

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

SECONDMENT GUIDANCE

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Statement of Policy

The aims and objectives of the Secondment Policy are: -

- To meet organisational workforce planning needs through the temporary deployment of employees to alternative roles.
- To provide a cost effective, fair and equitable method of providing employees with work experience and development opportunities outside of their normal area of work and / or the Council while ensuring that the short to medium term staffing needs for service provision are in place.

The Secondment Policy: -

- Covers the short-term deployment of employees within an alternative section or organisation for the purposes of work experience or career development.
- Is applicable to all employees of Argyll and Bute Council.
- Will be applied in conjunction with relevant legislation concerning equalities, fixed term and temporary work.
- Will be applied in conjunction with relevant organisational policies and procedures including those concerning recruitment, redeployment and equalities.
- Will be applied in accordance with relevant national and local conditions of service, and conditions of service relevant to incoming secondees.

Benefits

Secondments are an effective way of providing individuals with the opportunity to apply their skills and experience in a new environment and challenge themselves professionally, thereby aiding their development, bridging identified skills gaps and broadening their experience.

The section that hosts the Secondee benefits from the individual's existing and new skills, whilst their 'home' section benefits from their increased motivation and enhanced skills on their return. There is also an organisational benefit of promoting increased mobility within the Council and retaining employees with valuable skills, knowledge and experience.

Secondments can help the Council fill workforce planning gaps by allowing employees to experience alternative roles and potentially retrain for the future.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by HR and Organisational Development. Any comments regarding the Secondment Policy or associated Guidance should be directed to trainingcentre@argyll-bute.gov.uk

SECONDMENT GUIDANCE

Introduction

The Council is committed to the development of employees. Secondments are a valuable tool for individual career development and for developing skills within the Council.

The Secondment Guidance is designed to provide a framework for employees to undertake a period of career development as a secondment, normally for a period of 4 to a maximum of 23 months inclusive. It is not anticipated that a secondment will continue beyond 23 months. In the event that this situation arises, advice should be sought from HROD in regard to the implications of this for the secondee, seconding section and anyone covering the substantive post.

At the end of a secondment the employee will have the opportunity to return to their substantive post, unless otherwise discussed.

Separate arrangements exist for employees who choose to take up a temporary post outwith the Secondment Procedure.

Normal recruitment and selection processes apply to filling a post on a secondment basis.

Definitions

Secondment	The temporary move or 'loan' of an employee either to another part of the Council (internal secondment) or externally to a different organisation (external secondment).
Seconding Manager	The substantive manager of the employee who is going on secondment – i.e. the manager of the post held prior to the secondment.
Secondment Manager	The manager of the employee while on secondment – i.e. the manager of the secondment post.
Secondee	The employee who is going on secondment.
Seconding Organisation or Section	The normal employer or employing section of the employee going on secondment.
Host Organisation or Section	The employer or section for the period of secondment.
Internal secondment	The movement of an employee temporarily to another post within the Council that is managed under the Secondment

Procedure (please note that employees can take up temporary posts which are not secondments, under separate arrangements).

External secondment The movement of an employee to an external organisation for a fixed period of time, managed under the Secondment Procedure and covered by a Secondment Agreement. The employee remains an employee of Argyll and Bute Council and retains their terms and conditions of employment, subject to the terms of the Secondment Agreement.

Scope

The Guidance applies to all employees of Argyll and Bute Council, i.e. those covered by Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees (LGE), Scottish Joint Council for Chief Officials (CO), and Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) conditions of service.

The Guidance covers internal secondments within the Council and external secondments to public and private organisations.

Financial Responsibility

Employees undertaking an external secondment will normally continue to be paid by the Council.

Internal secondments will be charged to the cost centre of the secondment post according to the HR and financial hierarchies.

For an outward external secondment, the Seconding Manager must arrange for the Council to invoice the Host Organisation for the employee's salary plus on costs on a monthly basis. Your Finance contact will be able to advise you of the relevant financial details in order that this can be organised with the Secondment Manager of the external organisation.

Terms and Conditions

The employee will normally have the right to return to their substantive post on conclusion of the secondment. If this is not possible it will have been agreed at the outset or as soon as it became known, and in this situation the employee will return to the same type of or work of an equivalent grade, although this may be in a different section and / or location. If this is the case the Seconding Manager will meet with the employee and explain the reasons why a return to the substantive post is not possible.

If the reason that the employee cannot return to their substantive post is that the post is redundant, the secondment will be brought to an end once the redundancy situation arises. The employee can request to continue the remaining term of the secondment as a temporary post. A redundancy payment may be applicable in certain circumstances at the end of this temporary post but this is not guaranteed.

Notwithstanding the above, the employee will usually return to their substantive post at the substantive pay level, including appropriate increments.

The employee's existing terms and conditions of employment will continue for the duration of the secondment with the possible exception of those relating to pay, in which case they will receive the appropriate pay relating to the secondment post. If the pay is lower the employee will receive the lower pay applicable to the secondment post. If an employee undertakes a secondment on fewer or more hours than they work in their substantive post, their holiday entitlement will be amended pro-rata to the hours actually worked.

Internal secondments will be dealt with through a temporary variation to an employee's contract, i.e. a contractual amendment. External secondments will be covered by a Secondment Agreement signed by the Seconded and Seconding Manager of the Council and Secondment Manager of the Host Organisation.

If an employee has their request to go on secondment refused due to the needs of the service, they may still apply for the post on a temporary basis, but will not have the right to return to their substantive post at the end of the temporary period. The employee must resign from their substantive post and will then be treated as a temporary employee. This may result in the employee being fairly dismissed from employment with the Council at the end of the temporary contract, subject to the appropriate dismissal process being followed.

If an employee has been granted a secondment and wishes to extend this beyond 23 months they must submit a further request to their line manager. Secondments will not normally be granted beyond 23 months and the seconded may have to make the choice between returning to their substantive post or resigning from their substantive post and taking up a temporary post instead of a secondment. Advice should be sought from HROD in these circumstances.

Procedure

Secondment requests must be made on the Secondment Application Form (SEC1) seeking the approval of their line manager, prior to submitting an application for the secondment. Wherever possible requests will be granted, but this may not always be possible due to the needs of the service. If the employee is not satisfied with the reason(s) for refusal and believes that a secondment should have been granted then they can raise a grievance through the Council's Grievance Procedure.

Where the seconded post requires a PVG or other check(s) to be undertaken, these must be in place before the secondment starts.

A checklist is available on The Hub with points for managers to consider if they receive a Secondment Application Form from a member of their team.

During the secondment period, the Seconding Manager and Secondee should keep in touch at monthly intervals in order that the Secondee is kept up-to-date with developments in their home section. This is especially important at times of change and in advance of the secondment coming to its end.

In advance of a secondment coming to an end, the Secondee and the Secondment Manager should meet to review the secondment. At least 4 weeks before the secondment is due to end the Seconding Manager should plan for the Secondee's return, including any retraining or re-induction that may be necessary. If the employee is unable to return to their substantive role due to redundancy, the Seconding Manager must meet with the employee to begin the redeployment process at an earlier date. Details are available in the Redeployment Procedure. If the employee is returning to an alternative role due to redundancy, the Seconding Manager must notify the employee's new line manager so that they can initiate the planning process.

Secondment Managers and employees will receive automated emails in advance of the end of secondment through the myview system, notifying them of the end date of the temporary arrangements and allowing them time to make the necessary arrangements for the employee's return to the substantive post.

After the secondment has concluded, the Secondee will complete a Reflective Evaluation describing the benefits to the Council of their having been on secondment, based on their experiences of the secondment and development during it. This should be given to the Seconding Manager for their comment and then submitted to HROD trainingcentre@argyll-bute.gov.uk. It may take between one and three months for the Seconding Manager to see benefits realised and provide comment.

Managing the Secondment

The Secondment Manager should manage the secondment like that of any other new employee to the team. This includes induction and PRD processes. Appropriate targets should be set for the Secondee during the secondment. The Secondment Manager and Seconding Manager should liaise regarding the employee's progress against targets from their substantive post, and the Secondment Manager should be provided with a copy of the last PRD form from during the secondment so that they can discuss the employee's development during the secondment period.

Early Termination

The secondment can be brought to an end by the Secondee or the Secondment Manager by giving a month's notice. There may be unforeseen circumstances that lead to sudden termination of the secondment e.g. withdrawal of funding, early return

from authorised leave / leave of absence (maternity leave, secondment etc). Where any difficulties have been identified by either the Secondee or the Secondment Manager it is expected that discussions will have taken place to resolve these, and early termination is a last resort.

External Outward Secondment

A secondment may be granted to an employee to undertake a period of career development with an external organisation belonging to one of the groups listed in the **Scope** section. This will be covered by a Secondment Agreement signed by all three parties: Secondee, Seconding Manager of the Council (third tier manager or above), Secondment Manager of the Host Organisation. The Secondee will continue to retain Council terms and conditions for the secondment period, with the possible exception of pay. The Host Organisation should reimburse the Council on a monthly basis in order that the Council can continue to pay the Secondee. Additionally, the employee will require to follow any Health and Safety policies of the host organisation and complete any required checks for the secondment post.

Seconding Managers should make early contact with the payroll team if an external secondment is being discussed in order that appropriate arrangements can be made regarding salary payments that do not relate to our pay and grading structure, and with your Finance contact to discuss the process for reimbursement.

Contact during an external secondment should be the same as that for an internal secondment, as detailed in **Procedure** section.

External Inward Secondment

The Council will not invite secondments from other organisations and will advertise all posts in accordance with normal procedures, however employees of other organisations may accept a temporary post with the Council on a secondment basis agreed with their own employer. In these circumstances, an Argyll and Bute Council manager may be asked to sign a Secondment Agreement by the seconding organisation. This can only be signed by a third tier manager, i.e. the manager who has budgetary control for the post being filled (or more senior manager in the absence of the third tier manager).

An individual appointed on an inward secondment from another organisation will remain subject to their employing organisation's terms and conditions, with the exception of any specific health and safety or other Council policies or procedures that are relevant to the specific post. In other respects the Council will treat the inward Secondee the same as other temporary postholders. The Secondment Manager may receive invoices for the postholder's secondment salary. Before any external candidate is appointed on a secondment basis, invoicing arrangements must be agreed with the Seconding Manager of the external organisation and discussed with your Finance contact.

Documentation

Secondment Application Form	Completed and submitted by employee to your line manager before you accept an offer of secondment. This must detail the benefits to the Council of approving the request.
External Secondment Agreement	Completed for each external secondment. This must be organised by the Seconding Manager.
Reflective Evaluation	Completed by employee on conclusion of the secondment, detailing the benefits realised by the secondment. A template for this is available on The Hub.
Contractual Amendment Form	Applies to internal secondments and is completed in advance of each of the secondment's commencement and its conclusion, by the Secondment Manager.

Further Information

The following information is available on The Hub: -
Secondment Considerations Checklist
Reflective evaluation
Frequently Asked Questions

Further advice in regard to secondments is available from HR advice team
HRadviceenquiries@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Associated Policies and Procedures

The Secondment Guidance should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures as relevant to the specific circumstances. These include, but are not limited to: -

- Recruitment and Selection
- Redundancy
- Redeployment
- Contractual Amendment
- Procedure for Ending Employment

FLOWCHART – SECONDMENT

