



Brasenose College
SECONDMENT POLICY
Revised- agreed by Governing Body Feb 2015

Secondments may be:

Outward : a temporary move by a College employee to the University , another Oxford College or an external employer to take on a different role.

Internal: a temporary move by a College employee to another area within College to take on a different role.

Inward: the temporary movement of an employee of an external company or from the collegiate university to a role within College to take on a different role.

During the secondment, the substantive employer continues to carry legal obligations towards the secondee as continuity of service is preserved during the secondment period.

NB The secondment policy does NOT cover joint appointments where the individual takes on a different balance of teaching, research and administrative responsibilities within the broad remit of their current combined role, for both College and faculty or department. Substantive adjustments in the balance of duties are usually subject to provision of replacement teaching, buy-outs, or other financial adjustments. There is no VAT with a joint appointment.

Purpose

The purpose of the secondment may be to deploy a member of staff with particular skills and abilities to undertake a particular project, or to cover a period of maternity leave or sickness absence. The secondment may also be considered to be an opportunity for an individual to acquire skills or experience which will benefit their employing department upon their return, as well as providing career development for the individual member of staff.

The purpose of the secondment is not to offer individuals a 'risk free' way of trying out a new role. Where the intention of either the individual or host at the outset of the secondment is that the role is likely to be offered on a permanent basis, a secondment is not appropriate since the employing department is left unable to fill the substantive role for an extended period of time. In such cases proper recruitment and retention processes should be followed.

Benefits

For staff: secondments provide career development opportunities and the chance to acquire new skills and experience, and broaden horizons. The secondment may provide the opportunity to broaden and deepen experience rather than necessarily involving working at a higher grade or level. For College: The facility to offer secondments can improve career development opportunities, motivation and morale, as well as improving networking and team-working across the collegiate university. Secondments are a valuable way of resourcing cover for staff absence or short term projects. Secondees coming into College can also offer valuable external perspectives.

Offering Secondments:

Most short term posts can be considered as a potential secondment opportunity.

Advertising

A short term post that is identified as a secondment opportunity should be advertised as such, as a normal job advert in the relevant area of the vacancies section of the BNC website but with the addition of the following wording in the job title: "This post may also be offered as a secondment opportunity".

A secondment may also represent a redeployment opportunity for a member of staff at risk of redundancy.

Eligibility

An employee may apply for a secondment if they:

- Have been employed in the substantive post for a period of at least 12 months at the time of the applying for the secondment.
- Have an underlying contract that will last at least 12 months after the secondment period would end (in order that the department is able to gain some benefit from skills/experience gained during the secondment upon their return to their substantive post).
- Have approval of their employing department before applying for the secondment.
- Can make a case as to how the skills and experience gained will benefit their employing department when they return to their substantive role at the end of the secondment.

NB For any individual who requires a visa to live or work in the UK, a secondment may breach the individual's visa arrangements and the work permits team must be contacted for advice before any secondment is considered.

Approvals

Whilst College should not unreasonably withhold consent for an individual to take up a secondment opportunity there may be occasions when it is not operationally viable to release the individual.

The following considerations should be addressed before a secondment is agreed:

- The business case for secondment (e.g. to allow an individual to acquire particular skills or experience which are of benefit to the College).
- The duration of the secondment
- The operational impact on the team i.e. to ensure colleagues are not over-burdened
- How the individual's responsibilities will be covered during their absence including formal line management responsibility
- Whether the secondment would be good for the team by enabling another team member the opportunity to 'act-up'
- Any costs for overtime or training
- Who will act as line manager for the secondee, including responsibility for appraisal
- The arrangement for ending the secondment early (e.g. for performance or capability reasons).
- How disciplinary matters would be dealt with (i.e. the department holding the underlying contract of employment should retain formal responsibility for disciplinary matters)
- Health and safety considerations and whether the College's insurance covers the secondment?
- What happens at the end of the secondment- i.e. expectations over whether the individual can return to their substantive role.

Duration

Typically would not exceed twelve months, and usually with a maximum of two years. Secondments of more than two years would require the consent of Personnel Committee.

Setting up a secondment

A job description and selection criteria should be prepared in the usual way.

For internal secondments within College, costs of the secondee would be charged to the new department's cost code. A contract amendment should be issued to the individual outlining the period of the secondment and setting out the new terms including line management arrangements. Continuity of service is retained by the employee throughout the secondment.

For secondments to external organisations or the collegiate university:

Method 1. Secondment to the collegiate university or other employer:

The individual's substantive appointment remains unchanged and their salary continues to be paid as normal by the employing department who invoices the costs to the University or other employer/college (with VAT if appropriate).

Recharging

Two agreements are required: an employment contract with the individual and the secondment agreement between the two employers and the secondee.

1. **Contract/secondment agreement;** the individual remains a full employee contracted to Brasenose. A secondment agreement is drawn up covering the secondment period.
2. **Holiday/sickness and other terms.** The individual could be able to transfer leave entitlements between employers, with agreement, and would retain continuity of service with regards sick leave entitlement, long service etc.
3. **At the end of secondment** the individual returns to their substantive post with Brasenose and salary reverts to previous level (plus any incremental progression that has been agreed during the secondment).

Advantages:

There is no additional cost to college

The responsibilities are clear

The individual retains their role in College and continuity of employment

Disadvantages:

VAT is potentially incurred in addition to the cost of the employment

OR

Method 2. The employee takes unpaid leave from their Brasenose post and is employed directly by the University or other employer for the duration of the temporary appointment

1. **Contract:** The individual remains an employee of Brasenose and the substantive contract remains in place but a period of unpaid leave is agreed in a separate letter. The University or other employer draws up their standard **fixed term contract** for the duration of the 'secondment'.
2. **Payment.** The Brasenose post is reduced to zero (but is not ended so no P45 is raised). The individual is paid directly by the University or other college and completes a P46 stating 'this is my main job' and contacts HMRC to ensure that personal allowances are allocated to the University or other employer's job and reverses this process on return.
3. **At the end of secondment:** the individual returns to their substantive post with College and salary reverts to its previous level (plus any incremental progressions that has occurred during the secondment).

4. **Pension:** The University or other external appointment would mean a new pension number which, if still within the USS or OSPS scheme, would be paid under CARE arrangements. This may mean that an individual ends up with two memberships, one final salary and on CARE, and may mean a gap in contributions in the main pension. Not all employers participate in the same schemes.
5. **Responsibilities: The University or other college would become the primary employer.**

Holiday /sickness /other terms: the individual would not be able to transfer annual leave entitlements between employers and would need to plan and take any leave accrued during the secondment within the secondment period. Continuity of service would not necessarily be recognised with regard to sick leave, long service leave etc.

Advantages:

There is no additional cost to Brasenose or the University or other college.

The responsibilities are clear.

The individual retains their role in Brasenose and their continuity of employment on return.

In the event that the secondment has to be ended early the substantive post remains.

Disadvantages:

The tax and pension arrangements are more complicated and potentially disadvantageous for the individual.

Other considerations

- **Part- time secondments**

Even if an individual is to be seconded for a proportion of their working hours to another department or employer, it is important that an agreement is put in place between all parties to ensure that matters outlined above are agreed and understood. In addition there must be clarity about how conflicting priorities and demands between the two roles will be handled and how secondment will be brought to an end if the arrangements prove not to be viable.

- **Pension considerations between non –academic (support staff) and academic related grades**

Where a grade 5 member of staff who is in OSPS is seconded to a grade 6 role which is eligible for USS membership, the post holder will exceptionally be allowed to remain in OSPS for the duration of the secondment to avoid a false break in service. In the event that they subsequently secure a substantive post at a higher grade, this post would be liked to USS as normal.

- **Annual leave**

The employing department and host should agree arrangements for notifying, authorising, taking and recording and annual leave before a secondment commences and communicate these in writing to the secondee.

- **Sickness**

Arrangements for notifying, recording and managing sickness should be agreed by all parties. The employing department will retain the responsibility to maintain the formal records.

- **Contact during secondment**

Before the secondment commences all parties should agree the arrangements for the employing department to retain contact with the secondee during the secondment. The purpose of retaining contact is to maintain employee records, ensure processes such as appraisal are continued and to

ensure the employee is kept up to date with developments which may affect their substantive appointment or help with their re-integration.

- **Induction and re-integration**

Careful thought should be given to the arrangements for the secondee both when joining the new department and also re-joining their old department.

Approval: Approval for an internal or external secondment must be approved by the Bursar and/or Senior Tutor.