Guidance on Internal Secondments
Guidance on Internal Secondments

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this document is to set out the University’s guidance on the use of internal secondments.

1.2. External secondments (incoming and outgoing) can be more complex and will require an agreement not only with the secondee but also between the employing and host organisation. Please consult your local HR team at the earliest opportunity concerning external secondments.

2. Internal Secondment Benefits and Types

2.1. The University is committed to creating an equitable and motivating working environment which values and empowers people at all levels.

2.2. The University supports the use of secondments, recognising them as:
   - Development for the individual
   - An additional means of advancing career paths
   - Creating mobility around the organisation
   - Adding to the skills base of the organisation
   - An opportunity to deal with specialist, short-term or problematic work levels

2.3. Typically secondments may be generated in two ways:

   2.3.1. **By invitation to apply** – Where an opportunity is advertised internally and the member of staff expresses an interest in competition with others (Note – in exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to advertise a secondment opportunity ring fenced to a particular team or service where specialist skills are required and exist within that area).

   2.3.2. **By management request** – Where management identify that a particular skill set or person is required to support a specific piece of work and a member of staff is identified and then required to support that work for an agreed period.

2.4. Secondments differ from ‘Acting Up’ arrangements and the guidance below explains the difference:

   2.4.1. **Internal Secondment**
   An internal secondment is the temporary deployment or ‘loan’ of an employee to another part of the organisation (including a different section within the same unit) for a specific purpose and period of time.
The secondment is usually no longer than two years and is different to ‘acting up’ which is defined in 2.4.2 below. Individuals will be given a secondment letter stating the details of the arrangement which will act as a temporary variation to their contract of employment.

2.4.2. Acting Up
Acting up generally occurs where unplanned cover for a position at a higher level is required for a short period of time, e.g. due to the absence of the substantive post holder, usually within the same unit. These opportunities do not have to be advertised and are intended to cover situations for up to 12 months. An individual cannot normally be offered an ‘acting up’ position which is more than one grade higher that their current position. If there is more than one individual in a unit who could cover the acting up, the opportunity should be offered to the group and a selection process applied.

Where an ‘acting up’ role becomes available on an open ended basis, e.g. the substantive post holder does not return to the role, an open recruitment process subject to the normal recruitment procedure will be required.

Acting up arrangements should be discussed and agreed with the local HR Manager prior to being agreed within the unit.

Section 7 below provides the guidance and further information on pay and conditions during secondment or acting up periods.

3. Eligibility for Consideration

3.1. Internal secondments are available to all University staff on open-ended (part time and full time) contracts who have successfully completed their probation period and been employed for a minimum of 12 months by the University. They may also be available in certain circumstances to staff employed on a fixed term basis where it is possible to release them from the specific work they have been employed to deliver; this will require the approval of their line manager.

3.2. The guidance is intended to apply mainly to the circumstances where an individual identifies an advertised opportunity (which is specified as a secondment) for which they would like to be considered on a secondment basis.

3.3. For situations where the individual is approached by the University to undertake a specific task or work for a specified period, the normal secondment guidance may not apply, particularly in relation to the normal expected duration, i.e. where the requirement may be beyond two years. In such cases the University will normally agree to protect the substantive post for that extended period and the terms of the secondment will be no less favourable than specified in this guidance.

3.4. Anyone wishing to be considered for an advertised secondment opportunity must
first discuss the opportunity with their line manager. Managers are asked to be flexible in their consideration of such requests in support of the ongoing ONE University project. Staff applying for secondment opportunities should have demonstrated good performance in their current role and also have a good attendance record.

4. Support for Secondments

4.1. The University is committed to encouraging personal development and mobility of staff around the institution; secondment opportunities are a key enabler to support this agenda. The opportunity to undertake a secondment will be balanced against the business needs of the academic or service unit.

4.2. Secondments should normally be granted provided that they meet the following criteria:
   - That the secondment will provide personal and professional development for the employee;
   - That there will be overall benefits to the University through improved individual and organisational performance;
   - That the secondment creates potential for further internal mobility within the University and the seconding department can reasonable expect to backfill

5. Role and Responsibilities

5.1. Current Line Manager
   Managers should first consider whether it is possible to release the individual from their current role for the required period of time. Managers are encouraged to discuss with their local HR team the options for cover of a post at an early stage. Managers are encouraged to consider that individuals can benefit from a secondment and will often return to their original team at the end of the secondment with increased knowledge and experience and a broader understanding of the University.

5.2. Recruiting Manager
   When vacancies arise recruiting managers should give consideration to whether it is appropriate for the post to be offered on a secondment basis. Where a secondment is appropriate a post requisition will be required (the usual authorisation process for vacancies in the relevant Faculty/Services will apply) along with a job advert and job description (which will need to be or has been appropriately graded). The post will be advertised to staff registered as redeployees in the first instance for 3 working days. If no redeployees express an interest in the post the advert and job description will be posted for internal applicants on the University’s e-recruitment site. Additionally the advert will be circulated around internal email lists to ensure wide awareness of the opportunities. The application requirements will be made clear in the job advert.
On receipt of applications the manager will complete the shortlisting process and make arrangements to interview suitable applicants. Posts at Grade F and above will typically require shortlisted applicants to deliver a presentation in addition to an interview as part of the selection process.

5.3. **Line Manager during Secondment**
During the secondment it is recommended that there are regular reviews with the secondee. An initial PDR discussion to agree objectives, and appropriate review meetings to discuss progress and performance expectations should take place within the first few weeks of the secondment.

5.4. **Individuals (not in a redeployment situation)**
Prior to submitting an application for secondment, staff must approach their line manager to discuss whether a secondment application would be supported by the unit. Staff will be asked to declare that they have done this in their secondment application.

Prior to approaching their line manager staff are encouraged to identify areas of their own development (normally documented in the PDR discussion) which would directly benefit from the secondment opportunity and ultimately how any knowledge and experience gained as a result will benefit the team to which they will return.

Whilst the University encourages managers to make every effort to release staff to undertake secondment opportunities, it will not always be possible to do so. In this case the member of staff will not be permitted to apply for the secondment opportunity. Should the opportunity not be filled as a secondment and is subsequently advertised more widely as a fixed term appointment, the member of staff can choose to apply at this stage. If the member of staff applies for the post as a fixed term appointment they will have no right to a return to their substantive post.

5.5. **Individuals (in a redeployment situation)**
Staff in a redeployment position will have the opportunity to apply for secondment opportunities advertised through the e-recruitment system. If a member of staff is successful they will be appointed on a fixed term contract and will not have a substantive position to return to at the end of the fixed term. The Unit from which they would have been made redundant from, but for the secondment, will transfer accrued redundancy pay to the new Unit.

Should the member of staff not secure further employment beyond the secondment they will leave the University by reason of redundancy.

5.6. **Human Resources**
The local Human Resources team will ensure that appropriate authorisation for the secondment has been received before advertising the opportunity to redeployees. If there is no interest from the redeployment advert the opportunity will be circulated by the local HR team to the relevant email lists. Once the secondee has been identified or selected, the HR team will ensure that a secondment offer is issued to the member of staff outlining the terms of the secondment. The HR team should be consulted at an early stage for discussion about the terms of the secondment and the selection process.
6. At the end of the Secondment

6.1. Prior to the end of the secondment, a meeting should be arranged between the secondee and their substantive line manager to discuss the implications of returning to their substantive post, and in order to update the individual on any changes within the unit. It is recommended that the meeting takes place at least one month before the return date.

6.2. If during the terms of the secondment, organisational change results in the substantive post being substantially altered or made redundant, the guarantee right of return will cease to apply. In the event of this happening the employee will be consulted on any changes in line with the University’s relevant policies and procedures.

6.3. Normally, at the end of the secondment period, should the post holder not return to the post being covered by the secondee the post will be advertised in open competition if it is necessary to fill the post. However, where the secondee has covered the post for more than twelve months there may be exceptional circumstances which permit the secondee to be offered the vacant position. Such exceptions must be discussed with Human Resources and approved by the Registrar or Faculty Pro-Vice Chancellor.

7. Pay and Conditions during Secondment

7.1. The University’s management guidance on starting salaries sets out the normal expectations for managers to observe when appointing staff from external or internal routes to ensure sound appointment decisions are made and that they are robust, evidence-based and fair to the secondee and other staff.

7.2. Secondments to a higher graded post may necessitate a change to the terms and conditions of employment for the secondee for the duration of the secondment, for example a secondment from Grade E to Grade F may change how the hours of work are managed and also the amount of annual leave the secondee is entitled to for the duration of the secondment.

7.3. A secondment will typically last for no longer than two years in duration but there may be exceptional circumstances where a secondment is required for a longer period.

7.4. Recruiting managers are encouraged to discuss the details of the secondment terms with HR in advance of an offer of secondment being made.
8. Equality Impact Assessment

[Outcome of EQIA screening process. This will comprise the date, followed by either 'Equality Impact Assessment required'; 'Equality Impact Assessment not required'; 'More data required', or, if a full EQIA has been carried out, the date followed by 'Full Equality Impact Assessment carried out'.]

9. Electronic File Reference

File location: \Recruitment\Secondments\Secondment Guidance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area lead</th>
<th>Craig Armstrong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved by</td>
<td>Staff Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval date</td>
<td>1 May 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date</td>
<td>1 May 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>