

Self-Funded Sabbaticals for Teachers & Associated Professionals - Guidance Note

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 [Part 2 Section 9.28](#) of the SNCT Handbook for Teachers & Associated Professionals outlines Teachers & Associated Professionals are entitled to apply for a self-funded sabbatical subject to eligibility criteria. Further information can be found in [Appendix 2.23](#) of the SNCT Handbook.
- 1.2 A self-funded sabbatical is defined as a formal opportunity to obtain an extended break from work of up to 1 year, for the purpose of providing employees with an opportunity to refresh and re-energise their careers.
- 1.3 A self-funded sabbatical is separate and distinct from family leave as set out in Part 2: Section 7, Family Leave or Career Breaks as set out within the SNCT Handbook.
- 1.4 An employee may undertake alternative employment while on a self-funded sabbatical, subject to the agreement of the employer. However, a self-funded sabbatical should not normally be used to undertake alternative full-time employment, although placement or internship arrangements may be acceptable. It should be noted that there are no specific prescribed activities that a sabbatical must involve.
- 1.5 To be eligible for a sabbatical, employees are required to have at least 5 years of continuous employment, on a permanent or temporary basis, with any Scottish Council.
- 1.6 On an annual basis up to 1% of the total number of employees covered by SNCT terms and conditions will be released on a self-funded sabbatical.
- 1.7 The exigencies of the service will be considered when a request for a self-funded sabbatical is being considered.

2. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

- 2.1 A self-funded sabbatical is unpaid. The contract of employment continues during the self-funded sabbatical and the employee retains statutory and contractual rights as applicable. This includes the right to notice of termination of employment.
- 2.2 Entitlement to annual leave and public holidays during the leave years in which the self-funded sabbatical commences and ends will be calculated pro-rata to the part year period of service. During the period of a self-funded sabbatical employees will not accrue any annual leave entitlement under the Working Time Regulations.
- 2.3 A self-funded sabbatical will be considered and counted as service in relation to compulsory transfer arrangements as agreed by LNCT.

- 2.4 Time spent on a self-funded sabbatical will impact on entitlements to statutory maternity pay and leave, which is calculated based on periods of paid work in the period ending 15 weeks before the expected date of childbirth. Employees should take account of this when planning a sabbatical.
- 2.5 Self-funded sabbaticals will impact on pension and national insurance contributions, further information can be found in [Appendix 2.23](#) of the SNCT Handbook.
- 2.6 Whilst on a self-funded sabbatical, it is the employee's responsibility to ensure that they maintain their professional registration with the GTCS.

3. DURATION & FREQUENCY

- 3.1 The duration of a self-funded sabbatical will be a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 1 year. The intended duration of the self-funded sabbatical should be identified when an application is made.
- 3.2 An employee may be granted up to 3 self-funded sabbaticals within their full employment career. In addition, a minimum of 5 years of continuous service with any Scottish council is required between each period of self-funded sabbatical.
- 3.3 An employee on a self-funded sabbatical may apply for an extension to the duration of such, subject to the cumulative total of the time elapsed and the extension period not exceeding 1 year. Any extensions to a sabbatical can only be agreed by the Head of Education.
- 3.4 An employee is entitled to early termination of a self-funded sabbatical but may be required to wait up to 8 working weeks before resuming work. Where the reason for wishing to end the self-funded sabbatical is pregnancy the employee will be returned to paid work as quickly as possible in order to be eligible for statutory benefits such as maternity leave and pay.
- 3.5 Any application for extension or early termination of a self-funded sabbatical should be made at least 8 working weeks prior to the original date of termination.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS AND AUTHORISATION

- 4.1 Employees who wish to request a self-funded sabbatical should submit the application form (Appendix 1) to their Head of Establishment/Line Manager in the first instance. The Head of Establishment/Line Manager then requires to complete Section 2 of the application form and submit the application form to the relevant Education and Families Manager for consideration. Applications should be submitted at least 12 months prior to the proposed date of commencement, although it is understood that there may be exceptional circumstances to this timeline. The date of commencement of the self-funded sabbatical should correspond with the beginning of a school term.
- 4.2 On receipt of an application for a self-funded sabbatical the Education and Families Manager will ensure the applicant is eligible. The Education and Families Manager will consider the application and following a decision being made by them, they will confirm to the employee in writing whether the request for a self-funded sabbatical

has been approved. If the request has been rejected the reasons for this will be outlined in writing.

- 4.3 Where the self-funded sabbatical is agreed, the approved application form should be sent to the Employee Service Centre for processing prior to commencement of the sabbatical. A copy of the completed form should be given to the employee by their line manager as well as the decision being confirmed in writing within 14 days.
- 4.4 Prior to the commencement of a self-funded sabbatical agreement should be reached regarding arrangements, if any, for contact during the period. There should be a clear understanding of the nature and frequency of any contact. The employee is obliged to provide the council with appropriate contact details during this period.

5.0 APPEAL PROCESS

- 5.1 Where an employee has made an application for a self-funded sabbatical and their application has been rejected, the employee can appeal against this decision to the Head of Education within 14 days of receiving the outcome. You can not appeal against the decision not to extend the period of a sabbatical.
- 5.2 The appeal will be considered by the Head of Education within 14 days of receiving the appeal. The employee will be given a minimum of 7 days' notice of the appeal hearing unless other arrangements have been mutually agreed.
- 5.3 The employee will have the right to be represented or accompanied by a trade union representative or colleague.
- 5.4 The outcome of the appeal will be notified to the employee in writing within 14 days of the appeal hearing.
- 5.5 If an employee is unable to attend the appeal hearing for any reason, they should contact the Head of Education at the earliest possible point and an alternative date and time will be arranged.
- 5.6 Where an employee fails to attend more than one appeal hearing without reasonable explanation, the appeal application will be treated as having been withdrawn and confirmation of the withdrawal will be sent to the employee in writing.

6.0 RETURNING TO WORK

- 6.1 Employees who are granted a self-funded sabbatical have the right to return to the substantive post which they held prior to their self-funded sabbatical subject to the outcome of any intervening school closures, amalgamations or other organisational restructuring.
- 6.2 Where a post considered to be suitable is offered on different terms and conditions from the post held prior to the self-funded sabbatical then placement should be by agreement of the employee.
- 6.3 Teachers or associated professionals on a self-funded sabbatical who wish to resign from their post must provide contractual notice.

SELF FUNDED SABBATICAL APPLICATION FORM FOR TEACHERS & ASSOCIATED PROFESSIONALS

PART 1 – EMPLOYEE DETAILS (to be completed by the employee)

NAME:	JOB TITLE:
EMPLOYEE NUMBER:	ESTABLISHMENT/DEPARTMENT:
CONTINUOUS SERVICE DATE:	SABBATICAL REQUESTED DATE FROM: DATE TO:
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (PLEASE TICK)	
Please note: to continue with the application all eligibility criteria require to be met	
5 years continuous employment with a Scottish Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application submitted at least 12 months prior to proposed commencement date	<input type="checkbox"/>
Period of sabbatical requested is between 3 months and 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/>
No previous periods of sabbatical in the last 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Date of proposed commencement coincides with the beginning of a school term	<input type="checkbox"/>
FURTHER INFORMATION	
Detail how a self-funded sabbatical will refresh and re-energise your career and provide information as to what, if any, activities will be undertaken during the sabbatical.	
Detail what impact a sabbatical will have on your professional practice and what benefits it will have for your current role?	
Signature:	Date:

PART 2 – AUTHORISATION (to be completed by line manager and Head of Service)

LINE MANAGER APPROVAL			
I have considered the application and support the request for a self-funded sabbatical:			
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
If not in support of the application, please outline reasons below:			
Please outline any proposed cover arrangements that you may have considered:			
Line Manager Signature:		Date:	
EDUCATION AND FAMILIES MANAGER APPROVAL			
REQUEST FOR SELF-FUNDED SABBATICAL APPROVED:			
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
If not approved, please outline reasons below:			
E & F Manager Signature:		Date:	

A copy of the completed form should be given to the employee by their line manager as well as the decision being confirmed in writing within 14 days.

If approved the line manager should advise the Employee Service Centre at the earliest opportunity.