



Nottingham Trent
University

Human Resources Department

Special leave Colleague information

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Basis for request

Special leave may be granted in circumstances where you require additional time off work to manage personal and family commitments, as well as other issues that may need your immediate/urgent involvement, or for public duties.

It's only normally intended to cover genuine emergencies, unforeseen matters or in some cases planned events, where your normal leave isn't appropriate or has been exhausted.

If you know in advance that you are going to need time off, or the emergency gives rise to a need for a longer period of time off, this should normally be accommodated as part of your annual leave entitlement.

Where unpaid leave is sought in some circumstances, you must already have exhausted your annual leave entitlement for that year.

If time is granted, this will be adjudged to be reasonable in the circumstances and should be sufficient to deal with the immediate issue/concern.

There is no mandatory or contractual right to a period of special leave. Each request will be considered on its own merits, giving full consideration to the facts and the needs of both you and the University.

The granting of special leave operates on the basis of your honesty and genuine need, and should this be abused, it may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Types of special leave and entitlement

The special leave entitlements are:

	Special Leave Category	Days paid (per year*)	Days unpaid (per year*)
1	Parental bereavement	10 days	None
2	Compassionate	Up to 10 (additional 10 at managers' discretion)	Up to 10 at managers' discretion
3	Sudden and unexpected emergency	2 days	Up to 10 days
4	Public duties	Reasonable number of days, at managers' discretion	None
5	Local and national elections	None	Up to 2 days
6	Jury service	As necessary	None

7	Attendance at court as a witness	As necessary	None
8	Service in non-regular forces	Normally up to 10 days but as necessary, in the event of compulsory mobilisation	None
9	Severe weather conditions and/or disruption to public transport	Unlimited at managers' discretion	None
10	Disability related	Unlimited at managers' discretion	None
11	Graduation (Employee's)	1 day	None
12	Job interviews (within NTU, or within and outside NTU where the member of staff has been given notice of dismissal due to redundancy)	Unlimited at managers' discretion	None
13	Medical appointments	Unlimited at managers' discretion	None
14	Religious or cultural events	None	Unlimited at managers' Discretion
15	Blood donation	One hour per appointment, for up to two occasions	None
16	Bone marrow donation	All appointments for tests (in advance of donation) and up to 3 days for the donation and associated recuperation	None
17	Organ donation	All appointments for tests (in advance of donation) and up to 5 days for the donation and associated recuperation	None

*These entitlements are applicable to each academic year between 1st Sept – 31st August.

You can find further information about each entitlement below.

Parental bereavement

This is a statutory entitlement, and the University provides this independently of any other form of special leave.

If you experience the death of a child, for whom you have or expect to have parental responsibility for the child's upbringing and care, you will be granted 10 days paid leave.

This leave is intended to provide you with time and privacy to grieve.

For the purposes of entitlement, a 'child' is defined as:

- Under the age of 18; or
- A stillborn baby after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

Additionally, 'parental responsibility' applies where you are the:

- Parent of the child or unborn child
- Adopting parent, foster parent and guardian; or
- Kinship carer, where you are a close relative or family friend that has assumed responsibility for looking after a child in the absence of the child's parents.

You can either take this leave as a single block of two weeks or as two separate one-week blocks, and it can be taken immediately following the death or at any time up to 56 weeks after the child's death.

Compassionate leave

In the event of the death or imminent death (where this is medically predicted) of an immediate relative, you may be granted up to ten days paid leave inclusive of making any funeral arrangements and/or the day of the funeral.

This may be extended by up to a further ten days paid leave and subsequently by a further ten days unpaid leave, at the discretion of your line manager.

An '*immediate relative*' is defined as child, spouse/partner, parent, dependant.

Similar paid special leave may be extended to include wider relatives, dependant on the nature of your relationship with them. This is also at the discretion of your line manager.

Entitlement to one day's paid leave is available in respect of the funeral of other relatives or close friends.

In the event of more than one immediate relative passing away in a 12 month period, your line manager can exercise discretion in approving more than one instance of special leave.

Sudden & unexpected emergency

Where you experience a sudden and unexpected emergency that requires your immediate involvement and needs to be prioritised over all other matters, you may be granted up to 2 days paid leave. Examples of this are the care of an ill or injured dependant, damage to property as a result of crime, flood, gas leak or fire.

This leave is intended to provide short-term support to enable you to alleviate the situation, resolve the matter and/or put in place alternative arrangements for managing it.

You may also be granted up to ten days unpaid leave to deal with emergencies involving a dependant, if it is necessary to make longer term care arrangements.

For the purposes of entitlement, a 'dependant' is defined as:

- Your spouse/partner, parent or child (biological, adopted or fostered or for whom you have a legitimate responsibility)
- Someone who lives with you as part of your family and for whom you are the primary carer
- Someone who relies on you as their primary carer but who may not live with you, for example an elderly relative.

The circumstances under which time off can be taken are:

- If a dependant suddenly falls ill, or has been injured or assaulted
- To make longer term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured
- To deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown in care arrangements for a dependant
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving your child during school hours and which you need to deal with urgently.

Public duties

You will be granted reasonable paid time off to undertake certain voluntary public duties when holding the following public positions:

- A magistrate (also known as a Justice of the Peace)
- A local government councillor
- A school governor
- A member of a police authority
- A member of a health authority
- A member of any statutory tribunal (for example, Employment Tribunal)
- A member of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment

- A member of the General Teaching Council
- A member of the Environment Agency
- A member of the prison independent monitoring board
- A trade union member (for trade union duties).

If you receive any attendance fees or paid compensation for undertaking such voluntary public duties (other than those for travel or subsistence), you are required to refund this to the University.

You should discuss the extent of the potential commitment and the implications for your role within the University with your line manager, before entering into such a commitment.

Any leave must be agreed beforehand with your line manager and a request may be refused, if it is deemed to be unreasonable.

The amount of time off which is granted will be based on:

- How long the duties might take
- The amount of time you have already taken off work for public duties
- How the time off will affect your team/dept and area of work.

Local and national elections

You will be granted up to 2 days unpaid leave if you support the local (including district and parish) election or national election process by undertaking one of the following roles:

- Polling station staff, for example polling clerk
- Count staff, for example counting assistant, ballot box receiver
- Postal vote staff
- Returning Officer.

Payment for these roles is normally made by the local authority. It will be your responsibility to ensure that any tax and national insurance due is payable.

You are not required to refund the University for any fees received as any approved leave is unpaid.

You should discuss the extent of the potential commitment and the implications for your role within the University with your line manager, before entering into a commitment to undertake any of these roles.

Any leave must be agreed beforehand with your line manager and a request may be refused if it is deemed to be unreasonable.

The amount of time and timing of any special leave will be dependent on:

- When the duties are required to be fulfilled
- How long the duties might take
- The requirement for minimum break periods between your role at NTU and the election role
- The amount of time you have already taken off for any other public duties
- How the time off will affect your team/dept and area of work.

Jury service

If you are required to carry out jury service, you will be granted paid leave in accordance with your contractual working. For those on zero hours, you will be paid for any scheduled working during this period.

When you request time off, you'll need to provide your line manager with a copy of the court summons.

Attendance at court as a witness

If you are summoned to attend court as a witness (either with the consent of the University, on a subpoena, witness summons or other as a legal obligation) you will be granted paid leave in accordance with your contractual working. For those on zero hours, you will be paid for any scheduled working during this period.

Service in non-regular forces

If you are a volunteer member of the non-regular (Reserve) forces, you will be granted up to ten days' paid leave to attend annual training.

In the event of compulsory mobilisation, special leave will be granted as necessary and will be unpaid. In these circumstances, you will be paid by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

If you are subject to compulsory mobilisation, you are entitled to remain as a member of the relevant pension scheme, i.e. Local Government (LGPS), Teachers (TP) or Universities Superannuation (USS). Provided you continue to pay contributions to your respective pension scheme, the MoD will pay the contributions which would otherwise normally have been paid by the University.

If you are called up for active duty, you are entitled to return to the same role, under the same terms and conditions of employment as previously held before mobilisation. If it is not reasonably practicable to do so, you will be given priority consideration for a suitable alternative role on terms and conditions which are no less favourable than your previous role.

Severe weather conditions/disruption to public transport

Where travel difficulties arise as a result of severe weather conditions or disruption to public transport, you may be granted paid leave at the discretion of your line manager, or appropriate alternative manager in their absence.

If you participate in a 'flexitime' scheme, any time off should be offset by time off in lieu or taken from accrued hours.

You should maintain regular contact with your line manager where the severe conditions persist and result in your protracted absence.

In the event that weather conditions deteriorate during the working day, giving rise difficulty in travelling home, your line manager will consider whether you are allowed to leave work early.

Given the wide range of factors that can apply, including the distance that you may travel to work, a decision as to how time off should be categorised is for your line manager to make.

Nonetheless, consistency and fairness is very important so they will take into account a number of factors, including:

- Availability of alternative transport

If trains and/or buses are running, you may be advised to consider these as an alternative to private transport.

- Ability to work from home

Where adverse weather continues, it may be that where circumstances permit and depending on the nature of your role and duties, you may be expected to work from home.

- Disability or health conditions

Where it is known that you have a disability or health condition which impacts your mobility or makes it unsafe to travel during severe weather conditions, this will also be taken into account.

Disability related

If it's necessary for you to take time off work for a reason directly related to your disability but not as a result of being ill, paid leave may be granted at your line manager's discretion.

Examples of this may include:

- Hospital or doctor's appointments
- Hospital treatment as an outpatient

- Assessment of conditions
- Hearing aid or sight tests
- Training with a guide dog or hearing dog
- Counselling/therapeutic treatment
- Recovery time after blood transfusion or dialysis treatment.

This list is purely illustrative and is not intended to be exhaustive.

Graduation

If the University funds you to undertake a degree or similar, you will be granted one day's paid special leave to attend your graduation ceremony.

Job interviews

You will be granted paid time off to attend a job interview within the University (for promotion, career development or redeployment) and within and outside the University, where you have been given notice of dismissal due to redundancy.

Medical appointments

Paid leave may be granted for medical appointments for the doctor, dentist, optician and hospital (including appointments relating to transitioning).

Where possible, these appointments should be arranged in your own time although where this is not possible, you should make appointments at times which are least disruptive to work, for example at the beginning or end of the normal working day, and ideally within the first or last working hour. Where you participate in a 'flexitime' scheme of recording hours of work, any time off should be offset by time off in lieu or taken from accrued hours.

You should give as much notice as possible to your line manager of such appointments. Where these are scheduled in advance, it will generally be possible to accommodate and plan for them, although it's recognised that in some instances, short notice appointments may occur, so every effort should be made to also accommodate these arrangements especially if failure to attend may be detrimental to your physical or psychological wellbeing.

You may be asked to provide evidence of medical appointments, although in the case of transition related consultations, your manager will not ask for intimate and/or personal details to be provided.

Religious and cultural festivals

No paid special leave will be granted for religious or cultural festivals.

However, sympathetic consideration will be given to requests for annual leave or in addition, for unpaid special leave, for participation in such events.

You are expected to follow the normal requirements for requesting annual leave in these circumstances.

Blood donation

When you donate blood (including platelets), paid special leave of one hour per appointment will be granted (excluding travelling time) for up to two occasions per year.

You are requested to minimise the impact of travel and time out of work by attending the nearest donation centre to your place of work, where possible.

Bone marrow donation

Where you are identified as a potential match for bone marrow (or stem cell), paid special leave will be provided for all your appointments for tests.

If a bone marrow match is confirmed, up to 3 working days paid special leave will be provided in respect of your donation and associated recuperation.

Organ donation

Where you are identified as a potential match for organ donation, paid special leave will be provided for all your appointments for tests.

If an organ match is confirmed, up to 5 working days paid special leave will be provided in respect of your donation and associated recuperation.

Applying and recording special leave

You are required to notify your line manager (or an appropriate alternative manager in their absence) as soon as you are aware that you will need to request special leave.

In circumstances where it is possible to request special leave in advance, you should record this as 'Other Absence' on [MyHR](#). This will automatically send an authorisation request to your line manager.

In circumstances where it is not possible for you to request special leave in advance on MyHR, you must notify your line manager at the earliest opportunity and in any event within an hour of your usual start time, confirming the reason for your absence and how much time off work you are requesting.

All special leave requests are required to be approved by your line manager, or appropriate alternative manager in their absence. If this does not happen, you will not be paid and may be considered to be absent without approval.

The number of days' leave to be taken (whether paid or unpaid) will be recorded on MyHR.

Notification will automatically be received by Payroll, and any adjustments to salary will be processed, where appropriate.

Impact on your pension

The University operates various pension schemes and contributions differ depending on which scheme you are a member of.

The University continues to pay pension contributions during your paid special leave period. This period of leave will count in full, as reckonable service for pension purposes.

If you are on unpaid special leave, you will not pay any pension contributions for this period if you are a member of LGPS, TPS or USS. If you wish to repay those contributions, you'll need to contact:

Local Government Pension Scheme

The University's Payroll Services by emailing payroll@ntu.ac.uk or finpayroll@ntu.ac.uk within 30 days of your return to work.

If you do not elect to buy back your lost pension within 30 days of returning to work, then the full cost of this option will fall to you. If you do not return to work following your special leave, but still wish to buy back your lost pension, you must advise the University's Payroll Services before your last day of employment, to ensure that arrangements can be made for this to be actioned.

For specific pension advice, you'll need to contact Nottinghamshire County Council at Pensions Office, County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP or on 0115 977 2727, quoting your National Insurance Number in any correspondence. The website can be accessed at: www.nottspf.org.uk

Universities Superannuation Scheme

Royal Liver Building, Liverpool, L3 1PY or call 0845 068 1110 or 0151 2274711, quoting your National Insurance Number on any correspondence. The website can also be accessed at: www.uss.co.uk

Teachers' Pension Scheme

11b Lingfield Point, Darlington, DL1 1AX or call 0345 6066166, quoting the pension scheme reference number in any correspondence. The website can also be accessed at: www.teacherspensions.co.uk

Retirement Savings Plan

For members of the Salary Sacrifice Retirement Savings Plan, both employee and employer contributions will be maintained by NTU throughout periods of unpaid special leave.

More information is available at [Retirement Savings Plan](#).

Sponsored migrant workers

If you are a sponsored migrant worker, notification to the United Kingdom Visa and Immigration (UKVI) will be required. This will be notified by your HR Team, in order to ensure that the University fulfils its reporting duties and remains compliant with its legal obligations as a licensed sponsor.

You may not be able to retain your sponsored status during a period of unpaid leave and it is therefore essential that any special leave, and all the potential implications are discussed with your local [HR Team](#) well in advance, where possible.

Additional support

Your local [HR Team](#) will be available for any further support and advice, if required.