



Queen Margaret University
EDINBURGH

Secondment Policy and Procedure

Policy Summary:	The Secondment Policy and Procedure provides guidance on secondment arrangements and the procedure to undertake secondments.
Policy Owner:	Human Resources
Approved By:	Executive Board: May 2011
Consultation Completed:	Trade Unions: June 2011
Equality Impact Assessed:	11 th July 2011
Date of Issue:	18 th July 2011
Review Period:	Annual or as required by legislation
Last Reviewed:	May 2015

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1.0 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to provide Managers and staff with guidance on secondment arrangements to ensure that these are undertaken fairly and consistently across Queen Margaret University and in accordance with equality and diversity principles.

2.0 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all secondment arrangements within Queen Margaret University.

3.0 Monitor and Review

Human Resources is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and supporting procedures and will conduct reviews at appropriate intervals.

Any individual who feels they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against as part of secondment arrangements should contact Human Resources.

4.0 Equal Opportunities

Queen Margaret University is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and it is the responsibility of all QMU employees to promote “equality and diversity” in the application of this policy ensuring that there is no discrimination on the grounds of disability, race/ethnic origin, sex/gender, age, religion, marital/family status, dependency, sexual orientation, political opinion, and economic or social status.

5.0 Responsibility for this Policy

Human Resources.

Any changes to this policy and supporting procedures will be made in consultation with appropriate bodies.

QMU reserves the right to update HR Policies in line with new or updated Employment Legislation.

6.0 Definition of a Secondment

6.1 A secondment is where an employee temporarily transfers to work in a different area of QMU or to another organisation, for a fixed period of time, for a specific purpose, to the benefit of all parties.

7.0 Advantages of Secondments

7.1 For the Employee:

7.1.1 Secondments offer valuable opportunities for staff development and allow employees to gain a broader understanding of other departments in QMU or associated external organisations.

7.1.2 Employees often receive the opportunity to enhance new skills and gain new experiences when working in a different area.

7.2 For the Employer:

7.2.1 Placing employees on secondment can ultimately increase organisational flexibility by developing a wide range of skills and knowledge in employees.

7.2.2 QMU may also benefit from sharing skills with external organisations, for example, the NHS. External secondments can enhance relationships with other organisations.

7.2.3 Secondments provide employers with a means of dealing with short term pieces of work or projects.

8.0 Secondment Circumstances

8.1 Secondment arrangements may be considered in the following circumstances:

8.1.1 Project Pieces of Work:

A secondment opportunity often arises where a specific piece of work must be undertaken and achieved within a fixed time scale.

8.1.2 Vacancies pending permanent recruitment:

When a member of staff leaves there could be several reasons why it is not feasible to recruit into the vacant position on a permanent basis in the first instance, such as availability of suitable candidates, or recruitment which is pending a restructure of the School/Department. In such cases, it may be best to second an employee into the vacant post until permanent recruitment can commence.

8.1.3 Long Term Absence:

Where a member of staff is absent for a medium or long period of time or on maternity leave, the best option for cover of the position may be secondment.

8.1.4 Cover for Secondments:

If a member of staff is seconded to another School/Department or another organisation for a length of time then it may be necessary to second another individual into the vacant position for the duration of the secondment.

8.1.5 Cover for Acting Up Arrangements:

If a member of staff is acting up into another position within the School/Department for a length of time then it may be necessary to second another individual into the position into the position that is left vacant as a result of this.

9.0 Types of Secondment

9.1 Internal Secondment:

9.1.1 An internal secondment is when a QMU employee is temporarily transferred to another School/Department or where an employee is to undertake work different to their normal duties, such as a fixed term project, within their own department. The employee will be expected to return to their substantive position at the end of the secondment.

9.2 External Secondment (Outgoing):

9.2.1 An external outgoing secondment is when an individual remains an employee of QMU but is based within an external organisation for a fixed period of time.

9.2.2 In some cases, the employee will be based within QMU for part of the week and based within the “host” organisation for part of the week.

9.2.3 The QMU employee will retain their QMU terms and conditions, including incremental rises, pay awards and their record of continuous service.

9.2.4 The QMU employee will continue to be paid via the QMU payroll.

9.2.5 The QMU employee should continue to report sickness absence and annual leave dates to QMU.

9.2.6 A secondment agreement (see Appendix 1) with the “host” organisation will be set up by Human Resources.

9.2.7 At the end of the secondment period the employee will return to their substantive position at QMU.

9.3 External Secondment (Incoming):

9.3.1 An external incoming secondment is when an individual from an external organisation is based within QMU for a fixed period of time.

9.3.2 In some cases, the employee will be based within QMU for part of the week and based within their own employer’s organisation for part of the week.

9.3.3 The individual will retain their terms and conditions with their own employer, including incremental rises, pay awards and their record of continuous service.

9.3.4 The individual will continue to be paid via their own employers payroll.

9.3.5 A secondment agreement (see Appendix 1) with the organisation providing the secondee organisation will be set up by Human Resources.

9.3.6 At the end of the secondment period the individual will return to their substantive position with their own employer.

10.0 Secondment Procedure

10.1 Where it has been identified as necessary to second an employee into a position, the following procedure should be followed:

10.2 Establish Grade of the Secondment Position

10.2.1 The Manager should liaise with Human Resources to determine the grade of the secondment position.

10.2.2 If the secondment position is one which is already established within the staffing structure then grade of the position will already be known.

10.2.3 If the secondment position is a new position within the staffing establishment then the Manager should liaise with their HR Partner to create a suitable role profile document detailing the duties and responsibilities of the position in order for the grade to be scored and determined under the HERA (Job Evaluation) process. The HR Partner will advise the Manager of the appropriate grade.

10.2.4 In cases where the secondment role is on the same grade as the seconded employee's substantive position then the seconded employee will receive an incremental rise of one point on the scale in recognition of their secondment.

10.2.5 Where the secondment is an External Secondment (Outgoing) the Manager should obtain the job description or role profile documents associated with the position from the host organisation. The Manager should pass these documents to their HR Partner who will score the position using the HERA method, determining the appropriate grade.

10.3 Determine the Duration of the Secondment

10.3.1 Secondments vary in length, often between three months and two years, depending on the circumstances.

10.3.2 The Manager may be required to make an estimated judgement on the duration of the secondment period depending on the circumstances.

10.3.3 All parties affected by the secondment should be kept informed as far as possible on the likely duration.

10.4 Vacancy Approval Panel

10.4.1 As they involve the filling or creation of positions, all secondments are dependent on approval through the Vacancy Approval Panel (VAP).

- 10.4.2 Once the Manager has identified a need for a secondment they should complete the Vacancy Approval Form (available on the HR Intranet page) and submit this to the relevant Executive Board member. If the Manager requires assistance to complete any part of the Vacancy Approval Form they should speak to their HR Partner.
- 10.4.3 The HR Partners will keep Managers informed of the forthcoming VAP submission and meeting dates. The outcome of each VAP meeting will be notified to Managers following the meeting.
- 10.4.4 Where VAP approves a secondment the Manager will automatically have permission to backfill the seconded employee's substantive position. Backfilling of the substantive position must be by an employee who is either on the same or lower grade than the substantive position.

10.5 Filling the Secondment

- 10.5.1 If there is one obvious single suitable employee who can be identified by the Manager as having the right skills for a defined project or piece of work then the secondment may be agreed with them directly. The secondment should be discussed in detail with the employee and the employee should be given a reasonable opportunity to consider the secondment.
- 10.5.2 Discussion on whether or not it is possible to second the employee should take place with the employee's line Manager and their approval should be sought to release the employee to the secondment. Requests to second employees should not be unreasonably refused. Reasons for refusal should be communicated clearly.
- 10.5.3 Where the employee has requested to be seconded to a position and has been refused release from their line Manager, alternative development opportunities within their own School/Department should be suggested where possible.
- 10.5.4 If it is possible that more than one employee could be suitable for the secondment the seconding Manager should undertake a recruitment and selection process for the position. The Manager should liaise with their HR Partner to determine if recruitment should be internal or external. The Manager must also liaise with their HR Partner at this stage to establish if there are any suitable individuals currently on the Redeployment Register who may wish to express an interest in the acting up position.
- 10.5.5 The Manager should refer to the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure on the HR Intranet site for guidance on undertaking this process.

10.6 Appointment

- 10.6.1 The Manager should liaise with their HR Partner to determine an appropriate scale point upon which to appoint the employee.
- 10.6.2 If the employee is seconded to a position which is of a higher grade than their substantive position, they must have been in the seconded position for a minimum of six months to be awarded an incremental scale point rise on 1st April.

10.6.3 Internal Secondments

- 10.6.4 Once a suitable candidate for the secondment position has been identified, whether they have undergone a recruitment and selection process or not, an Amendment to Contract form should be completed and submitted to Human Resources.
- 10.6.5 Human Resources will issue a contract amendment letter to the employee, detailing the secondment arrangements, including any alterations to the employee's existing terms and conditions.

10.6.6 External Secondments (Incoming)

- 10.6.7 Where the most suitable candidate has been identified via an external recruitment and selection campaign, the Manager should complete the New Employee Appointment Form and submit it to Human Resources at the end of the recruitment campaign.
- 10.6.8 The recruiting Manager should liaise with the Finance Office with regards to payment of external secondment arrangements.

10.7 Induction and Training

10.7.1 Internal Secondments

- 10.7.2 A local induction appropriate to the secondment position and the current experience of the seconded employee should be undertaken by the seconding Manager.
- 10.7.2 Upon commencement of secondment the Manager should follow the Performance Enhancement Review guidance to discuss with the employee their forthcoming activities and objectives and identify appropriate development opportunities. Reviews should be undertaken in accordance with the Performance Enhancement Review policy.

10.7.3 External Secondments

- 10.7.4 Where the seconded employee is based in a new organisation the seconded employee should be invited to the next available corporate induction day so that they can be informed of the background, culture and procedures of the organisation.
- 10.7.5 A local induction within the School/Department should also be undertaken by the seconding Manager.
- 10.7.6 If the seconded employee does not have all the relevant skills and experience required to fully perform the duties of the position then appropriate support and development must be put in place by the Manager to manage the disparity and equip the employee with the skills required as soon as possible. The Manager should liaise with their HR Partner if they require further advice on this.
- 10.7.7 Upon commencement of External Secondments (Outgoing) the Manager should follow the Performance Enhancement Review guidance to discuss with the

employee their forthcoming activities and objectives on their secondment and identify appropriate development opportunities. The Manager should have regular contact with the host organisation to enable reviews to be undertaken in accordance with the Performance Enhancement Review policy.

10.8 Health and Safety

10.8.1 It is expected that any seconded employee, either internal or external, will take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of any other persons who may be affected by his acts or emissions at work. It is also expected that the seconded employee will co-operate with the external Seconder in complying with any relevant statutory regulation. Whilst on QMU premises the seconded employee must comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (including Regulations issued thereunder).

10.9 Maintaining Contact

10.9.1 For the duration of the secondment, the seconded employee should maintain some contact with their substantive School/Department to ensure continuity when they return to their substantive post.

10.9.2 Suitable contact would include:

- Retaining the seconded employee on mailing lists for team communications.
- Seconded employees being advised/consulted on restructuring or significant departmental changes.
- Seconded employees attending significant team meetings or away days with their substantive department.
- Continued review of personal development (or other development plan for individuals seconded from external organisations).

10.9.3 Acting up arrangements will be reviewed at monthly establishment meetings by the HR Partner and the Manager.

10.10 Extensions to Secondments

10.10.1 Extensions to secondments should be fully discussed with the seconded employee as early as possible.

10.10.2 Agreement for extension should be sought from the substantive line Manager as early as possible as they may have planned the future performance of the School/Department based on the assumption that the seconded employee would be returning on a specific date. They may also be required to extend any backfill which they have arranged in the substantive position.

10.10.3 If an employee is to be seconded for longer than was originally anticipated then the seconding Manager should submit an Amendment to Contract Form to Human Resources to ensure the secondment arrangements continue. Human Resources will write to the employee confirming the extension of the secondment.

10.11 Ending Secondments

- 10.11.1 The seconded employee, their substantive line Manager and Human Resources should be kept continually informed of when the secondment is likely to come to an end.
- 10.11.2 When a secondment comes to an end the Manager should submit an Amendment to Contract Form to Human Resources indicating that the employee has returned to their substantive post and the effective date of this change.
- 10.11.3 The seconded employee is entitled to revert to their substantive post. Planning for the return should ideally commence no later than four weeks before the date of return. If the seconded employee has been absent from their substantive position for a significant period of time then re-induction and re-training may need to be considered, especially if significant changes have occurred within the School/Department in their absence.
- 10.11.4 When returning to their substantive position, seconded employees will revert to their substantive grade and scale point. The scale point employees are placed on must reflect any incremental rises that would have been incurred if the employee had remained in their substantive position during the secondment period.
- 10.11.5 When seconded employees return to their substantive position it is possible they may feel demotivated or as if they have taken a step backwards in their career. Therefore it is important for Managers to discuss future development with them as soon as possible, even if this is outwith their normal cyclical timescales of Activity Planning.

11.0 Backfilling the Seconded Employee's Position

- 11.1 Options to cover the seconded employee's substantive position should be considered as early as possible.
- 11.2 Options to fill this gap could include:
- Redistribution of workload throughout the remaining team.
 - Backfilling with a temporary employee.
 - Backfilling with another secondee.
 - Acting up of another individual.
- 11.3 Managers may find it helpful to refer to the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure to backfill the substantive position.

12.0 Related Policies

- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
- Acting Up Arrangements Policy
- Vacancy Approval Procedure
- Performance Enhancement Review

Appendix 1



Queen Margaret University
EDINBURGH

SECONDMENT AGREEMENT

between

Queen Margaret University
("The Employer" or "The Seconder" – delete as appropriate)

and

Insert name of Secondee
("The Secondee")

and

Insert name of organisation
("The Seconder" or "The Employer" – delete as appropriate)

The Secondee is employed by the Employer as a **Insert Job Title**.

The Employer and the Seconder have agreed that the Secondee will be seconded to work for the Seconder on the terms and conditions set out in this Secondment Agreement.

The Secondee has agreed to be seconded to the Seconder.

IT IS HEREBY AGREED:

The Employer agrees to second the Secondee to the Seconder to fill the position of **Insert Job Title**, on the following terms and conditions:

Principal Terms

1. The Secondment will commence on **Insert date of commencement**;
2. The Secondment will terminate on **Insert date of termination** unless extended by mutual agreement of the parties or terminated earlier;
3. During the period of the Secondment (subject to any periods of holiday absence which may be agreed amongst the Parties) the Secondee will be made available for work for the Secunder on a part time basis;
4. The Secondee will work at such of the Secunder's premises as shall be agreed, but it being understood that in the event that the Secondee is deployed in work outwith Edinburgh the Secunder will meet the Secondee's reasonable travel and accommodation expenses on terms no less favourable than those that would be offered to a Secunder employee;

Employer's Obligations

5. Except insofar as they are not capable of being performed by reason of the Secondment during the period of the Secondment the Employer will continue to be responsible for all its contractual obligations to the Secondee;
6. The Employer will remain responsible for, and the Secondee will remain subject to, all the Employer's policies and procedures including its disciplinary and grievance policies and procedures;
7. The Employer will continue to be responsible for paying the Secondee's salary and any pension contributions, for managing any holiday and/or sickness absence, and any disciplinary or professional issues that may arise;

The Secondee's Obligations

8. The Secondee will be obliged to:
 - 8.1 attend, throughout the period of the Secondment the office or offices nominated by the Seconder as the place or places of his employment from time to time during the working hours stipulated by the Seconder;
 - 8.2 diligently to perform the duties accorded to him by the Seconder and to undertake the work that the Seconder may allocate to him;
 - 8.3 maintain as confidential to the Seconder any confidential information of which she may become possessed in the course of his work with the Seconder;
 - 8.4 adhere to such Codes of Practice in use by the Seconder as may reasonably be directed by the Seconder;
 - 8.5 maintain the standards of personal and professional behaviour required of them in the employment of the Employer and the Seconder;

The Seconder's Obligations:

9. The Seconder will be responsible:
 - 9.1 for nominating a responsible person to be the Manager and Supervisor of the Secondee, who will be the point of contact between the Employer and the Seconder for all necessary purposes;
 - 9.2 for providing the Secondee with work of an appropriate type and level during the Secondment;
 - 9.3 for providing the Secondee with appropriate supervision, support and training as necessary to carry out the work allocated to them;

- 9.4 for providing the Secondee with a safe place and system of work and for their health and safety and welfare at work;
- 9.5 for ensuring that adequate insurance is in place to cover their liabilities to the Secondee as a contract or agency worker, or otherwise;

Termination of Secondment

- 10. While the Secondment is due to continue for an original period of **insert period of employment**, it may be terminated at an earlier date, or at any time during an extension to the original period, in the following circumstances:
 - 10.1 on one party issuing to the other party one month's notice in writing of their intention to terminate the Secondment; or
 - 10.2 if any party is in material breach of its obligations under this Agreement and that breach is not remedied within 48 hours of being notified in writing of the breach, immediately on receipt of written notice of summary termination being given by the party not in breach to the defaulting party;
 - 10.3 On termination of the Secondment the Secondee will return to work for the Employer.

SIGNATURES

For the Employer Date

Secondee Date

For the Seconder Date