



## **Brasenose College**

### **Career Break Policy**

**Applies to Non- academic employees**

**Approved by Governing Body on February 2019**

Brasenose College is committed to developing work practices and HR policies that support work-life balance and enhance the staff experience. The aims of the Career Break Policy are to attract, retain and motivate staff by demonstrating a commitment to their long-term career and personal development.

Although there is no statutory or contractual entitlement to a career break the College will give due consideration to all requests from eligible staff. The request will be considered with regard to the operational and strategic requirements of the College and in all cases the College's decision will be final. Employees are advised not to commit themselves in advance of this decision. However, managers are encouraged to accommodate requests for a career break wherever practicable, and must provide clear business or operational reasons if a request is refused.

In certain circumstances a career break may not be the most appropriate arrangement for the employee. Alternative arrangements may need to be explored with departmental managers. Employees who wish to request flexible working in accordance with their statutory rights should refer to the College's Flexible Working Policy:-

<https://staff.bnc.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Flexible-Working-Policy-revised-2014.pdf>

Individuals who are unsure of which policy is applicable to their particular set of circumstances should seek further advice from their HR team.

#### **Eligibility**

Employees be employed on a continuing contract of employment, and must have 3 years or more continuous service before any request for a career break can be made.

All career breaks will be subject to operational and other College requirements.

#### **General Conditions**

Eligible employees may apply for a career break of between three months and one year depending on their individual needs. Very exceptionally, an extension beyond the one-year period may be possible by mutual agreement.

During the career break the individual remains an employee of the College and will continue to be bound by the terms and conditions of their contract including disciplinary and grievance procedures, confidentiality and intellectual property.

The start and end dates of the career break must be clearly defined and will be by mutual agreement between the College and the individual. These dates should take any outstanding work activities and alternative staffing arrangements into consideration.

A career break is a period of unpaid leave. Incremental progression through the salary spine will be suspended during the period of absence although the salary on return will reflect any agreed cost of living increases. If College funds allow, and subject to Bursar's approval, payment of the College bonus will be considered, although this is not a contractual right. Any bonus payment would be made on return to the payroll and would be in proportion to the number of completed months of service in the calendar year prior to leaving, which must be in excess of 7 months.

The period of the career break will count as continuous service, however holiday pay will not accrue during a career break.

A career break is not counted as pensionable service. An employee can choose to make pension contributions during the career break. The payment mechanism will depend on the pension scheme to which they belong. Staff should seek independent advice regarding pension arrangements.

An employee must obtain written consent from the College before they undertake any paid work for another organisation during a career break. Such consent will not be unreasonably withheld and the requirement is primarily designed to avoid any conflicts of interest.

If a career break is agreed, there is no automatic entitlement to an extension of the break. A fresh request will need to be made and considered by the line manager.

The BOD card and any College property should be returned to the College for the duration of the career break.

Individuals will be required to keep abreast of any developments in their field of expertise and to maintain links to any relevant professional networks. You must supply a valid email address and/or mobile phone number to enable the College to remain in contact in case of an emergency that may occur during the Career Break

### **How to apply**

Employees interested in making an application under this policy are encouraged to raise the matter informally with their line manager at the earliest opportunity. Formal applications, supported with appropriate evidence should normally be submitted to the individual's line manager at least 6 months in advance of the requested start date. The Bursar has the final decision.

If a career break is refused the reasons for the refusal will be given to the individual concerned. There is no right to appeal.

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