



Career Break Policy

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Adopted by (body): Chair of Staffing & Remuneration Committee

WELLBEING POLICY
DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY HUMAN PEOPLE
RESOURCES
CHANGE MANAGEMENT
SUCCESSION PLANNING
CONFIDENTIALITY

Collaborate Ability to work effectively as a team

Empower Ability to take initiative and problem solve in order to improve performance

Lead To lead by example and achieve shared goals

Transformation Ability to recognise a need for change and adapt accordingly



CELT Vision

Our vision is for our trust to be a learning organisation in the truest sense.

At the heart of our vision for education is a self-improving school-led system which has the best evidence-led practice and in which every child fulfils their potential. This is a learning community in which:

- Our leaders are driven by moral purpose. They are outwards focused and not afraid to take risks to achieve system transformation. The focus of policy is on continually improving the quality of teaching.
- Our teachers strive to be outstanding. They work across organisational boundaries to promote a collective sharing of knowledge, skills, expertise and experience in order to deepen pupil learning.
- The individual talents and strengths of our pupils are recognised and nurtured. A passion and curiosity for learning is sustained in every child from the moment they join us. A CELT pupil leaves our family of academies with a purpose, and the confidence to fulfil that purpose.
- Our parents are engaged in our learning community and actively work in partnership with us to raise the level of attainment and aspiration of every child.

CELT Mission

“Learning together to help every child achieve more.”

We believe there is no limit to what every child can achieve, and that every child deserves the chance to fulfil their potential.

As a learning community we are on an ambitious journey. We want to deliver a model for education in the 21st century which instils curiosity and a love for learning in every child so that they develop into young adults who contribute to humanity, follow their passions, and think for themselves.

By learning and improving together – as part of a global learning community – we create much richer and more sustainable opportunities for rigorous transformation than can be provided by any one of our academies alone.

**COLLABORATE
EMPOWER
LEAD
TRANSFORM**

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Policy statement

- 1.1 We recognise that there are times when employees may want or need to take a period of time away from work. We are committed to long-term career development and to retaining staff wherever possible and so permit employees to apply for a paid or unpaid career break under this policy.
- 1.2 A career break can provide staff with an opportunity for personal development (such as extended periods of travel, voluntary service overseas or to pursue further education) or to fulfil personal or domestic commitments. However, a career break may not be the most appropriate way of meeting your needs and, in some cases, we may suggest a more appropriate alternative. We will not allow a career break for the purpose of taking up alternative employment or starting a personal business venture.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time following consultation with staff and recognised trade unions. We may also vary application of this procedure, including any time scales for action, as appropriate, with the mutual agreement of the employee.
- 1.4 The policy has been implemented following consultation with staff and recognised trade unions. It has been formally adopted by the Staffing and Remuneration Committee.

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Who is covered by the policy?

- 2.1 This policy applies to all CELT employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.

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Scope and purpose of the policy

3.1 This policy sets out how CELT will respond to requests for career breaks from employees.

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Personnel responsible for implementing the policy

4.1 The Trustees have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The Trustees have delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Deputy Trust Lead (Operations).

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ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for a career break, you must have:

- (a) at least 2 years' continuous employment [although we may consider employees with less service on an exceptional basis]; and
- (b) a good record of performance in your last two annual appraisals.

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APPLICATION PROCESS

- 6.1 You should first discuss the career break you wish to take informally with your line manager or the Human Resources Department to outline the reason for your request, the proposed length of your absence and consider how your workload might be managed while you are away.

- 6.2 You should then submit your request for a career break in writing to your line manager at least three months before the anticipated start date. In exceptional circumstances we may waive this time limit. Your request should set out:
 - (a) the reason for your proposed career break;
 - (b) the dates between which you wish to take your career break;
 - (c) whether you have previously taken any career breaks and, if so, the dates between which you have taken them;
 - (d) the benefits to our business, if any, of your proposed career break; and
 - (e) how you consider your work can be covered in your absence.

RESPONDING TO YOUR REQUEST

- 7.1 Each request will be considered on its own merits. You should not commit yourself to plans before your request for a career break has been agreed by CELT in writing.
- 7.2 When considering your request the following are examples of the factors that will be taken into account:
- (a) The purpose of, or reasons for, the career break.
 - (b) The period of absence requested.
 - (c) The number and length of any previous career breaks taken.
 - (d) The operational needs of our business.
 - (e) The need to retain your skills, knowledge and experience.
 - (f) Our ability to cover your duties on a temporary basis.
 - (g) The potential benefits of the proposed career break.
- 7.3 We will respond to your request in writing within 1 calendar month of receipt.
- 7.4 Either party may request a meeting to discuss the request.
- 7.5 If your request for a career break is refused we will explain the reasons for our decision.
- 7.6 If we accept your request we will write to confirm the start and return dates for your career break and will set out the changes to your terms of employment. You must sign and return a copy of the letter to accept the changes and until this is received your career break will not have been agreed.

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CONDITIONS FOR TAKING A CAREER BREAK

- 8.1 Career breaks can be granted for up to 1 year.
- 8.2 Where practicable we will return you to the job in which you were employed before your career break, although this cannot be guaranteed. If we cannot return you to the same job we will take reasonable steps to find you a similar job to that in which you worked before your break. During agreed career breaks the contract of employment will usually be suspended and you will not be paid any salary during the career break nor be entitled to any contractual benefits such as, but not limited to, accrual of holiday pay or eligibility for pay progression. Your continuous service, however, would be protected.
- 8.3 In some cases, we may only be able to agree to a career break on condition that you visit the workplace on occasion and up to six keeping-in-touch days, pro-rated if your career break is for less than a year.
- 8.4 You may in some circumstances be permitted to take more than one career break while working for us provided that there has been a gap of at least 2 academic years since returning from your last career break and the total time taken by way of career breaks does not exceed 1 year. A fresh application must be made under this policy for each career break requested.

DURING A CAREER BREAK

- 9.1 Where possible, you will be given 2 weeks' notice of any requirement to attend work during your career break. These will be paid at the rate of pay applicable before the start of your career break. Unless specifically agreed at the time your career break is approved, you will not be obliged to do any work or attend any events during a career break. You will share in the responsibility for keeping in touch with us and with your department during your career break. Your line manager will keep you up to date with changes in policy, personnel, developments and news on a regular basis. You should make arrangements to be kept up to date with developments with your line manager. You are expected to maintain any professional links and to keep up to date with any significant developments in your area of work.
- 9.2 It is a contractual requirement that you must tell your line manager about any change of address or other contact or personal details during your career break.
- 9.3 In the event that during your absence the role from which you are taking a career break is affected by reorganisation, restructuring or redundancy, we will consult with you as appropriate.
- 9.4 You must obtain prior written approval from your line manager and HR before undertaking paid work for anyone else during your career break.

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RETURNING FROM A CAREER BREAK

- 10.1 We are committed, as far as is reasonably practicable, to offering you [the opportunity to return to the post you held before your career break or where this is no longer possible priority consideration for any post within the same undertaking doing the same type of work at the same grade as you carried out before your career break.
- 10.2 When approving your request for a career break we will agree when you will need to contact us before your return date to confirm arrangements. For a career break of a year it is likely to be a term before your return date. For a career break of six months it is likely to be half a term before your return date. For a career break of three months it is likely to be a month before your return date.
- 10.3 Consideration will be given to a request to return earlier than an agreed date, although it may not be possible to accommodate such a request.
- 10.4 If you are prevented from returning to work on your return date due to ill-health, you must contact your Line Manager as soon as possible in accordance with our Sickness Absence Policy.
- 10.5 If you are unable to return to work in accordance with previously agreed arrangements for any reason other than ill-health you must immediately contact your line manager. In exceptional cases, consideration might be given to extending the period of your career break, providing that your overall period of absence does not exceed three months.
- 10.6 If you wish to terminate your employment while on a career break, unless the amount of notice required from you to do so has been varied by agreement with us, you will be required to give notice in accordance with the terms of your contract.
- 10.7 On your return your line manager will organise for you to attend a re-induction process. This will include training on any new systems or procedures that have been introduced during your absence and briefing on any changes that have taken place that will affect you.

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Review of policy

11.1 This policy is reviewed and amended annually by the Trust in consultation with the recognised trade unions. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively. Consideration of the equality impact of this policy will be given to ensure that no groups or individuals with protected characteristics are unintentionally disadvantaged by the policy or practice.

Appendix History of Changes

Version	Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change
1.0	30.11.2022		Original Draft	