

# Secondment Guideline

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) To assist staff with internal and external Secondment arrangements.

### Scope

(2) This Guideline covers the following topics:

- a. purpose of a Secondment;
- b. duration of a Secondment;
- c. benefits of a Secondment;
- d. keys to a successful Secondment;
- e. releasing internal staff for Secondment within the University;
- f. Secondment checklist;
- g. managing change;
- h. end of a Secondment; and
- i. additional expenses.

## Section 2 - Policy

(3) Refer to the [Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Procedure](#).

## Section 3 - Procedures

(4) Nil.

## Section 4 - Guidelines

### Purpose of a Secondment

(5) Secondments can be used for a range of purposes including providing career and professional development opportunities for staff or to re-energise a staff member by providing the chance to acquire new skills and experience.

(6) From the University's perspective, Secondments can contribute to internal knowledge through the engagement of people with specialist knowledge or experience, or through a staff member bringing knowledge and skills back to the University after an external Secondment. In the longer term, Secondment opportunities can also improve staff retention.

### Duration of a Secondment

(7) A Secondment will normally be no longer than two (2) years. A Secondment greater than two (2) years will need to

be discussed and approved by the Executive Dean / Head of Office.

(8) The duration of a Secondment may be extended if approved by the Executive Dean / Head of Office.

## Benefits of a Secondment

For the Host Unit	For the Home Unit	Staff member
gives access to new expertise that may not otherwise be affordable brings in an external perspective to the organisation (new ideas and no preconceptions)	develops valuable experience for an individual which is not available from the Home Unit provides opportunities for the staff member to become more knowledgeable improves staff engagement, through increased development opportunity provides information about the culture, methods and knowledge of other teams	enhances personal and professional development provides the opportunity for different responsibilities offers experience of managing / operating outside a familiar environment provides an opportunity to develop a wider perspective and become more adaptable provides an opportunity to develop and participate in new networks

## Keys to Successful Secondments

(9) The Secondee should be given appropriate training and advised of the range of specific tasks for which they will be responsible as early into the Secondment as possible. Prior to the Secondment, discussion should be undertaken on the type of tasks the Secondment will involve.

(10) It is very important that the Home Unit capitalises on the development of the Secondee when they return. The Secondee should be encouraged to present a detailed report on what they have learned from the experience and identify different ways of doing things. The Secondee should also be encouraged to make a presentation to staff on the benefits and issues from the Secondment and to pass on any new skills learnt.

(11) It is very important for the Secondee to be aware and accepting of any differences in employment practices, and for the Host Unit and Home Unit to anticipate and deal with any potential issues before they arise.

## Releasing Internal Staff for Secondment within the University

(12) The Home Unit supervisor should be consulted as early as practical regarding the intention to second their staff member.

(13) The Home Unit supervisor and the Host Unit supervisor should negotiate a release date for the staff member to be seconded. Each supervisor should consider the other's needs in the release date negotiation and seek the most practical outcome for the University. A maximum of four (4) weeks prior to start date is recommended.

## Secondment Checklist

### Decide if a Secondment is Appropriate

(14) Identify why a Secondment would be of benefit and evaluate the nature of the work you have in mind. Ask questions, including:

- is there a shortage of skills within a particular area or location?
- do you have a particular project to progress?
- do you want to fill a key role by a means other than recruiting a continuing staff member?
- what can you offer? For example, can you offer high level networking, political exposure, or financial experience?

- e. what advantages are there in encouraging individuals to take part, and the department / unit or external organisation to release them?

(15) Write a proposal for Academic Staff or a position description for Professional Staff describing the Secondment, its primary functions, reporting relationships and environment.

(16) Establish what resources may be required to support the Secondee and the most appropriate person to supervise the Secondment.

### **Identify Whether it is an Internal or External Arrangement**

(17) Find out which departments / units within the University or external organisations might have an interest in your project because of shared or related aims.

(18) For an external Secondment, find out if the organisation has a Secondment policy or guidelines.

(19) Recognise that the external organisation may have reservations about passing on expertise to the University. Personal contacts are often more effective than formal requests.

### **Seek Approval for the Secondment**

(20) Seek approval for the Secondment from the Executive Dean / Head of Office or delegate.

### **Meet the Secondee**

(21) Ensure the Host Unit supervisor meets the Secondee, and do the following:

- a. interview the Secondee, if applicable;
- b. find out how the Secondee (and their employer) view Secondment, for example, is it seen as a promotion or sideways move?
- c. make sure the Secondee is enthusiastic and committed and not under any pressure to agree to the assignment;
- d. check that the Secondee understands the aims of the project, is self-motivated and capable of adapting quickly to new situations and people;
- e. ensure that the Secondee is available for the time required and, if possible, encourage them to speak to others who have been on Secondment; and
- f. clarify the end of Secondment arrangements for the benefit of all parties.

### **Finalise the Objectives of the Secondment**

(22) Work with the department / unit or external organisation to establish the boundaries of the project and its objectives. Establish what benefits are to be gained by all three parties: the Host Unit, the Secondee, and the Home Unit.

(23) Agree with the department / unit or external organisation about:

- a. background information on the organisation and the assignment;
- b. the type and length of the Secondment;
- c. the role and responsibilities of the Secondee;
- d. special circumstances or conditions peculiar to the Secondment;
- e. the supervisor for the Secondee; and
- f. the Host Unit's contact or communication with the Home Unit.

## Clarify Terms and Conditions of Employment

Internal Secondment	External Secondment
<p>An internal Secondment may be advertised, or a direct appointment, in accordance with the <a href="#">Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Procedure</a>. Payments to a Secondee during a Secondment may be treated in either of the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. the Home Unit may continue to pay the Secondee, plus associated on-costs, and arrange for an equivalent or proportional transfer of funding from the Host Unit; or</li><li>2. the Home Unit may cease all payment to the Secondee, and the Host Unit will pay all salary and associated on-costs for the period of the Secondment.</li></ol>	<p>A University staff member on Secondment with an external organisation may be employed under the terms and conditions of the external organisation or may remain an employee of the University for all purposes for the Secondment.</p> <p>A staff member will normally take leave without pay from the University to undertake an external Secondment when employed under the terms and conditions of the external organisation. When a person from an external organisation undertakes a Secondment at the University, consider how the Secondee will be paid. Either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. the Secondee is employed as a fixed-term staff member by the University; or</li><li>2. the Secondee's employer invoices the University for the staff member's salary plus associated on-costs.</li></ol> <p>The following costs will normally be met by the Host Unit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. salary (at least equal to the employee's substantive position);</li><li>2. employer's superannuation contribution;</li><li>3. payroll tax;</li><li>4. annual leave loading;</li><li>5. workers' compensation;</li><li>6. provision for annual and long service leave accrual;</li><li>7. administrative costs; and</li><li>8. allowances.</li></ol>

## Finalise Terms and Conditions of Employment

(24) The supervisor completes the [Secondment Form](#) and submits to Human Resources for processing.

(25) In addition to the [Secondment Form](#), where there is an external organisation involved, a formal contract may be required. Speak with your Faculty Human Resources Manager (HR Manager) or the Manager, Strategic Resourcing and Talent to assist with this.

(26) For internal Secondments, Human Resources will provide a letter to the Secondee detailing the Secondment arrangements.

## Help the Secondee to Settle In

(27) Remember that the working conditions and culture in the department / unit or external organisation may be different from what the Secondee is used to. Do the following:

- a. provide an induction to help with the process, bearing in mind that the Secondee is neither a staff member nor simply a guest, but both; and
- b. where a Secondee is supervising other staff members, they must receive the same level of information (staff handbooks, memos, access to staff files) afforded to other supervisors.

## Ensure that the Secondee Maintains Contact with their Home Unit

(28) Suggest that a support person from the Home Unit is appointed to offer support and advice to the Secondee. Such an arrangement can help the Secondee to resolve conflicts of interest which may occur. It can also keep the Home Unit in touch with the skills being developed, so that the best use can be made of them on the Secondee's return.

(29) To give an extra level of support, provide the Secondee with the names of other Secondees Macquarie University is sponsoring, where applicable.

(30) Encourage the Home Unit to continue to invite the Secondee to meetings and social functions and to send out newsletters or email circulars so that the Secondee can keep in touch with their Home Unit.

### **Monitor Performance and Results**

(31) The responsibility for performance appraisal may rest with the Host Unit. Do the following:

- a. agree on an appropriate method with the Home Unit for measuring the success of the Secondment for all parties concerned;
- b. undertake regular review meetings which are attended by the Host Unit, Home Unit and Secondee, the frequency of which will be determined by factors such as perceived need, the nature of the role, or the seniority of the Secondee;
- c. ensure performance development and review is completed for internal Secondments; and
- d. encourage the Secondee to keep a brief work diary, and consider making it a condition that the Secondee writes a report (available to both Host Unit and Home Unit) at the end of the Secondment that demonstrates, for example, achievements, challenges and outcomes.

### **Managing Change**

(32) If a staff member's position changes during the staff member's Secondment as a result of a managing change process in accordance with the Macquarie University [Enterprise Agreements](#), the University will contact the staff member with respect to any possible impacts that the changes may have on their position.

### **End of a Secondment**

(33) Four (4) weeks prior to the end of the Secondment, the supervisor is to make contact with the Secondee to discuss their return and to ensure a smooth transition to the Home Unit.

(34) For all Secondment arrangements, subject to managing change, a University staff member resuming duty after a period of Secondment will return to their former position.

### **Early End to Secondment**

(35) Home Unit or Host Unit:

- a. The Secondment may be brought to an end by the Home Unit or Host Unit by providing ten (10) days' written notice to the other party and the Secondee.

(36) Secondee:

- a. The Secondee may make a written request to their supervisor to end the Secondment and return to work in their Home Unit earlier than the end date for the Secondment.

(37) Supervisor:

- a. Where a supervisor of the University is notified of an intention to end the Secondment or they intend to end a Secondment, the supervisor seeks approval from the Executive Dean / Head of Office.

(38) Executive Dean / Head of Office:

- a. Review a request for an early end to a Secondment by taking into account budgetary provisions, backfilling arrangements (including fixed-term contracts that may need to run to conclusion), or other associated matters. The Executive Dean / Head of Office has absolute discretion to approve an early end to a Secondment.

## **Additional Expenses**

(39) Any additional costs associated with a Secondment such as cost of removal and eventual return of personal effects, other allowances, etc. will be the subject of negotiation between the Secondee and the Host Unit and Home Unit.

## **Section 5 - Definitions**

(40) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Guideline:

- a. Secondment means an arrangement made with the mutual consent of the supervisor and staff member, where a staff member is released under specific agreed arrangements to work in another area within the University or with another organisation for a specific period of time.

A Secondment arrangement may be made in the following circumstances:

- i. within the University (internal Secondment);
  - ii. to an external organisation (external Secondment); or
  - iii. from an external organisation (external Secondment).
- b. Home Unit means the department / unit or external organisation where the Secondee is normally located.
  - c. Host Unit means the department / unit or external organisation where the Secondee is undertaking the Secondment.
  - d. Secondee means the person performing the work under the Secondment arrangement.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	22nd February 2021
<b>Review Date</b>	1st April 2021
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-President, People and Services
<b>Approval Date</b>	16th August 2011
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Eric Knight Deputy Vice-Chancellor (People and Operations)
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