found not to impact on, or have any relevance to this policy.

Part 2

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? (Please specify details for each of the Section 75 categories)

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	None identified
Political opinion	None identified
Racial group	Greater proportions of BME staff are in Research roles. However, in the last three years, none of these staff availed of sabbatical leave. No BME Academic staff availed of sabbatical leave in the last three years.
Age	Anecdotally, it would appear that as staff progress within their academic career, they are more likely to take sabbatical leave.
Marital status	None identified
Sexual orientation	None identified
Men and women generally	<p>The majority of academic staff who took sabbatical leave over the last three years were male (76.47%). This is consistent with anecdotal evidence provided in the THE, which suggests that men are more likely to be awarded sabbaticals than women, and that those who have been included in a university's REF submission may be considered more favourably for time away, Although the author is careful to admit to a lack of "hard evidence".</p> <p>THE Article - https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/sabbaticals-no-longer-so-open-ended-or-available/2019616.article</p>
Disability	The proportion of Academic staff who are disabled and who took sabbatical leave over the last three years (8.82%) is significantly

Part 2

	higher than the proportion of disabled staff at the University (4.92%). This may suggest that disabled Academic staff have a greater need for sabbatical leave.
Dependants	None identified.

Consultation

Consultation with relevant groups, organisations or individuals about the policy can provide useful information about issues/opportunities which are specifically related to them (i.e. evidence to inform the policy). Please indicate whether you carried out (or intend to carry out¹) any consultation exercises prior to equality screening?

Focussed consultation was undertaken with Associate Deans (Research & Impact) and Executive Deans. Consultation was undertaken with HR.

The draft Sabbatical Policy was considered by SLT at its meeting on 9th April 2018 prior to adoption.

Consultation on the draft Sabbatical Policy was undertaken with the Trade Union.

¹ Please contact equality staff in the Policy Implementation Unit (PIU) if you intend to carry out a consultation exercise prior to equality screening your policy. The PIU will assist you to align some of the consultation questions with the screening pro-forma, so that you receive more meaningful responses.

Screening

Introduction

The answers to the following screening questions will assist the University in making a decision whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment on the policy. The following information is provided to help you to identify and comment on the level of likely impact of the policy in questions 1-4:

Select 'major' impact if:

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there are insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

Select 'minor' impact if:

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations;
- e) Differential impact observed and opportunities exist to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 2

Select 'none' if:

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented in Part 1, please complete the screening questions (Questions 1-4).

Screening questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (Please provide details)		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? (minor/major/none)
Religious belief	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Political opinion	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Racial group	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is likely to have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	Minor
Age	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is likely to have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	Minor
Marital status	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Sexual orientation	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Men and women generally	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is likely to have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	Minor
Disability	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is likely to have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	Minor
Dependants	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is unlikely to impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None

Part 2

2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75
Political opinion		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75
Racial group		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75
Age		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75
Marital status		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75
Sexual orientation		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75
Men and women generally		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75
Disability		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75
Dependants		The Policy applies to all academic/research staff and aims to provide equality of opportunity to all Section 75

Part 2

3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (Please provide details)		
Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact (minor/major/none)
Religious belief	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is unlikely to impact on good relations between people of different religious beliefs.	None
Political opinion	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is unlikely to impact on good relations between people of different political opinion.	None
Racial group	The Sabbatical Leave Policy is unlikely to impact on good relations between people of different racial groups.	None

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief		The Policy has no relevance to good relations.
Political opinion		The Policy has no relevance to good relations.
Racial group		The Policy has no relevance to good relations.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

<p>5 Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, please provide details of any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities? <i>(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people)</i>. Please include details of any data which you have used to determine/identify this impact</p>	
<p>Section 75 categories (please specify)</p>	<p>Details of policy impact and details of data which describes the policy impact</p>
<p>All</p>	<p>The Policy aims to provide equality of opportunity in accessing sabbatical leave to all Section 75 categories.</p>

Disability Duties

<p>6. Does the policy provide an opportunity to encourage disabled people to participate in University life?</p>	
<p>If Yes, provide details</p>	<p>If No, provide reasons</p>
<p>The Policy is intended to provide equality of opportunity in accessing sabbatical leave to all Section 75 categories. However, the policy could encourage more disabled Academic and Research staff to participate in research and other academic excellence activities.</p>	

Part 2

7. Does the policy provide an opportunity to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?	
If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
	The Policy is intended to provide equality of opportunity in accessing sabbatical leave to all Section 75 categories.

Part 3

Screening decision

Based on the evidence considered and outlined in Part 1 and the responses to the screening questions (Part 2), please indicate the screening decision for this policy:

Note: The University should take particular care not to screen out policies that have a procurement aspect if there is potential to promote equality of opportunity through the procurement of services.

Screen in the policy (subject the policy to an Equality Impact Assessment)
i.e. the likely impact is 'major' in respect of one, or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories

Screen out the policy without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted (no Equality Impact Assessment)
i.e. the likely impact is 'none' in respect of all of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories

Screen out the policy and **mitigate the impacts on equality by amending or changing the policy**, or by **developing an alternative policy or action** (no Equality Impact Assessment)
i.e. the likely impact is 'minor' in respect of one, or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories

Part 3

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment (i.e. 'screen out' the policy) and mitigate the impacts on equality by amending or changing the policy, or by developing an alternative policy or action, please provide reasons to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy:

The likely impact is 'minor' in respect of one, or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories. However, the policy is likely to have a positive impact on equality for these categories. In line with University policy, the Policy will be reviewed two years after it has been implemented, and if necessary, amended.

Timetabling and prioritising

If the policy has been '**screened in**' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to the University's functions	

Note: The Total Rating Score will be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the University in timetabling. Details of the University's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable will be included in its quarterly Screening Reports.


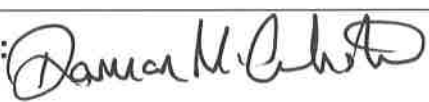
Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details:

Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by:  Professor Cathy Gormley-Heenan	PVC Research & Impact	04/06/2018
Approved by: 	Director of People and Culture	4/6/2018

Note: Following approval by the Senior Leadership Team/Senate, the policy owner must inform the University Secretary that the policy has been approved. Once the Council of the University has been informed of the policy (either directly or through an appropriate Committee), the policy owner can then promulgate the policy and develop appropriate training or awareness raising material in relation to the policy.

A copy of the screening pro-forma will be made available on the University's website and be made available on request.

Review

Note: Policies must be reviewed at least every two years, but sooner if changes in legislation or other variables require review.

This policy is due for review (in terms of its impact on equality of opportunity and good relations) by the policy owner on:
 (normally 2 years from date of signature)

05/06/2020

