

## Career Break Arrangements

## 1. Introduction

Glasgow Life recognises that during an employee's working life there will be times when personal commitments or aspirations can take priority over work. Therefore our Career Break arrangements have been designed to allow employees the opportunity to take an unpaid break from their employment.

We appreciate the benefits to be gained from working arrangements that support a work life balance. Our Career Break arrangements are part of the overall flexible working arrangements offered by Glasgow Life.

These arrangements detail the criteria and conditions for career break applications.

## 2. Definition and Purpose

A Career Break is defined as a period of special leave **without** pay.

The purpose of a career break is to provide employees with an opportunity to obtain an extended break from work. While there are no prescribed reasons for a career break, examples include:

- Caring responsibilities;
- Academic study;
- Undertaking voluntary work;
- Travel abroad, and
- Personal Development.

Career breaks may be used in addition to other types of leave in our conditions of service such as maternity leave, parental leave and time to care for dependants. These types of leave are separate from the career break scheme.

## 3. Qualifying Conditions

Employees are required to have at least 2 years' continuous employment on a permanent basis with Glasgow Life to qualify. It excludes employees on a Glasgow Life training programme, such as a modern apprenticeship.

Management should decide whether the demands of service provision allow for a career break to be granted. When considering an employee's application, they will consider a range of operational factors.

Service provision will take priority when an application is being considered.

Employees who are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, and who otherwise meet the criteria as set out above, may apply for a career break. The start date of the career break can commence from the end date of the maternity, paternity or adoption leave period, if requested by the employee.

#### **4. Duration & Frequency**

A career break will last for a minimum of 1 month and a maximum of 2 years and the length of the intended career break should be identified at the point of application. It will be for management to consider whether to grant the career break as requested or to place a condition on the duration of the request - this may be for reasons relating to service provision.

A single maximum break of 2 years may be granted, or multiple breaks with the cumulative total not exceeding 5 years during an employee's career. The employee **must** have a minimum of 1 year's continuous service between career breaks.

#### **5. Application & decision**

Employees should submit their application for a career break in writing to their manager, stating the anticipated length of the career break using the **application form**. This application should be submitted at least 3 months before the proposed start date.

Employees will be given a written response, setting out the decision in principle, normally within four working weeks of application. Where the decision taken is to refuse the request for a career break, the reasons for this will be set out in writing.

An employee can be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or colleague at any stage during the process.

#### **6. Right of Appeal**

Where an employee has their application for a career break refused, they can appeal against this decision. This should be submitted in writing within 14 days of receiving written notification that their application has been rejected. It should detail the reasons for the appeal and should be sent to the Head of Service.

**The decision taken at this stage will be final.**

#### **7. Before the career break**

Before a career break starts, the manager and employee should agree how contact can be maintained. Contact will only be necessary if there is something very important that the manager must discuss with the employee.

If there is a change to any specialist practices which enable the employee to carry out their role, then they must agree to undertake any necessary training before they return to work.

#### **8. During a career break**

Employees should give a permanent address and/or details of how they can be contacted throughout the duration of the break. Any changes to these details must be communicated to their line manager.

## 9. Extension to an agreed career break

Employees may apply for an extension to the duration of a career break. They should give a minimum of six weeks' notice and the cumulative total of the time already taken together with the extension period must not exceed the 2 year limit. The manager will consider this in line with operational factors.

## 10. Conditions of Service

### Pay

A career break is a period of special leave **without pay**. The period of the career break will **not** be recognised for incremental progression of pay.

### Continuous Service

On returning to work the separate periods of employment will be treated as continuous for statutory and contractual purposes. The period of the career break will not count towards reckonable service.

### Annual Leave

During the period of a career break, employees will **not** accrue any annual leave entitlement under the Working Time Regulations. Holiday entitlement for any part years worked will be pro-rated.

### Maternity, Adoption & Paternity

Employees on a career break who become pregnant or a parent are **not** entitled to Glasgow Life occupational maternity/adoption/paternity pay provisions.

Employees on occasion may be entitled to statutory maternity, adoption or paternity pay. Contact HR for more information.

Employees are entitled to make an application to take a career break immediately following maternity, adoption or paternity leave. This should be made no later than three months before the end of the relevant leave period.

### Sick Pay

There is **no** entitlement to Glasgow Life's occupational sick pay provisions whilst on a career break.

There could be specific circumstances where an employee may be entitled to statutory sick pay while on a career break. Contact HR for more information.

### Pension Rights and National Insurance

Contributions to the Pension Scheme will stop when the career break begins and will start again when the employee returns to work. There is provision to repay pension contributions upon your return to work.

Employees should speak with the pension office about this. Contact information can be found on the intranet.

### **State Benefits**

Any employee considering a career break should also be aware of any implications regarding National Insurance benefits. It is responsibility of employees to consult with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) for advice on how a career break could affect their entitlement to state benefits.

### **11. Non return to work - Resignation**

Employees on a career break who do not wish to return to work must resign from their post and provide contractual notice before their agreed return date.

### **12. Right to return to work - Conditions**

Employees on a career break have the right to return to the same type of work and grade. However should there be a Service reform undertaken which significantly changes the employee's organisational unit then this may bring the career break to an end.

### **13. Employment during a career break**

An employee can not undertake alternative employment while on a career break.