

Leave Without Pay Policy

Section 1 - Policy Purpose

(1) This Policy has been developed in support of the provisions for leave without pay at ACU.

(2) This Policy clarifies the 'appropriate purposes' for which leave without pay may be granted, including the maximum duration and frequency of leave without pay which will normally be approved. The Policy also sets out the arrangements applying to superannuation contributions when a staff member proceeds on approved leave without pay.

Section 2 - Policy Statement

(3) The University makes available leave without pay as one of a number of flexible, family-friendly terms and conditions of employment for staff members. Staff may be granted leave without pay for approved purposes in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

Section 3 - Application of Policy

(4) This Policy shall apply to any form of leave without pay, including sick leave without pay, approved by the University, but does not apply to unpaid leave associated with the [Parental Leave Policy](#).

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Approvals

(5) Staff wishing to apply for leave without pay must apply using Staff Connect and may provide further information to support their application to their supervisor.

(6) Leave without pay, or any variation or extension to an approved period of leave without pay, must be submitted for approval by the appropriate delegated officer. Information on delegated officers for leave approvals is available in the relevant section of the [Delegations of Authority Policy and Register](#).

Part B - Parameters

(7) A leave without pay request period is normally for a period of up to six (6) months. A supervisor can approve leave without pay for maximum single continuous period of up to twelve (12) months.

(8) Where leave without pay for a period greater than 12 months is requested, or if a staff member seeks to extend a period of leave without pay beyond 12 months, the nominated supervisor will assess if the work area can support such a request and provide their recommendation to the relevant senior executive for consideration.

(9) Other than for the purposes outlined in clause 10, and except where a staff member is on approved sick leave, leave without pay will not normally be granted in the following circumstances:

- a. where a staff member has an accumulated annual leave and/or long service leave credit;
- b. where a staff member is on a first or subsequent fixed-term contract, and the term of the contract(s) is less than 3 years; or,
- c. where a staff member seeks to extend a period of long service leave.

Part C - Appropriate Purposes

(10) Subject to University requirements, leave without pay may be approved for the following purposes:

- a. where a staff member is required to appear in Court in a capacity other than as a witness on behalf of the University or the Crown;
- b. where a staff member is a candidate for election to federal, state or local government;
- c. to observe recognised religious or cultural occasions that are associated with the staff member's religious or cultural background;
- d. to accompany a partner or immediate family member on a period of extended overseas or inter-state travel;
- e. to undertake a program of study as approved by the University;
- f. where a staff member has exhausted all available personal leave;
- g. in conjunction with an approved external secondment arrangement;
- h. where a staff member makes an application for annual leave, up to an annual entitlement, and has an insufficient annual leave credit.

Part D - Service Requirements

(11) A staff member must normally have served at least 3 years with the University before being granted leave without pay for a period of more than 3 months, whether continuous or aggregated, in any year. This period of qualifying service need only be met once during a staff member's period of service with the University.

Part E - Notice Requirements

(12) A staff member wishing to apply for leave without pay, except unpaid parental leave or for personal (sick) leave reasons, is normally required to provide the University with the following notice:

Period of leave without pay	Minimum notice required
Between 1 day and 2 weeks	2 weeks
More than 2 weeks and less than 3 months	3 months
More than 3 months	6 months

(13) Where leave without pay is approved in conjunction with another form of leave, greater notice may be required.

(14) In appropriate or compassionate circumstances where planning for leave may be beyond the control of the staff member, the approving officer may waive the required notice period set out above.

(15) If a staff member is seeking to extend a period of approved leave without pay, an additional leave application should be submitted in line with the relevant notice period.

(16) If a staff member has been granted leave without pay for sick leave purposes, a medical certificate confirming the staff member is fit to resume duty is required before duty is recommenced.

Part F - Superannuation Contributions

(17) Employer and employee superannuation contributions automatically cease for any period of leave without pay.

(18) The staff member may elect to make both the employee and employer superannuation contributions in order to maintain full superannuation contributions. Such an arrangement shall be made by the staff member contacting their superannuation fund directly.

Part G - Leave Without Pay and Annual/Long Service Leave

(19) If a staff member applying for leave without pay has accumulated annual leave and/or long service leave balance to credit, the staff member will be required to take all of her/his annual and/or long service leave prior to taking leave without pay.

(20) Where a staff member is seeking to access personal leave without pay due to all personal leave entitlements for which a staff member is eligible have been exhausted, the staff member may request to use any annual and/or long service leave credit rather than proceed

Part H - Service at ACU

(21) Periods of leave without pay not exceeding 20 days in any year of service, whether continuous or aggregated, shall count as service towards a probationary period, and in determining a staff member's entitlement to leave accrual and the Research Study Program (RSP) for Academic Staff.

(22) Periods of leave without pay exceeding 20 working days in any year of service, whether continuous or aggregated, shall not count as service in determining a staff member's entitlement to all leave accrual types (LSL, personal and A/L) and RSP.

(23) Leave without pay will defer the date of incremental progression.

Part I - Other Employment

(24) A staff member on a period of approved leave without pay must not be employed as a casual or fixed term staff member at ACU during the period of approved leave without pay.

(25) A staff member wishing to undertake any other form of paid employment outside the University, including as a casual, during a period of approved leave without pay must obtain prior written approval in accordance with the [Delegations of Authority Policy and Register](#) and other University policies, including the [External Secondment Policy](#). Such employment must not interfere or conflict with the staff member's substantive duties at the University, nor be in direct competition with the University, nor be inappropriate to the University's Mission. A [Declaration of Interest Policy - Staff and Affiliates](#) must also be made for assessment and management.

Section 5 - Revisions made to this Policy

(26) The University may make changes to this Policy and procedures from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this Policy may forward their suggestions to People and Capability.

Section 6 - Further Assistance

(27) Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should first consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further information or advice be required staff should visit [Service Central](#).

Section 7 - Associated Information

(28) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	13th May 2026
Review Date	13th May 2031
Approval Authority	Governance Officer
Approval Date	13th May 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Responsible Manager	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Enquiries Contact	Bernardine Lynch ER and Safety Committees and Policy Officer <hr/> People and Capability