

# International Secondment Policy

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The Secondment Policy (Non international) is available at:

<http://policies.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-004.pdf>

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<http://policies.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-195.pdf>

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## Summary

### 1.1 What is this document about?

The International Secondment Policy sets out fair and consistent treatment of staff considering international secondment. It sets out roles and responsibilities and introduces allowances for different lengths of secondment. It identifies sources of support and guidance for employees and managers.

### 1.2 Who is this for?

All staff.

### 1.3 How does the University check this is followed?

Through advice and guidance from HR to managers and ensuring documentation issued by HR is in line with the policy.

### 1.4 Who can you contact if you have any queries about this Policy?

HR Business Partnering team, contact details available at:

[www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/humanresources/contactus/hrbusinesspartnerteams/](http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/humanresources/contactus/hrbusinesspartnerteams/)

## 1. Purpose and Scope

The University vision is to create a network of strategic global partners to support internationalisation. Internationalisation includes developing global graduates, extending our international footprint and reach, increasing international research and improving our international position, brand and profile. The strategic choice made by the University to invest in campuses in other countries will offer significant opportunities for both the University and its staff to realise the full benefits of transnational education (TNE).

The term 'international secondment' refers to the temporary transfer of a member of staff from their normal role to do another role on a fixed term basis outside of the UK internationally. This policy is designed to provide managers and staff with information about the main issues to be considered when seconding a member of staff overseas.

This policy will not normally apply in cases where individual academics or researchers request to undertake part of their work, such as a sabbatical or research study outside the UK. Nor will it apply in cases where periods of unpaid leave or unpaid sabbaticals are agreed. Further information on process in these cases where this policy does not apply is available from HR.

This policy covers academic, research and support staff.

## 2 Categories of international working

For staff currently based in the UK, international secondments normally falls into one of 2 categories. This policy outlines the approach for each of these categories.

### 2.1 Short-Term International Secondments

- Where a member of staff is seconded by the University to work in another country for a period of more than 30 calendar days but generally less than 6 months (183 calendar days).

### 2.3 Long-Term International Secondments

- Where a member of staff is seconded by the University to work in another country for a period of over 6 months (183 calendar days) up to 5 years.

## 3 Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 The secondee will:

- Keep in contact with the University when overseas as agreed with their UK Head of Department (or equivalent)
- Where possible, be aware of local risks such as changes in political climate etc and keep their UK Head of Department (or equivalent) informed should these change
- Abide by country legal requirements.
- Be aware of cultural requirements. These will vary depending on the country and will be discussed with the International Office on a case by case basis.
- Ensure they have appropriate right to travel and work in the country that they are seconded to, provide copies of right to work documents to HR and advise HR of any situation that arises which may affect their right to work
- Ensure they adhere to all health and safety requirements and recommendations advised by the host organisation, our insurers or the Health and Safety Office
- Abide by the requirements of this policy

### 3.2 The Head of Department (or equivalent) /budget holder will:

- Lead in negotiating the terms of the secondment in conjunction with Director of Corporate Governance and HR if appropriate, and co-ordinate activities undertaken as part of the risk assessment / due diligence of potential external partners before entering into a contract with them to ensure there is an appropriate environment for secondment of staff
- Keep in contact with the member of staff and conduct annual appraisals
- Retain line management
- Agree terms of the secondment in line with this policy and in conjunction with their Human Resources (HR) Business Partner

### 3.3 Human Resources will:

- Lead on HR, including employment law and contractual aspects for the assessment / due diligence work
- Raise the secondment contract for the member of staff
- Provide advice and guidance on the terms of the secondment to include early repatriation if required
- Draft the secondment agreement
- Actively liaise with host organisations in setting up the secondment

### 3.4 Occupational Health Service will:

- Advise on fitness for secondment from the health perspective on OH referral
- Advise on health matters and any reasonable adjustments
- Advise on country specific health protection requirements and give all appropriate vaccinations

### 3.5 The Health and Safety Office will:

- Lead on Health & Safety aspects where applicable for the assessment / due diligence work
- Advise on health and safety issues/risks

### 3.6 The International Office will:

- Lead on country specific matters for the risk assessment / due diligence work
- Provide country-specific advice related to risks, legal requirements, cultural matters, equality matters, transport, housing, schools etc.
- Arrange emergency repatriation on advice from the Insurance Officer

### **3.7 The Finance Department (including Insurance) will:**

- Lead on financial matters for the assessment / due diligence work
- Lead on insurance aspects for the assessment / due diligence work
- Advise on and ensure appropriate insurances are in place during the planning stages of secondments
- Advise on emergency repatriation if required in conjunction with insurers advice

### **3.8 The Academic Registry will:**

- Lead on collaborative contract and quality aspects for the assessment / due diligence work
- Where applicable, advise on and draft the International Collaborative Agreement contract for the franchised or validated University Award or transfer of credit between the overseas host and the University

## **4 Terms applicable to both short and long term assignments**

### **4.1 Agreement**

When arranging secondments it is important, both for the University and the member of staff concerned, that the arrangements and responsibilities of the different parties are made clear in writing. Before a secondment takes place, there it is expected that there will be mutual understanding and an agreement among the three parties (the University, the member of staff and the international host) as to the nature and terms of the secondment.

### **4.2 Costs**

Prior to a secondment starting the budget holder will clearly define who is bearing the costs. These can include UK base pay, payroll on costs (e.g. National Insurance Contributions (NIC), pension, medical insurance), additional tax or social security liabilities, secondment allowances, vaccinations, accommodation in the host country, travel expenses etc.

### **4.3 Travel and Visa Arrangements**

- 4.3.1** Offers of international secondment are conditional on the member of staff being eligible for a renewable passport, together with any visas, work permits, medicals, and/or residence permits, and any other documents required for entry into the host country. The cost of visas and work permits and medical assessments will be reimbursed by the University or the international host, but the cost of passports will be at the member of staff's expense.
- 4.3.2** Employees who are sponsored on a UK visa can work overseas on that visa provided the overseas role and UK Visa Immigration (UKVI) Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code are the same as that of their UK role. The change of location should be notified by University of Portsmouth HR to the UKVI. If the UK visa duration is beyond the length of the secondment the member of staff may return to their role in the UK. Any extension to UK visa must be applied for in the UK.
- 4.3.3** International secondments are subject to the member of staff being and remaining eligible to work in the country in which they will be based and the secondment will be subject to the member of staff obtaining the right to work before the secondment commences. Copies of relevant visas and any other required documents will be obtained by HR and kept on the member of staff's HR file. The member of staff is expected to advise UoP HR of any situation that arises which may affect their right to work. The University reserves the right to terminate a secondment should the member of staff no longer qualify for the right to work in the international location.
- 4.3.4** Members of staff will be expected to manage the travel and work arrangements in a reasonable manner in order to meet the needs of the University and the international host.

## 4.4 Advertising of the secondment

- 4.4.1** Secondments will normally be advertised internally across the University. In some circumstances Schools/Services may advertise a secondment solely within the School/Service for example, if it is believed that the necessary skills can only be obtained from within the School/Service. Alternatively, an individual can be nominated for a secondment where the secondment is for a very short duration and the requirement to start is urgent.
- 4.4.2** Members of staff wishing to apply for a secondment is expected to discuss the possible secondment with their existing Head of Department (or equivalent) before applying. A decision can then be made about whether the member of staff's existing role can be covered during the secondment and plans made for how their duties are covered.
- 4.4.3** If a member of staff wishes to apply for a secondment, their Head of Department (or equivalent) is expected to seriously consider the request and if they are unable to agree to the secondment they are expected to discuss the rationale for their decision with the staff member. Whilst allowing members of staff to take secondments is encouraged, it is acknowledged that it will not always be possible. Secondments can sometimes be refused by the current Head of Department (or equivalent), if:
- There is a significant impact on quality or performance of the department.
  - The department is unable to recruit, replace or reorganise the work among existing staff.
  - The individual is being monitored under the formal stages of HR policies and procedures.
  - The individual applies for more than one secondment in a three year period.

Advice can be sought from their HR Business Partner

- 4.4.4** The appropriate Head of Department (or equivalent) will be agreed at the onset of the secondment.
- 4.4.5** A member of staff will be consulted in the normal way if their substantive post could be affected by organisational changes while they are on secondment.

## 4.5 Employment during the Secondment

- 4.5.1** The individual remains a member of staff of the University and is seconded to the international host for the fixed period of time. The substantive employment contract with the University remains in place and is unaffected for the duration of and on return from the secondment and the member of staff is provided with a secondment letter detailing any temporary variation from current employment terms applicable during the secondment as well as the terms and conditions of the secondment.
- 4.5.2** The secondment and the underlying employment contract with the University are governed by English law, but the member of staff is expected to comply with the host country law and respect the host country's customs and cultural practices. Where local legislation may result in additional requirements or cost, this should be advised by the International office and considered during the due diligence stage.
- 4.5.3** The University reserves the right to withdraw the member of staff from the international host back to the UK or to terminate a secondment prior to the agreed date, at any time as a result of changes in business need, in the interest of personal safety or wellbeing, or for any other reason. Alternatively a secondment may be extended to cater for a particular business need. Any such changes will be fully discussed with the member of staff and the international host at the earliest possible opportunity. The University will seek to give not less than one month's notice wherever practicable.

## 4.6 Line Management and HR Processes

- 4.6.1** The normal University HR procedures such as Grievance, Disciplinary, Managing Sickness Absence, Managing Under-Performance, Organisational Change (Redeployment and Redundancy) will apply whilst working overseas. Should the secondee need to adhere to some host organisation policies and procedures, this will be made clear to the secondee before the secondment starts by either the line manager at the host organisation or HR as appropriate.
- 4.6.2** Where a member of staff is seconded to an external company, day to day operational direction may be delegated to the host organisation but overall management control will be retained by the University. The University Head of Department (or equivalent) will carry out any appraisals, HR processes such as disciplinary or grievance procedures either face to face where possible or by using Skype, and it is the University procedures that will be followed.

## 4.7 Salary

**4.7.1** The member of staff's annual salary will normally continue to be paid in Pounds Sterling through the University Payroll to an appropriate nominated bank account during the period of the secondment less statutory and any other agreed deductions such as member of staff pension contributions.

**4.7.2** Salary reviews and incremental progression are conducted in line with the University's standard processes.

## 4.8 Pension Scheme and Contributions

If the member of staff is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) or Teachers Pensions', it is likely that they will remain in the pension scheme unless they opt out. If a member of staff makes Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) these can normally also be continued. Pension rights will be investigated and confirmed during planning stages of the secondment by HR. Further information can be sought by the member of staff from HR.

## 4.9 Subsistence and Travel within the International Country and to Other International Countries

Where international staff are required to travel to the UK from their international base for business reasons, they will be entitled to claim expenses in line with the University Expenses Manual.

## 4.10 Expatriate Location Allowance

The University **may**, at its discretion, include in the secondee's salary calculation, a temporary 'International Location Allowance'. The purpose of this allowance is:

- To provide some additional incentive to encourage international mobility.
- To compensate the member of staff for the general impact of a temporary relocation.
- To help cover any additional expenditure arising from living abroad.

If applicable, the level of allowance will normally be between 5% and 15% of gross salary and will be determined individually, taking into account factors such as the host country and length of secondment.

## 4.11 Holiday Entitlement and Public Holidays

**4.11.1** While on secondment, the member of staff will be entitled to the same amount of leave, including bank holidays and closure days that they are entitled to in the UK. Bank holiday and closure days may differ in different countries. If this is the case the actual annual leave days can be adjusted. However the total amount remains at the member of staff's contractual entitlement.

**4.11.2** As is normal practice in the University that all holidays taken must be pre-authorized using Employee Self Service (ESS) by the member of staff's UK Head of Department (or equivalent) or by agreement this can be delegated to the host organisation manager.

## 4.12 Emergency/Bereavement Leave

In the event of serious illness or death of a member of the member of staff's or spouse's/partner's immediate family, or other serious emergency situation, the University will provide for return tickets to the UK for the member of staff; this must be pre-approved by the member of staff's Head of Department (or equivalent).

## 4.13 Insurance

The University Insurance Officer will advise the secondee of the insurances that will be put in place for the duration of the secondment to cover both the member of staff and the University. Any additional costs will normally be paid for by the University.

Sometimes local policies need to be arranged to comply with country legal requirements. This can take a long time to arrange, be complicated and involve additional cost. The Insurance Officer is expected to be involved in the planning stage of secondments so this can be factored in.



## 4.14 Health cover

- 4.14.1** Members of staff who are seconded to a country within the EEA (European Economic Area) or Switzerland are expected to ensure they have a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card) so they may access health care whilst working overseas.
- 4.14.2** The need for private health insurance in countries outside of the EEA will be assessed on a case by case basis to assess what medical care is available to the secondee. Where adequate health care is not available, health insurance will normally be paid for by the University.
- 4.14.3** Occupational Health are expected to be consulted where advice is required on specific medical matters.

## 4.15 Termination of Employment during a Member of staff's Secondment

- 4.15.1** Formal notice provisions to terminate the substantive employment are outlined in the UK employment contract and UK legislation will apply. Any right to compulsory redundancy provisions remain unaffected by the secondment.
- 4.15.2** Where a member of staff's employment is terminated by the University for any reason other than misconduct, the University will pay the costs of repatriating the member of staff and accompanying family (if an approved accompanied secondment) to the UK.
- 4.15.3** If the employment is terminated on the grounds of misconduct or gross misconduct, the member of staff will be responsible for the full costs of repatriation.
- 4.15.4** If the member of staff terminates his or her employment whilst on an international secondment, then all assistance will cease from the effective date of resignation, and the University will not meet any costs of repatriation unless mutually agreed by all parties that costs will be paid.
- 4.15.5** If the member of staff terminates his or her employment whilst on international secondment without giving contractual notice, the secondment will summarily terminate.

## 4.16 Personal and Professional Development

Throughout a secondment, members of staff are entitled to appropriate training and development and will continue to be appraised through the PDR process. It is the member of staff's responsibility to ensure their skills and knowledge are kept up to date and recorded on the HR System where possible.

## 4.17 Communication

The maintenance of links between the member of staff and the University Head of Department (or equivalent) contribute significantly to the success of an international secondment. The Head of Department (or equivalent) of the secondee is expected to ensure they keep in regular contact to discuss the progress of the secondment and resolve any issues that may arise.

## 4.18 Further Information and Advice

International secondments can be complex and may require a great deal of preparation if they are to be successful. Depending on the nature of the secondment, there can be implications for member of staff's safety and security, employment law, visas, taxation, insurance and employment conditions. In the first instance, Deans and Heads of Professional Services may discuss offering an international secondment with their HR Business Partner who will provide advice and guidance on the HR implications. Specific advice and involvement may be required from a number of departments across the University and this is expected to be sought as appropriate by the Head of Department (or equivalent)/Budget holder who may find it beneficial to set up a short term working group.

## 5 Additional Terms Applicable to Short-Term International Secondments

### 5.1 Family/Spouse/Partner

Member of staffs are normally not accompanied by partners or family members.

### 5.2 Tax and Social Security

- 5.2.1** At the time of writing, for secondments of up to 6 months or 183 calendar days per calendar year, tax year or any 12 month period as defined by any relevant tax treaties, the member of staff normally remains tax liable in the UK. In certain countries there may be a host country tax liability. In the first instance, staff are expected to contact their HR Business Partner for advice. Depending on the nature of the enquiry, staff may then be referred to the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) or other external authorities or advice may be sought from our Internal Auditors.
- 5.2.2** At the time of writing, secondments that are extended to beyond 6 months (183 calendar days) without returning home may result in a tax liability in the host country, with a continued tax liability in the UK. However, rules vary from country to country and therefore, when planning the terms and conditions of short term secondments, both home and host country tax obligations will be taken into consideration. Guidance will be provided on individual cases as they arise.
- 5.2.3** For tax purposes all member of staffs are required to maintain an accurate travel diary for the duration of the secondment documenting days travelled outside of the host country and days spent outside the UK in order to correctly assess the total number of days spent in the host country. Additionally all supporting documents such as boarding passes, tickets, receipts, etc. are expected to be retained as these may be required by the fiscal authorities.
- 5.2.4** For secondments within the European Economic Area (EEA) the member of staff will continue to pay UK National Insurance and will not be liable for any contributions within the host country. The member of staff will need to contact HMRC to obtain the appropriate form to confirm exemption from contributions in the host country. This will also apply to countries outside of the EEA with which the UK has a reciprocal social security agreement.
- 5.2.5** If the secondment is to a country with which the UK has no reciprocal agreement, UK NIC will continue to be payable, for a period of up to 52 weeks from the date of departure. The University will meet the costs of any additional compulsory social security contributions in the host country.

### 5.3 Relocation costs

For secondments up to 6 months (183 calendar days), the University will cover reasonable excess baggage costs for personal baggage, normally up to a limit of 40 kg. Any exceptions must be agreed with the budget holder.

### 5.4 Accommodation and Related Expenses

- 5.4.1** The University will cover the cost of agreed temporary accommodation and related running and utility costs in the host location. This could be in a hotel, one-bed serviced apartment, furnished apartment, or host employer lodgings, depending on availability, cost and length of the secondment.
- 5.4.2** In the event of agency fees, deposits etc., to secure accommodation, which are required to be paid in advance for accommodation, the University will reimburse such costs subject to such costs being both reasonable and receipted. Where any costs, e.g. deposits are due to be repaid at the end of the tenancy agreement, the member of staff agrees to assist the University Finance Department in recovering such costs. The member of staff may be liable for the costs which are withheld by the landlord as a result of wilful damage or neglect by the member of staff.

### 5.5 Travel and Home Leave

- 5.5.1** The University will pay for a return ticket for the member of staff for travel to and from the secondment location at the beginning and end of the secondment.
- 5.5.2** In addition, where the secondment is for a period of between 90 and 183 calendar days, the member of staff will be entitled to one 'Home Leave' trip, which consists of a return ticket (air or rail, plus transfer costs) to the home country.

**5.5.3** Where an initial short term secondment has been extended for another period up to a maximum of 12 months, no further 'Home Leave' trip will be funded.

**5.5.4** No cash alternative will be permitted if a member of staff chooses not to take this annual home leave entitlement.

**5.5.5** The University will cover any tax liability that may arise on travel costs.

## **5.6 Transport at the host location**

Transport for personal use will normally be at the member of staff's own expense.

## **5.7 Secondment Extensions**

In exceptional circumstances short term secondments can be extended up to 12 additional months in total. The terms of any further secondment extensions after 12 months would be adjusted to reflect the tax position in the UK and host location. The Long Term Secondment Terms at section 6 of this policy would then apply.

# **6 Additional Terms Applicable to Long-Term International Secondments**

## **6.1 Accompanying Family**

**6.1.1** Secondments of more than 183 calendar days may be accompanied by the member of staff's family. The University (or the overseas host) will pay for visas and flights for spouse/partner and up to 2 dependants.

**6.1.2** However, where the family unit includes more than one University member of staff, some variation to these guidelines may be appropriate – for example, it is unlikely that two sets of allowances would be paid. Such variations will be agreed with HR and the budget holder in advance.

## **6.2 Pre-visits**

A visit for the member of staff and spouse/partner going on secondment may be provided if it is appropriate and practical. The length of this visit will be determined by agreement with the budget holder, and will only normally be granted once a decision in principle has been made to accept the international secondment. The University will meet the cost of reasonable expenses associated with the visit, as agreed with the budget holder and in line with the University's Expenses Manual. Wherever possible, the visit is expected to be used to identify suitable accommodation and schooling, and may be combined with a job briefing.

## **6.3 Briefings**

Pre-secondment preparation is intended to help the member of staff and accompanying family to adjust well and settle quickly in the host country. The provision and content of such training will vary depending upon previous experience, the needs of the member of staff, the family and the host country.

## **6.4 Training**

**6.4.1** Language training may be appropriate to allow the member of staff and family to integrate into the local culture. Where appropriate, it may be provided both prior to departure and on arrival. The training may be extended to the accompanying family, although the content may vary. Costs will be agreed by the University budget holder prior to any training being undertaken.

**6.4.2** Cultural awareness support is available for all staff who may be going to work and live overseas. Individual or group briefings may be arranged depending upon previous experience, the needs of the member of staff, the accompanying family and the host country.

## **6.5 UK Housing**

The member of staff is wholly responsible for his or her UK accommodation whilst on secondment and the payment of any associated costs, including agency fees when renting the property out. It is the member of staff's responsibility to notify mortgage companies and insurers of the status of their property.

## 6.6 Personal, Financial and Legal Matters

It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure that mechanisms and procedures are in place to deal with any matters relating to personal financial and legal circumstances in the UK whilst on secondment, for example, appointing a Power of Attorney.

## 6.7 Personal safety and security

**6.7.1** For locations where there is a higher than normal risk to personal security, the University Head of Department (or equivalent) will endeavour to ensure that the member of staff is fully briefed prior to the start of the secondment. Information will be provided by the International Office on any country specific risks. However, in any country, a situation may suddenly arise that could not be anticipated so it is also expected that in these countries members of staff remain aware of the local events and news and take reasonable precautions and act in a sensible manner to ensure their personal safety. Members of staff must take responsibility for registering with the appropriate local authorities on arrival in the country; this is likely to be a requirement of the visa being issued in the first place.

**6.7.2** The University may require a member of staff and accompanying family to return to the UK at short notice should the University consider that personal safety is worsening and the member of staff shall abide by such a decision.

## 6.8 Taxation

### 6.8.1 General Principles

In general, when a member of staff undertakes a long term international secondment, taxation issues arise both in the UK and in the host country. The University wishes to minimise taxation liabilities and must ensure tax compliance in both the UK and host country. However, it is the responsibility of the member of staff to pay the required personal and/or income tax in the international location and ensure compliance with the legal obligations with the host country.

The University's position is to:

- Operate a system of tax equalisation with regard to long term secondments.
- Ensure all taxes due on employment income and benefits are paid across to the relevant foreign tax authority on behalf of the employer.

### 6.8.2 Tax equalisation

The purpose of tax equalisation is to deliver a rate of net pay equivalent to that which would be earned if the member of staff remained in the UK.

### 6.8.3 Tax advice and assistance

The University will source taxation advice for all member of staffs offered a long term secondment to include but not be limited to:

- The country of secondment and the impact of a Double Taxation Treaty (if one exists).
- The length of the secondment including intentions of intermediate visits to the UK.
- Explanation of UK residency rules and how they apply to the secondment.
- Further explanation of tax equalisation and tax on benefits.
- Provision of a "tax pack" which includes appropriate forms for completion before the secondment begins.
- The requirements for tax returns in the UK and host country and assistance required.
- An overview of the taxation of other forms of income, for example, pensions, dividends, rental income from UK property. If the member of staff's personal tax position is unusually complex then it is the responsibility of the staff member to obtain additional independent taxation advice should they wish.

## 6.9 Legal Obligations

Staff working or living international for long periods may, under certain HMRC regulations, fall outside of the requirement to pay income tax in the UK. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure they are compliant with the tax regulations in the country to which they are seconded. Staff who are not liable to pay UK income tax need to be aware that although there are reciprocal arrangements with some countries regarding payment of income tax, locally based authorities have the power to request whether income tax payments are being made by individuals working in their country. It must be noted that local taxes may be higher than those in the UK.

## 6.10 Social Security

- 6.10.1** In secondments within the EEA the member of staff will continue to pay UK NIC and will not be liable for any contributions within the host country. This will also apply to countries outside of the EEA with which the UK has a reciprocal social security agreement.
- 6.10.2** If liability to compulsory NIC ceases, the member of staff should consider whether they wish to make voluntary contributions to maintain rights and entitlements to certain state benefits. HMRC leaflet NI38 gives further information, available from <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pdfs/nico/ni38.pdf>.
- 6.10.3** The University will meet the costs of any additional compulsory social security contributions in the host country.

## 6.11 Removal costs

- 6.11.1** Removal costs at the start and end of the secondment will usually be confined to personal effects and a modest quantity of supplementary household items. These will be transported by combination of the airline's free personal baggage allowance and reasonable excess costs up to a limit of 30kg and up to 30 kg of accompanied airfreight. Any agreed excess will normally be sent by surface freight. Where the secondee is accompanied by family, additional removal costs may be agreed with the budget holder.
- 6.11.2** It may be exceptionally agreed to transport furniture and other household effects if accommodation overseas is unfurnished. In this case one 20ft shipping container will be considered the maximum for an entire family household, or one 10ft shipping container for a single or unaccompanied member of staff. Typical methods of transport will include sea shipment for international secondment or road haulage to European destinations. However individual circumstances will vary and the University will seek to use the most cost-efficient methods available.
- 6.11.3** The cost of removals of academic equipment and books will be met by the University. All reasonable costs, including those of packing, unpacking and insurance in transit, will be met by the University. Insurance of effects at all other times is the individual's responsibility. All costs must be agreed with the budget holder.
- 6.11.4** The University will not pay for the storage of furniture and personal effects left in the UK.
- 6.11.5** The University will bear no responsibility for the transport, upkeep, quarantine and other associated costs of any pets.

## 6.12 Accommodation

- 6.12.1** For local housing, the University budget holder will determine a budget for accommodation that relates to the role to be undertaken and individual family circumstances. This may not necessarily match UK housing, but will be in keeping with local arrangements. The member of staff and any accompanying family are encouraged to undertake housing viewings on the awareness visit prior to commencement of the secondment in order to ensure compatible housing is found.
- 6.12.2** Wherever possible, members of staff will have the freedom to choose their own housing, but the University reserves the right to specify accommodation which will be of a standard not below that generally considered acceptable within the UK. It is expected normally that the member of staff will seek rented furnished accommodation. Temporary accommodation will usually be provided for a maximum period of one month if permanent housing is not available upon arrival, depending on the reason for delay. This may be in a hotel, serviced apartment or provided by the overseas host.
- 6.12.3** An allowance of £500 will be provided to enable the purchase of small items (such as bed linen and towels) for the host country accommodation. All purchases must be receipted and will be based on the exchange rate applicable on the date of payment.
- 6.12.4** In the event of agency fees, deposits etc., to secure accommodation, which are required to be paid in advance for accommodation, the University will reimburse such costs subject to such costs being both reasonable and receipted. Where any costs, for example, deposits are due to be repaid at the end of the tenancy agreement, the member of staff agrees to assist the University Finance Department in recovering such costs.

**6.12.5** The member of staff will be liable for the costs which are withheld by the landlord as a result of wilful damage or neglect by the member of staff.

**6.12.6** The University reserves the right to recover from the member of staff, the cost of any damages, (other than normal wear and tear), to premises or contents provided by the University both before and after final return to the home country.

## **6.13 Travel and Home Leave**

**6.13.1** The University will pay for a return ticket for the member of staff and their accompanying family for travel to and from the secondment location at the beginning and end of the secondment. Class of travel will be as per the University's standard travel policy. The University will further cover reasonable costs for airport transfers, by the most economical means at the host location taking into account any potential security issues in the host country at the beginning and end of the secondment.

**6.13.2** The University will pay for one 'home leave trip' for the member of staff and accompanying family per tax year, which consists of an economy class return ticket (air or rail, plus transfer costs) to the home country.

**6.13.3** No cash alternative will be permitted if a member of staff chooses not to take this annual home leave entitlement.

**6.13.4** The University will cover any tax liability that may arise on travel costs.

## **6.14 Education Assistance**

**6.14.1** If state provisions are deemed inappropriate after discussions between the University budget holder and the member of staff and his/her family, a local fee paying school may be considered.

**6.14.2** The University will contribute up to £5000 (net payment) per child per year for up to two dependants towards the cost of standard fees for primary and secondary levels (i.e. between the ages of approximately 4 to 18 years. Should there be a local income tax charge, the University will agree to pay this. The University will not reimburse any extra tuition, uniform costs, books, transportation or other miscellaneous items.

## **6.15 Transport at the host location**

**6.15.1** Transport for personal use will normally be at the member of staff's own expense.

**6.15.2** The provision of transport in connection with University business in the host country will be dependent on local policies and arrangements and will vary from location to location. The host country manager or budget holder will agree any transport arrangements with the member of staff prior to commencement of the secondment.

## **6.16 End of Secondment**

**6.16.1** When a member of staff's secondment is drawing to an end, it is expected that their future position be discussed/reviewed no later than six months prior to their return. This will allow the member of staff and their family to plan their future, and where appropriate, their return to the UK. This is a joint responsibility of both the secondee and their Head of Department (or equivalent) in the UK.

**6.16.2** Where a secondment is drawing to a close and the future position of the member of staff is being organised the member of staff will return to their substantive position or a position at the same grade in the UK, or another international secondment, commensurate with their skills and experience.

## **6.17 Variation of Secondment Length**

**6.17.1** The length of any secondment will have been agreed with the member of staff prior to its start and will usually terminate automatically in line with the agreed secondment contract.

**6.17.2** In the event that a member of staff agrees to a further successive posting in the same or a new host international location, some of the provisions in this policy may be appropriate and will be agreed in advance between the member of staff and budget holder.

## 7 Sources of advice and guidance:

### 7.1 Internally:

- Human Resources Business Partner
- HR Training & Development Team
- Staff Development Website
- Finance
- International Office
- Health & Safety Office
- Occupational Health
- Insurance Officer
- Academic Registry, Quality Management Division, Collaborative Partnerships office
- <http://www.port.ac.uk/special/overseastravel/>

### 7.2 Externally

- The Foreign and Commonwealth Office [website](#)
- UK Government – [Foreign Travel Advice](#)
- FCO – [travel and living abroad](#)
- FCO A-Z Listing - [All foreign Embassies in the UK](#)
- FCO Listing - [UK Embassies international](#)
- AIG Travel Guard – [assistance website](#) (the UoP policy number is needed and is available from the [University's overseas travel webpage under section 3](#))
- NHS England – [Healthcare abroad](#)
- Travel Heath Pro – [Country Information](#)
- HM Revenue & Customs - [HM Revenue & Customs](#)

## 8 Equality analysis

**8.1** Monitoring and equality analysis will be conducted on the numbers of staff applying for international secondment and those appointed to identify any anomalies and take corrective action if applicable. Consideration will be given to the needs of individuals when working overseas and reasonable adjustments put in place where practicable.

**8.2** Advice will be taken from Occupational Health to recognise the circumstances of employees with disabilities working overseas by adapting arrangements to take account of their particular needs and ensure they are treated fairly and consistently.

**8.3** This approach will ensure that the University is able to demonstrate due regard in relation to protected characteristics in the decision making process, ensuring that any disproportional disadvantage or impact, be it negative or positive, is highlighted, the reasons identified and actions taken if the impact cannot be justified.

**8.4** Please refer to the Equality Analysis process at [www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/equalityanddiversity/equalityanalysis/](http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/equalityanddiversity/equalityanalysis/)

## 9 Policy Review

This policy will normally be reviewed on a 3 year basis by Human Resources but may be amended earlier to meet legislative changes.

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