

CAREER BREAK PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

The University recognises the importance of ensuring that our employees enjoy a healthy work life balance. We will support this by providing employees with the opportunity to take unpaid time off from their career to undertake caring responsibilities, to pursue voluntary work or to travel the world.

The procedure has been developed in conjunction with, and agreed by the recognised trade unions.

A flowchart of the procedure is available in Appendix 1.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this procedure are to:

- Outline the opportunities available to employees to take a career break;
- Inform employees of their rights and responsibilities prior to, during and after a career break;
- Provide managers with an understanding of their responsibilities to employees in relation to career breaks.

3. ENTITLEMENTS

A career break is a period of special leave without pay from work for a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 2 years. It must be used for one of the following reasons:

- To continue childcare following a period of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave;
- To care for family;
- To undertake voluntary work;
- To travel abroad.

Career breaks must not be used to take up alternative paid employment in a similar role with another employer. Individuals who are found to be in breach of this Procedure will be subject to the University's Disciplinary Procedure.

To be eligible to apply for a career break, an individual must have a minimum of 1 year's continuous service with the University.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Application Procedure

Individuals can apply for a career break by submitting Form CB1 to their line manager. This application must be made at least three months before the date that the individual wishes to start their career break. However, individuals who are considering taking a career break are encouraged to discuss this with their line manager at the earliest opportunity. Line managers are encouraged to discuss requests and seek support from People & OD throughout the application process.

When considering a career break application, line managers must balance the requirements of the individual with the operational needs of the department. Consideration should also be given to the resultant vacancy, and how this could be filled or covered. Normally the individual will be advised, in writing, if their application for a career break has been granted within 4 weeks.

4.2 Appeals Procedure

Individuals have the right to appeal their line manager's decision by submitting the grounds of their appeal in writing to the next level manager within 14 days.

4.3 Keeping in Touch during Career Break

The individual and the line manager should agree how often and by which method they will keep in touch. This is to ensure that the individual is kept up to date with developments within the School/Department and/or University.

4.4 Returning to Work

Employees must give a minimum of 3 months' notice of their return to work, if this date has not already been established.

Employees will be offered the right to return to the job they did before their career break, or if that is not practical, due to organisational changes within the University, to a role of a similar nature, requiring similar skills with similar reward and responsibility.

4.5 Recording a Career Break

Career breaks will be recorded in our employee database, iTrent, to ensure appropriate and accurate records are kept.

5. Terms and Conditions during Career Break

A career break is a period of special leave without pay. All pay and conditions will therefore be suspended during the career break and will resume when the individual returns to work. This includes the individual's continuity of employment.

Further information relating to periods of unpaid leave, and the implications this may have to an employee's pension entitlement, is available from People & OD or the relevant pension provider.

Any period of unpaid leave can have National Insurance implications and individuals should seek advice on this before deciding to take a career break. Individuals should contact the Department of Work and Pensions directly to understand the implications for their individual circumstances.

Official Use

Procedure Author – Employee Relations & Performance Adviser

Procedure Owner – Director of People and Organisational Development

Parent Policy Statement – People and Organisational Development

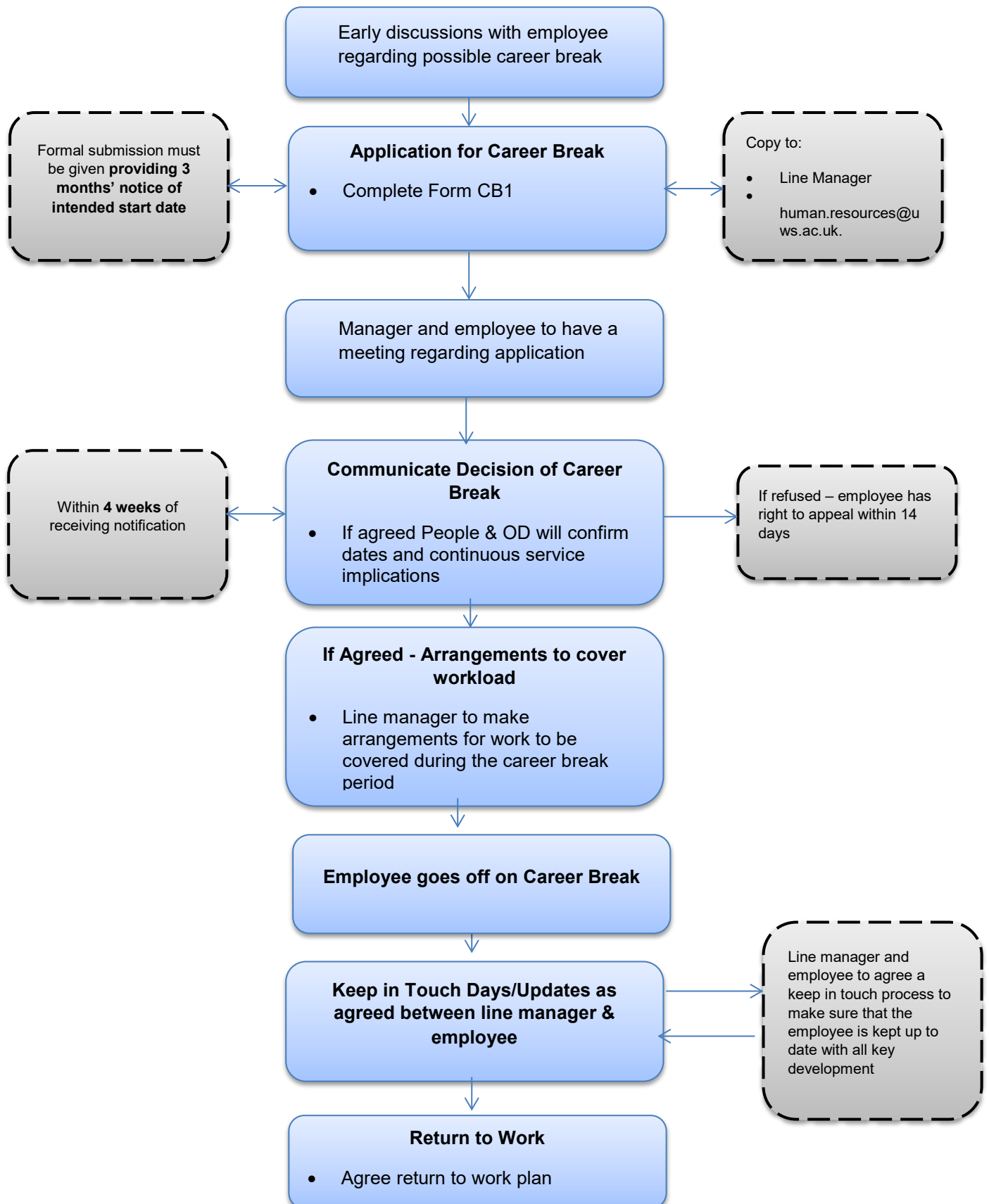
Public Access or Staff Only Access – Public

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Changes and Reason for Changes – Annual People & OD Procedure Update

Appendix 1

The procedure at a glance



**Appendix 2
CB1 Form**

**Form CB1
Application for Career Break**

Career Break Application		
Name:		
Job Title:		
Department:		
Date form submitted		
<i>You must have 1 year's continuous service to apply for a career break</i>		
Section A: Previous Applications		
Have you ever submitted a previous request for a Career Break? (If yes, please answer next question):	Yes	No
When did you submit your last request for Career Break?		
Section B: Details of Application		
When would you like to start your career break?		
When would you like your career break to end?		
Please detail the full reasons for your career break:		
Declaration:		
I fully understand and agree that if my Career Break is agreed, all my terms and conditions of employment will be suspended during the period of the career break and will start again on my return to work. I understand that this includes any service related pay progression, pension contribution, accrual of annual leave and continuous service.		
Signed:	Date:	
Notes		
Your line manager will invite you to attend a meeting to discuss your application.		

Please return this application form to your line manager and email a copy to human.resources@uws.ac.uk.