

HR & OD POLICIES

human resources and organisational development



Secondment Procedure

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1. INTRODUCTION

Secondments involve the temporary transfer of an employee from their substantive post to a different post. This takes place over a predetermined period, at the end of which the employee returns to their substantive post.

The Council recognises the value secondments can bring to the Council, its employees and the organisations involved by providing learning and career development opportunities for employees, creating a more flexible workforce and allowing Services and, where appropriate, other organisations to access individuals to undertake temporary work.

2. DEFINITIONS OF SECONDMENT

Internal Secondment

An arrangement made with the mutual consent of the manager and the employee whereby an employee is released to work in another area of the Council for a temporary period.

This is a valuable way of providing employee development opportunities, increasing the skill base within the Council and resourcing short-term projects.

External Secondment

An arrangement made with the mutual consent of the manager and employee whereby the Council allows an employee under agreed arrangements to work with another employer for a specific period of time. The employee will continue to be employed by the Council and will retain the main conditions of his/her employment excluding salary which will be based on the seconded role being undertaken.

External secondments are generally subject to VAT because HMRC see secondments as a taxable supply of staff. The exception to this rule is the secondment of a teaching professional to teach in another educational establishment or if the employee is jointly employed by both parties.

The burden of an additional charge (currently 20%) on top of employment costs can have an impact on an organisation's ability to support a secondment if they are not able to recover VAT, therefore the organisation concerned needs to be aware of this prior to the secondment decision being taken.

Inward Secondment

An arrangement whereby the Council acts as host to a Secondee from an external agency. The Secondee will continue to be employed by his/her substantive employer but will work under the direction and control of the Council for a specified period.

Reciprocal Secondment

An arrangement whereby the Council and an external organisation or two Services within the Council agree to the 'exchange' of two employees. The exchange will be for the purpose of developing the employees and bringing mutual benefit to the organisations/ Services involved.

Where a Council employee is seconded to another organisation or vice versa, salary, allowances, pension contributions, travel & subsistence and out-of-pocket expenses will generally continue to be paid by the substantive organisation, with the costs being recovered from the host organisation. Training given in the secondment post will generally be funded by the host organisation. It is essential that there is sufficient budget provision to meet the costs of any Secondment, e.g. Training, temporary staff cover etc.

Transfers of staff between equivalent posts within a team or section does not generally count as a secondment.

3. PROCEDURE

Stage 1 - Post Advertised

Any vacancy within the Council which may be a potential secondment opportunity must be advertised in line with the Recruitment and Selection Procedure. There may be instances where secondment opportunities can be restricted to certain categories of employee and/or service areas. This should be discussed with Human Resources.

Stage 2 - Employee Seeks Consent to Apply for Secondment

Employees applying for a temporary post, and seeking to be seconded to it, must discuss this with their line manager - they may not apply for the vacancy on a secondment basis without their manager's consent. If consent is not secured, the employee may apply and, if successful, resign from their substantive post and be appointed to the post on a temporary contract. Their employment status would change from permanent to temporary/fixed term.

Any secondment will be on the salary and terms and conditions for the seconded post. This may require a change to working arrangements – e.g. moving from term time working to working 52 weeks.

Important Information:

- Where an employee is seconded to a lower grade post they will move to the salary, terms and conditions for the seconded post.
- If a teacher applies for, and is seconded to, a local government post (LG) then they must transfer to LG terms and conditions they cannot remain on their current teacher salary and conditions.
- The length of secondment for temporary employees cannot exceed their current fixed term end date. This would be a separate fixed term contract.

Stage 3 – Preparing for Secondment

If following the recruitment process, an employee seeking secondment is successful, preparations will be made for them to be seconded. This may include agreeing a mutually acceptable starting date. For external secondments a Secondment Agreement is required.

This should be prepared in consultation with the host organisation and cover:

- The maximum duration of the Secondment. (It is envisaged that Secondments should not exceed two years. In the case of Teachers this should be restricted to 23 months due to implications of their Conditions of Service.)
- Duties of the Seconded
- Conditions of Service of the Seconded
- Arrangements and responsibilities for payment of the salary
- Provision of Information by the Host Organisation

- Arrangements for Formal Discipline/ Grievance proceedings
- Health & Safety Issues
- Indemnity.

These general principles of external secondment should be maintained in every case, however there may be an element of flexibility on the details to take account of particular circumstances, i.e. circumstances within the Host organisation. Any variations must be agreed with the Seconded, the Manager within the Service, Human Resources and the Host organisation.

An example of a [Secondment Agreement](#) is attached in the Resource Pack.

Any outstanding flexi-time balance should be used before the secondment commences. Also if there is a build up of annual leave then a percentage of this should also be used before the secondment

Stage 4 - Employee is Seconded

When an employee moves to their seconded post, an induction should be carried out. Any necessary training should be provided, and Personal Performance Plan (PPP)/ PDRS undertaken as appropriate.

Stage 5 – Maintaining Contact

There is a joint responsibility on the employee and their substantive manager to maintain regular contact. This will ensure the employee is kept informed about ongoing developments, changes and general information about the service area and/or team. This is especially important in the case of an external Secondment. The employee should also advise their substantive line manager of any particular circumstances, e.g. periods of sickness (more than a week) or disciplinary issues.

Stage 6 - End of Secondment

Secondments will usually continue for the time initially stated, but can be extended subject to agreement from all parties.

Secondment up to 2 years:

Employees will be guaranteed a return to their substantive post (subject to any organisational or service restructuring). Salary progression in the substantive post will have been maintained throughout the Secondment period. Prior to return to substantive post the substantive manager will arrange to discuss re-introduction to the post.

Secondment over 2 years:

Local Government employees - If the employee is successful in gaining a consecutive secondment, or an extension to the secondment, which takes the arrangement over 2 years, then they will no longer retain the right to return to their substantive post.

The Council will endeavour to secure employment for the employee on the same substantive grade or as close to the same terms and conditions as the employee was subject to on the commencement of the secondment.

In the event that a suitable post cannot be found by the intended return date then the employee will be placed on redeployment for a period of up to 12 weeks. If no suitable post is found during that period, the employee's contract will be terminated.

Where this situation applies, it will be the responsibility of the employee's line manager to commence arrangements for the return of an employee from a secondment at least 12 weeks prior to the employees return.

Teachers and other associated professionals - the secondment should be restricted to a period not exceeding 23 months due to the fact that Teachers Conditions of Service provides an entitlement to salary conservation following two consecutive years in a promoted post.

Teachers and other associated professionals who are granted a secondment of more than 2 years duration are entitled to be deployed by the Council but not necessarily to the post vacated prior to the secondment. While there is a need to be sensitive to the needs and preferences of the returning employee, the Council is entitled to place the returning teacher or associated professional in any similar post within the council.

Should the seconded post become available on a permanent basis, refer to the Recruitment and Selection guidance.

Ending a secondment early

An employee may choose to return to their substantive post earlier than planned. Appropriate notice must be given by the employee in order that the substantive line manager can make appropriate arrangements to terminate the contract of any individual covering the post. Where an employee wishes to return to their substantive post due to difficulties in the secondment, efforts should be made to resolve these difficulties.

A service can request any employee to return to their substantive post earlier than planned should service priorities require.

Returning from secondment

Employees returning from secondment should reflect on their experience and learning and discuss with their line manager the skills and experience gained and how they can be applied to benefit the team / section / school. They should be encouraged to disseminate what they have learnt to colleagues. An action plan may be agreed to support the employee's continuing development.

4. INWARD SECONDMENTS

Following the recruitment and selection process, should an external candidate wish to be seconded to the Council from their organisation, and this is considered appropriate, the new line manager will liaise with the substantive organisation to confirm the terms of the secondment (the [Secondment Agreement](#) may be adapted if required).

Inward secondees must be given an appropriate induction and any training necessary to their remit whilst seconded to the Council. The PPP/PDRS scheme will also be followed.

Secondment

Index of Documents

Procedure

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes
01-11-2005	-	Creation of all documents
16-07-2014	01-11-2005	Update procedure regarding VAT rules
21-08-2015	16-07-2014	Format update
15-10-2018	21-08-2015	Incorporated policy wording in procedure. Various amendments to clarify timescales, salary, terms and conditions.