

## Family Friendly Sabbatical Guidance Document

### **1. Introduction**

The University is committed to supporting parents and carers returning from relevant family leave. This guidance document specifically relates to the family friendly section of the Sabbatical Leave.

The purpose of having a family friendly version of this policy is to:

- Help colleagues balance their return to work with the demands of their research or pedagogical work.
- Help the university to recruit and retain staff with parental and caring responsibilities.

Please read the below to familiarise yourself with the relevant information. If you would like to discuss the policy further, or have any questions, please email [rewardandrecognition@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:rewardandrecognition@rhul.ac.uk)

### **2. Scope**

Academics staff returning from maternity, adoption, shared parental leave and caring responsibilities may apply for one term of sabbatical leave to allow them to focus on research/pedagogic activity. This could include supervising their laboratories, supervising PhD students, undertaking research, or pedagogic activity.

### **3. Timetable**

Requests made by colleagues returning from family friendly leave or in other exceptional circumstances will be considered as and when they are submitted.

### **4. Length of sabbatical leave**

Eligible staff can apply for a continuous period of three calendar months paid family friendly sabbatical leave.

Staff wishing to apply for family friendly sabbatical are encouraged to discuss their proposed application with their line manager as soon as possible.

Upon eligible staff members informing HR of their intention to take relevant family leave, HR should respond to notify them of their right to take a family friendly sabbatical upon their return to work. Doing so will allow colleagues to proactively apply for a family friendly sabbatical before their relevant family leave begins.

Eligible staff can also request to go on a family friendly sabbatical up to 4 weeks before they are due to return to work from their relevant family leave.

Where the staff member returns to work during a period in which they do not have any scheduled teaching duties, the family friendly sabbatical will be deferred until teaching begins. Furthermore, a member of staff may defer their family friendly sabbatical from their return from relevant family leave, provided that it is taken within one calendar year.

Completed forms should be emailed to HR. Once received, HR will process and record the details of the request, to support monitoring.

The preferred commencement date of the family friendly sabbatical will be communicated by the member of staff by submitting the Family Friendly Sabbatical Request Form, to their line manager/Head of Department by no later than 4 weeks before the family friendly sabbatical is due to commence. The member of staff and their line manager/Head of Department should then meet to discuss the Family Friendly Sabbatical Request Form and any practical arrangements that need to be made before the family friendly sabbatical commences. In circumstances where the member of staff wishes to defer the family friendly sabbatical to a date later than the end of relevant family leave, they must discuss this with their Head of Department.

## **5. Criteria**

There is no entitlement to family friendly sabbatical leave. This may be agreed at the discretion of the University. Arrangements for family friendly sabbatical cover and periods of leave should not be made until approval has been granted by the School Executive Committee.

To be considered for a family friendly sabbatical, applicants must:

- Be on an academic contract of employment.
- Be returning from maternity, adoption/surrogacy, shared parental, or carers leave.
- Not be subject to any action under the University's formal procedures i.e. disciplinary, grievance, capability.
- Re-engage with their research and pedagogic activities as outlined in a programme for their proposed use of time or other resources identifying measurable milestones and timescales.

## **6. Conditions of family friendly sabbatical leave**

Staff on a family friendly sabbatical are:

- Required to have a Performance Development Review in line with the University's timetable and are expected to meet all their objectives.
- Subject to their standard terms and conditions.
- Required to make themselves available for meetings as required by their line manager, Head of Department or Executive Dean. This may be either face to face, via telephone conference call or Teams and will be determined by the relevant manager.
- Required to produce within three months of return from family friendly sabbatical leave a written report for their Head of Department on their period of family friendly sabbatical leave outlining how they have re-engaged with their research or pedagogic activities. A template is provided for this purpose. Further information may be requested by the manager. The purpose of the end-of-family-friendly-sabbatical report is to:
  - Show how the objectives set out in the family friendly sabbatical proposal have been met.
  - Comment on any difficulties encountered.
  - State how personal development plans have been met.
  - Demonstrate re-engagement with their research or pedagogic activities.