

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Department	HR
Policy	General and Special Leave Policy

1. Description

The Academy's HR department have updated the Academy's General and Special Leave Policy. The policy establishes guidelines for granting leave to employees, including annual leave, compassionate leave, and other special leave arrangements. Maternity, paternity and parental leave guidelines are detailed within a separate institutional policy, which is also subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). The General and Special Leave Policy aims to support employees in balancing personal responsibilities with work commitments whilst fostering equity and inclusion in leave provision.

The purpose of this EIA is to assess the potential impact of the policy on different groups of employees, ensuring compliance with equality legislation and promoting fairness and diversity in the workplace.

2. Could the policy have an adverse impact on equality in relation to the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010?

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage or civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

No, the policy does not have a negative impact on the above protected characteristics.

3. Does this policy provide opportunities to make a positive impact on equality?

Yes, the policy includes the following provisions:

- Religious holidays - employees whose religious beliefs require them to be absent on particular days of the year outside of UK statutory holidays should take these days as unpaid leave. Alternatively, employees may opt to take such days as part of their annual leave entitlement.
- Urgent family leave - employees are entitled to take up to 1 week (5 working days) off work, which is unpaid, to deal with an emergency involving a dependant or to care for a dependent per year. The Director of HR or Registrar and Director of Student Operations may also grant up to 3 days paid leave, dependant on individual circumstances. The policy defines a dependant as a spouse, partner, child or parent, or someone who lives with an employee as part of their family. A dependant may also be someone who relies on an employee for assistance as a primary carer or the only person who can help in an emergency.
- Compassionate leave - employees are entitled to compassionate leave, normally up to 14 days, where a member of their immediate family dies, is seriously ill or in severe distress. The policy defines immediate family as parents, grandparents, siblings, spouse, or children. Paid and unpaid compassionate leave will be granted at the discretion of the Director of HR or Registrar and Director of Student Operations.
- Parental bereavement leave - employees are entitled to 2 weeks paid statutory parental bereavement leave if their child dies under the age of 18 or their baby is stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy and they have been employed for at least 26 weeks, before the child's death or stillbirth. The policy also makes provision for miscarriage. Miscarriage refers to pregnancy loss that takes place before the end of the 24th week of pregnancy. Employees who experience a miscarriage are entitled to up to 5 days of paid leave.

4. What evidence has been considered? What consultation has been undertaken?

The policy was developed in consultation with the following Academy staff, groups, departments:

- The Policy Review Group, which includes the Registrar and Director of Student Operations, Director of Finance and the Executive Assistant and Secretary to the Governing Body
- The HR Team
- The Equality Impact Assessment Sub-Committee

5. What actions have been agreed as a result of this EIA?

In summary, the policy provides leave options that accommodate employees' diverse needs, such as those related to religious holidays, urgent family care, compassionate and bereavement related absences. However, it is important to monitor and evaluate the policy and to implement appropriate measures to mitigate any potential negative impacts that may be identified, particularly with regard to employees with specific individual needs.

Progress on the actions detailed below will be reported to the Belonging Committee.

Action	Who	Timescale
Monitoring and evaluation: Collect and analyse data on leave requests and approvals to identify trends or inequalities.	HR	Ongoing
Feedback mechanisms: Maintain confidential channels for employees to provide feedback on their leave experiences.	Line managers	Ongoing

Received by the Belonging Committee

Date: 27/06/2025