



SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY

DESCRIPTION	
TITLE:	SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY
POLICY NUMBER :	
COMPILED BY:	DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES & EQUITY
EFFECTIVE DATE:	2 OCTOBER 2009
REVIEW DATE:	OCTOBER 2012
APPROVED BY:	STAFFING COMMITTEE: 20 MAY 2009 and 21 SEPTEMBER 2009 SENATE: 27 MAY 2009 FINANCE COMMITTEE: 17 AUGUST 2009 COUNCIL: 2 OCTOBER 2009

1. PREAMBLE

The University of KwaZulu-Natal recognizes that sabbatical leave is an essential element in the intellectual and academic life of individual members of the academic staff and the institution as whole. It shall assist the University to achieve its mission of academic excellence and research innovation whilst providing academic staff members with an opportunity for professional development and career advancement

The Conditions of Service provide for permanent academic employees to accrue sabbatical leave from commencement of employment. Employees who have successfully completed their probationary period may, in terms of this policy be granted sabbatical leave subject to approval by the appropriate authority. This policy must therefore be read together with the Conditions of Service.

2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Sabbatical leave – a temporary absence from work in the career of an academic employee for the purposes of approved scholarly or creative activity for academic professional development or research purposes.

Personal Development Plan (PDP)- A Personal Development Plan is developed by each employee as part of a structured and supported process undertaken by the employee to reflect upon his/her own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for his/her personal, educational and career development.

University refers to the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

In this policy, unless inconsistent with the context, words referring to any one gender shall include a reference to the other gender; the singular shall include the plural and *vice versa*; and natural persons shall include artificial or juristic persons and *vice versa*.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

Permanent academic employees on University Conditions of Service are eligible for sabbatical leave in terms of this policy.

4. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework and broad principles for the granting of sabbatical leave to permanent academic employees.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

The University recognises that it is important to provide sabbatical leave for academic employees to increase their knowledge, further their research, stimulate intellectual interests, improve their teaching and strengthen networks with the global community of scholars, thus enhancing their contribution to the

University. Sabbatical leave accordingly must benefit both the academic staff member and the University.

6. POLICY PROVISIONS

6.1 Conditions

- 6.1.1 The granting of sabbatical leave is not automatic and depends on approval of the sabbatical leave proposal by the Head of School, Dean and relevant Executive member. It is also subject to verification of eligibility and accrued sabbatical leave by the Division of Human Resources and Equity.
- 6.1.2 Sabbatical leave will not be unreasonably denied.
- 6.1.3 Academic staff wishing to go on sabbatical leave must provide reasonable notice, as defined by the relevant faculty, of intention to take sabbatical leave, to facilitate planning within the School/Department. Sabbatical leave may be denied if insufficient notice is given.
- 6.1.4 The applicant for sabbatical leave must have successfully completed her/his probationary period as at date of application.
- 6.1.5 The applicant must have achieved the agreed outcomes of any previous sabbatical leave granted at this University or must have provided a reasonable explanation for non achievement thereof.
- 6.1.6 Due to the mutual benefit for employer and employee inherent in the notion of sabbatical, sabbatical leave may not be granted in the twelve months prior to normal retirement date or the end date of any extension beyond retirement granted by the University Retirement Committee.
- 6.1.7 Generally Executive members, Deans, Deputy Deans, Heads of Schools and Deputy Heads of Schools are not eligible to take sabbatical leave during their period of office. In exceptional circumstances sabbatical leave may be granted, in the discretion of the Executive member or Vice-Chancellor as applicable, up to a maximum of 22 working days.

6.2 Accrual of sabbatical leave

- 6.2.1 Sabbatical leave will accrue from date of appointment of a permanent academic staff member at a rate of 2.75 working days per calendar month of completed service.
- 6.2.2 Staff appointed on fixed-term contracts of two years and longer are eligible to accrue sabbatical leave but shall only be eligible to take sabbatical leave if their fixed-term contract is converted to a permanent contract on or before conclusion of contract.
- 6.2.3 Sabbatical leave accrues during probation but may not be taken during any probationary period.
- 6.2.4 Sabbatical leave continues to accrue at the prevailing rate (6.2.1) while an employee is on sabbatical leave.
- 6.2.5 The accrual of sabbatical leave will continue for academic staff who are seconded to Executive or Faculty leadership and management posts

including Dean, Deputy Dean, Head of School and Deputy Head of School.

- 6.2.6 Sabbatical leave will not accrue during any periods of unpaid leave or an external secondment.
- 6.2.7 Sabbatical leave will accumulate to a maximum of two hundred and sixty four days and any accrual in excess of this amount, after the effective date of this policy will be automatically forfeited. Transitional provisions shall be enacted to allow persons who have accumulated more than the maximum accumulation as at effective date of this policy, an opportunity to use the excess accumulation within a period of three years, failing which it shall be forfeited.

6.3 Periods of sabbatical leave

- 6.3.1 A staff member wishing to apply for sabbatical leave must have accrued to his/her credit the requisite numbers of days of sabbatical leave being applied for, as at the date of application. A staff member who does not have the requisite number of days to his/her credit may utilise accrued annual leave and unpaid leave or a combination thereof.
- 6.3.2 The minimum number of days of sabbatical leave that may be granted shall be determined and approved by the relevant faculty board, provided it is not less than 22 working days.
- 6.3.3 The maximum number of days of sabbatical leave that may be granted within a period of five (5) years is two hundred and sixty four (264) working days.

6.4 Sabbatical leave Proposal

- 6.4.1 Applications for sabbatical leave must be submitted in the prescribed format and must be accompanied by a sabbatical leave proposal.
- 6.4.2 The sabbatical leave proposal shall be congruent with the staff member's Personal Development Plan (PDP).
- 6.4.3 The proposal shall include specific, measurable and time-bound objectives to be achieved during the sabbatical leave in furtherance of the individual's professional development, research, teaching or other scholarly activity.
- 6.4.4 The applicant may not proceed on sabbatical leave prior to receiving written approval by the relevant Executive member.
- 6.4.5 The sabbatical leave application, proposal and line manager's approval must be submitted to the Division of Human Resources and Equity for processing and subsequent filing in the staff member's personal file.
- 6.4.6 Prior to granting approval, the Executive member must be satisfied that satisfactory arrangements have been made, by the Head of School, in relation to meeting of the staff member's teaching, postgraduate supervision and administrative obligations during the period of absence.

6.5 Travel Assistance Grant

- 6.5.1 A conditional travel grant, to assist with travel expenses, may be awarded to academic staff, who are spending part or all of their sabbatical leave outside of South Africa. The maximum amount of such grant shall be determined annually by the Remuneration Committee of Council. The redemption of the grant is subject to achieving the outcomes of the sabbatical proposal (See 6.5.4 and 6.5.5)
- 6.5.2 Payment of the grant will not be made more than three (3) months prior to the commencement of a period of sabbatical leave.
- 6.5.4 The Head of School is required to submit written confirmation to the Dean and relevant Executive member that the outcomes of the sabbatical proposal have been met.
- 6.5.5 Should the staff member fail to meet the predetermined objectives, and is unable to provide a satisfactory reason, the grant must be refunded to the University, in the discretion of the relevant Executive member. In such a case the amount of grant, subject to 6.5.6 below, shall be deducted from the employee's salary in monthly installments over a period not exceeding two (2) years.
- 6.5.6 Where a staff member is able to provide a reasonable explanation for failing to meet the predetermined objectives, including illness or injury, the grant may on motivation to the relevant Executive member, be rebated by up to fifty percent (50%) of the repayable amount.
- 6.5.7 Should an employee resign while on sabbatical leave or within a period following on the sabbatical leave which is equal to the length of the sabbatical leave, he/she will be liable for reimbursement of the full amount of the travel grant.

6.6 Sabbatical leave Report

A sabbatical leave report must be submitted by the applicant to his/her Head of School, within one (1) month of the end date of the sabbatical leave period, clearly indicating how the outcomes envisaged in the sabbatical proposal have been met.

The Sabbatical report must be confirmed by the Line Manager and submitted to the Dean and relevant Executive member. The Dean must approve the report. The final decision as to whether the report is satisfactory and the agreed outcomes as stated in the proposal have been achieved will vest in the relevant Executive member.

Where the agreed outcomes as contained in the Sabbatical proposal have not been met and the staff member is unable to provide a reasonable explanation, the staff member will be expected to forfeit the equivalent number of days of accrued sabbatical leave and/or annual leave. Where some of the outcomes have been met, the Executive member may determine the number of days to be forfeited proportional to the outcomes that have been achieved. Where the staff member does not have sufficient accrued sabbatical and/or annual leave then future accrual will be suspended up to the equivalent number of days of sabbatical leave previously granted.

6.7 Resignation during or following sabbatical leave

Should an employee resign while on sabbatical leave or within a period of three months following on the sabbatical leave, the sabbatical leave shall be converted to unpaid leave. Interest at a rate determined by the Finance Committee of Council from time to time, will be charged on any monies due by the employee calculated from the date of resignation.

The University shall, subject to the applicable legislation, be entitled to deduct from any funds due to the employee on resignation, such amount as may be due by the employee which it is unable to recover from annual leave or other gratuities.

6.8 Termination of Service

With the exception of the transitional arrangements approved for employees whose services terminate due to death, medical incapacity, operational reasons, retirement and early retirement during the period 2008 to 2012, any sabbatical leave standing to the credit of an employee on termination of service, for whatever reason, shall be forfeited and no gratuity payable.

6.9 Transfer of Sabbatical Leave

New employees may be permitted to transfer part of their accrued sabbatical from another University provided they have not been paid in lieu thereof. The maximum that may be transferred is fifty percent (50%) of the accrued balance up to a maximum of ninety nine(99) working days.

6.10 Special Sabbatical Leave

All Deans, Deputy Deans, Heads of School and Deputy Heads of School shall receive a three-month special sabbatical immediately on termination of their term of office, provided that they are returning to a position within the University. This special sabbatical leave may be prorated but no special sabbatical leave shall be granted for periods of secondment to a leadership or management position of less than one year.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE

The effective date of this policy is 2 October 2009.

8. REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed at minimum every three (3) years from the effective date.