

Leave Without Pay Procedure

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Purpose

To outline the eligibility requirements and request process for staff seeking Unpaid Leave (UL) or Leave Without Pay (LWOP). The procedure assists staff and people leaders to understand the approval process and responsibilities associated with each type of leave.

Scope

This procedure applies to academic, general/professional and TAFE teaching employees of the University employed on a continuing or fixed-term basis. It does not apply to casual or sessional staff members.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Continuing appointment	Employment with no fixed end date. A continuing appointment does not include casual or sessional employment and may be either full-time or fractional part-time.
Continuous service	A period of service with the University without a break in employment.

Fixed-term employment	Employment for a specified term or ascertainable period. The employment contract will specify the period of employment (or circumstances in lieu of a finishing date) and the reason the appointment is fixed-term, as identified in the relevant industrial agreement. Fixed-term appointments may be either full-time or fractional part-time.
Leave Without Pay (LWOP)	A period of approved leave during which a staff member does not receive salary from the University. LWOP is granted at the discretion of the University and will normally be considered where other forms of paid leave are unavailable. It must be taken in whole-day increments and may be approved for any number of whole days in accordance with this procedure. LWOP does not count towards the annual five-day UL entitlement.
People leader	A staff member with direct responsibility for managing another staff member, including the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Dean, Deputy Dean, Associate Dean, Director, Manager or other nominated supervisor.
Secondment - internal	A temporary appointment to another position within the University where the staff member has a substantive position to return to at the end of the secondment period.
Secondment - external	Where a Federation University staff member undertakes a fixed-term appointment with an external organisation, or where an external organisation requests the University's services, resulting in the staff member working for the external organisation for a defined period.
Staff member	Any person employed by the University as an academic, general/professional or TAFE teaching employee under a continuing or fixed-term contract of employment.
Unpaid Leave (UL)	A period of approved Unpaid Leave during which a staff member does not receive salary from the University. UL may be taken for any duration, including part-days, where annual leave or personal leave balances are insufficient to cover the absence. A maximum of five days of UL may be granted in a calendar year. UL does not need to be taken in whole-day increments and is separate from LWOP.

Actions

Unpaid Leave

Unpaid Leave may be taken for short-term absences where annual leave or personal leave balances are insufficient to cover the absence. A maximum of five days of Unpaid Leave may be granted in a calendar year.

Request process

The following process must be followed for all **Unpaid Leave** requests:

	Action	Responsibility
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1.	Submit a leave request in Workday using the Unpaid Leave leave type, including any relevant supporting documentation. The request should be submitted to the staff member's immediate people leader to approve or decline before the proposed leave commences, where possible.	Staff member
2.	Review the leave request in Workday and approve or decline the request.	Immediate people leader
3.	The staff member is notified of the outcome of the leave request through Workday.	Workday

Leave Without Pay

Where possible, requests for Leave Without Pay must be submitted through Workday at least two months before the proposed commencement date of the leave.

Request process

The following process must be followed for all **Leave Without Pay** requests:

Requests up to and including four weeks

	Action	Responsibility
1.	Submit a leave request in Workday using the Leave Without Pay leave type, including any relevant supporting documentation. Where possible, the request should be submitted at least two months before the proposed commencement date of the leave.	Staff member
2.	Review the leave request in Workday and make a recommendation to approve or decline the request: if recommending decline, record the reasons in the comments section of the Workday task. Submit the request to the relevant delegated officer for final approval.	Immediate people leader
3.	Review the request and approve or decline it in Workday.	Relevant Dean or Director, or applicable Pro Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer or Chief Financial Officer

4.	Advise the staff member of the outcome of the leave request following the delegated officer's decision.	Immediate people leader
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Requests in excess of four weeks

	Action	Responsibility
1.	Submit a leave request in Workday using the Leave Without Pay leave type, including any relevant supporting documentation. Where possible, the request should be submitted at least two months before the proposed commencement date of the leave.	Staff member
2.	Review the leave request in Workday and provide a recommendation to approve or decline the request: - if recommending approval, include the proposed arrangements to cover the staff member's duties - if recommending decline, record the reasons in the comments section of the Workday task. Submit the request to the relevant delegated officer for approval or decline.	Immediate people leader
3.	Review the request and approve or decline it in Workday. The request is then routed to the Director, People and Culture (or delegate).	Relevant Dean or Director, or applicable Pro Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer or Chief Financial Officer
4.	Review the request and supporting documentation and approve or decline the request in Workday.	Director, People and Culture (or delegate)
5.	The staff member is notified of the outcome of the leave request through Workday.	Workday

Leave entitlements and conditions

Maximum period of leave

Approved periods of LWOP will not normally exceed one year.

In exceptional circumstances, LWOP of up to two years may be approved at the discretion of the Director, People and Culture following consideration of additional supporting documentation.

Eligibility and conditions

Leave Without Pay is normally only available where other forms of paid leave are unavailable.

Before LWOP is granted, staff members are generally required to exhaust their annual leave entitlement.

Staff members who have exhausted their personal (sick) leave (where applicable), annual leave and long service leave entitlements may apply for LWOP.

The timing of the leave and operational requirements may also be considered when determining whether a request is approved.

Approval authority

For periods of up to and including four weeks, the staff member's immediate people leader will review the request and provide a recommendation to approve or decline. The recommendation must be endorsed by the relevant delegated officer.

For periods exceeding four weeks, the Director, People and Culture (or delegate) will determine whether the request is approved or declined.

Personal (sick) LWOP

Requests for personal (sick) LWOP must be supported by a medical certificate from a registered health practitioner.

Staff members returning to work following a period of personal LWOP exceeding 13 weeks must provide a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner approved by the University confirming they are fit to return to work.

Where the University requires assessment by its nominated medical practitioner, the cost of the medical examination will be met by the University.

Leave accrual and public holidays

Public holidays that occur during an approved period of LWOP form part of the LWOP period and are not paid.

For staff employed under the **Federation University Australia Union Enterprise Agreement 2023–2026**, annual leave, personal leave and long service leave do not accrue during periods of LWOP exceeding 20 days.

For staff employed under the **Federation University Australia TAFE Teaching Staff Agreement 2025–2028**, annual leave, personal leave and long service leave do not accrue during any period of LWOP.

Leave counting as service

Periods of LWOP may affect the calculation of continuous service and may be taken into account when determining employment-related entitlements, including redundancy and termination payments.

Incremental salary progression

For staff employed under the **Federation University Australia Union Enterprise Agreement 2023–2026**, periods of LWOP of up to 20 days in any one year do not affect incremental salary progression or the incremental anniversary date.

Where LWOP exceeds 20 days in a year, incremental salary progression and the future incremental anniversary date will be deferred by the number of LWOP days exceeding 20.

For staff employed under the **Federation University Australia TAFE Teaching Staff Agreement 2025–2028**, incremental salary progression is determined in accordance with that agreement.

Superannuation

Staff members considering LWOP should contact their superannuation fund to discuss the options available to them and any impact on their superannuation entitlements.

Policy base

- [People and Culture Policy](#)

Associated documents

- [Federation University Australia Union Enterprise Agreement 2023-2026](#)
- [Federation University Australia TAFE Teaching Staff Agreement 2025-2028](#)
- [Fair Work Act 2009](#)

Forms/Record keeping

Title	Location	Responsible officer	Minimum retention period
Workday	People and Culture	Director, People and Culture	Leave requests, supporting documentation and approval records are maintained in Workday in accordance with University records management requirements and applicable retention schedules.

Responsibility

The Director, People and Culture (as the Approval Authority) is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this procedure.

The Head, Employee Experience (as the Document Owner) is responsible for maintaining the content of this procedure as delegated by the Director, People and Culture.

Implementation

The Leave without Pay Procedure are to be implemented throughout the University community via:

1. An Announcement Notice via 'FedNews' website and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the 'Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University' website to alert the University-wide community of the approved Procedure.
2. Inclusion on the University's online Policy Library;
3. Publishing of links on the People and Culture web pages;

4. Information provided by People and Culture to staff members, Deans, Deputy Deans, Directors and other people leaders.