



# TUS

**Technological University of the Shannon:  
Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:  
Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

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## Career Break Policy

Human Resources Department





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1.1 (June 2023)	Application method updated with the ESS procedure

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## **1.0 Introduction**

This policy outlines the procedures for eligible employees of the Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest (TU) who wish to apply for a career break without pay from their post.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Career Break**

A career break shall consist of leave without pay for one of the following reasons:

- family reasons
- other domestic reasons
- travel
- educational purposes
- voluntary service overseas
- employment in the private sector or becoming self-employed

A career break cannot be granted for the purpose of taking up any type of work in the public sector; or in an organisation where the pensions transfer network applies; or where a state superannuation scheme is in operation.

There must be no existing or potential conflict of interest, between the activity or employment in which the employee proposes to engage or engages in, during their career break and their position in the TU.

A career break for academics runs for the academic year i.e., 01 September to 31 August.

## **3.0 Eligibility**

All employees of the TU who have 1-year service in their existing, (or a previous) grade, may apply for a career break.

## **4.0 Career Break Duration**

A career break shall consist of leave without pay, for a period of not less than one year, and not more than five years. An employee may apply to have a career break extended, provided the period of leave without pay, does not exceed five consecutive years, or a pro rata entitlement based on service prior to commencing career break.

## 5.0 Application Process

Employees seeking a career break must submit the career break application for approval via the Employee Request facility on the Employee Self Service system (ESS)

- An application must be made three months in advance of the date the career break is required.
- An application for a career break must state the purpose for which the career break is being sought, as outlined in section 2.
- The line manager/supervisor will consider an application having regard to operational requirements.
- An email notification will be sent to the employee advising if their request has been approved or rejected.

## 6.0 Applying to extend a Career Break

An individual is required to give at least three months' notice prior to the expiration date of a career break, of their intention to apply for an extension of their career break. If an extension of the career break is sought, notification of this must be forwarded in writing to the Human Resources Department and the line manager/supervisor for approval.

**It is the explicit responsibility of the employee to ensure the timely notification to the TU of their intention to either seek an extension, return to work or resign.**

## 7.0 Refusal

Where the career break cannot be approved, possible alternatives should be considered and discussed with the employee before a final decision is reached. Where a request cannot be agreed, the reason will be set out in writing to the employee by the HR Department and the line manager/supervisor's decision will be final. If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision, an appeal may be made in writing to the HR Department.

## 8.0 Resumption of duty following a Career Break

At least three months prior to the end of the career break, an employee must notify the Human Resources Department and the line manager/supervisor, in writing that it is their intention to resume duty, following the career break.

Should the TU not receive this notification of the employee's intention to return to work, the TU will assume that the employee is resigning from their position of employment, and therefore the

TU will have no option but to terminate their contract of employment, on the date the career break is due to end.

**Note: The onus will be on the employee to keep the TU updated in terms of their contact details, while on career break.**

Employees returning from career break have an entitlement to resume duty at their substantive grade on the completion/termination of the approved period of the career break.

All employees resuming duty following career break are obliged to accept the terms and conditions of service pertaining to their grade at the time of their return.

### **9.0 Acting Up Arrangements**

Where an employee is acting-up, the acting-up arrangement will cease on commencement of the career break and will not recommence on return from the career break. Such employees will normally revert to their substantive post on resumption of duty.

### **10.0 Early Resumption of Duty**

Requests to resume duty early, following a career break, may only be considered in **exceptional circumstances**, where there is not a negative effect, on the replacement employee's contract. If agreed, a return-to-work date will be determined by the HR Department in conjunction with the line manager/supervisor.

### **11.0 Other considerations for all Employees**

An employee will not accumulate service while on career break – this means that the length of the career break will not be counted as service for example:

- for increment purposes;
- for annual leave purposes;
- for superannuation purposes [see section 13 below]

All employees should clearly understand that salary will only recommence upon resumption of duties. An employee on a career break who intends to resign from their post shall give the TU, 3 months' notice in writing.

Once a professional, management and support employee's application for career break is approved, their annual leave balance will be recalculated, up to the commencement date of the career break.

Where it is found that a professional, management and support employee has overtaken their annual leave entitlement, the overpayment amount will be brought to the attention of the employee and the full amount owing, will be deducted from final salary, before commencement of their career break.

While on career break an employee shall be eligible to apply for internally and externally advertised competitions by the TU. It is the employee's responsibility to make themselves aware of such competitions. All competitions will be advertised on TU's website through E-recruit/email.

#### **12.0 Department of Social Protection (DSP)**

It is advisable that, employees going on career breaks, maintain entitlements to social welfare benefits. Employees can contact the Department of Social Protection for more information.

#### **13.0 Pension – Reckoning period of Career Break for Superannuation Purposes**

For employees availing of a career break and who are a member of either the Education Section Superannuation Scheme [ESSS], or the Single Pension Scheme [SPS], they should contact the relevant Pension Section of the Human Resources Department.

#### **14.0 Garda Vetting**

TU will only re-vet relevant persons on return from a career break in line with the TU Staff Garda Vetting Policy and Procedures.

#### **15.0 Medical**

Employees on a career break in excess of two years, will be required, prior to return, to undergo a medical assessment and be deemed medically fit by the OHP.

## Queries

For enquiries on this policy please contact the relevant HR Department:

TUS Midlands: [hr.midlands@tus.ie](mailto:hr.midlands@tus.ie)

TUS Midwest: [hr.midwest@tus.ie](mailto:hr.midwest@tus.ie)