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| OTAGO POLYTECHNIC MANAGEMENT POLICY | | Number: MP1101.01 | |
| Title: | Research and Study Release | | |
| ITPNZ Standard: | 11 Research | | |
| Policies Committee | Approval Date: 31 Jul 08 | Effective Date: | 31 Jul 08 |
| Previous Policy Number | n/a | Review Date: | as required |
| Contact Authority: | Deputy Chief Executive | Status: | current |

Purpose

Research and Study Release is release from normal research, teaching and administrative duties which may be granted to qualifying staff in order that they may undertake duties within an approved research and/or study programme. It is an opportunity for the staff member to pursue research interests or other scholarly activities, or to undertake a programme of formal or strategically relevant informal study.

Research and Study Release is a form of service to the Polytechnic and a condition of employment for qualifying staff and as such is granted for those activities which are consistent with the staff member's role and/or duties within the Polytechnic.

Background

The Polytechnic acknowledges that a significant constraint on the productivity of staff with regard to conducting research and disseminating the results of research is similar to undertaking significant curriculum activities or organisational development. Accordingly, this policy aims to release staff whose substantive roles are concerned with research and/or who have significant academic leadership responsibilities to undertake regularly a period of focused research, learning or scholarly activity.

Application

Staff who may be eligible for Research and Study Release are:

- Professors
- Associate Professors
- Lecturers who have chosen a research career path and who have a written agreement with the Polytechnic to exchange discretionary leave for research time
- Other staff who have an express term in their employment agreement providing for Research and Study Release. This may include staff who are research active, but who have not confined their careers to a research path.

Policy

1. Eligibility for Research and Study Release

- 1.1 Eligibility for Research and Study Release is calculated from either
 - i. The date of appointment to a qualifying position
or
 - ii. The end of the period of service in which previous Research and Study Release was taken, or if the timing of release has been delayed by actions of the Polytechnic, the date at which the qualifying staff member became eligible to take research and study release.
- 1.2 Periods of special release with or without pay shall not be counted towards eligibility for Research and Study Release.

2 Application for Research and Study Release

- 2.1 A staff member applying for Research and Study Release shall submit a written application (refer Schedule 1) to the Deputy Chief Executive



through the appropriate Senior Manager. This application shall include:

- A copy of the staff member's last Research and Study Release Report (if applicable).
- A detailed description of the staff member's proposed Research and Study Release programme outlining the academic purpose, benefits to the Polytechnic, expected outcomes including details of proposed research outputs, project activities, itinerary and contact details.
- Proposed coverage, if any, of teaching and research obligations while on release.
- A statement on sources of available financial assistance (if applicable), and a request for further financial support based on the proposed parameters of the Research and Study Release programme.

2.2 Qualifying staff generally will complete written applications for Research and Study Release at least 12 months prior to the proposed commencement of release.

3 Approval of Research and Study Release

3.1 Applications for Research and Study Release shall be approved for qualifying staff by the Deputy Chief Executive on the recommendation of the Senior Manager.

3.2 Research and Study Release may be postponed for up to one year in any or a combination of the following circumstances:

- Inadequate notice (that is less than 12 months) has been given or other circumstances in which teaching and/or supervision duties cannot be covered by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.
- Where a significant number of staff from the same school/programme seek release at the same time such that teaching and supervision is unreasonably disrupted and/or the school/programme is unable to budget for financial support for all qualifying staff in that financial year.

4 Timing of Research and Study Release

4.1 Subject to clause 4.2, release will generally be taken as a single period of time, in the semester immediately following the expiry of the qualifying period.

4.2 In extraordinary circumstances other timing arrangements may be agreed.

5 Financial Assistance for Research and Study Release

5.1 Staff on approved Research and Study Release may be eligible to receive a Grant-in-Aid of up to a maximum of \$6,000 to assist with expenses directly related to the release, which may be incurred during the release period.

5.2 Such Grant-in-Aid will be by way of reimbursement of actual costs incurred and not covered by any other grant or external source. Approved financial support is paid to a staff member by the Polytechnic for goods and services purchased by the staff member related to the Research and Study Release on presentation of receipts and/or invoices.



- 5.3 Grant-in-Aid will generally be applied as follows:
- For release taken overseas – up to a maximum of \$6,000, normally for a 12 weeks release period
 - For release taken elsewhere in New Zealand, requiring significant periods away from home – up to a maximum of \$3,000, normally for a 12 week release period
 - For release based in the staff member's usual place of work on a case by case basis, but generally not funded.

(NB: the amounts for Grants-in-Aid are GST exclusive.)

- 5.4 Staff on Research and Study Release may not accept a financial grant or salaried post at any other tertiary institution, or engage in private consulting for fees, during the period of their release without prior written approval from the Employer.

For release taken overseas, outside financial assistance within reasonable limits will normally be approved provided that the acceptance of such financial support does not involve duties which:

- conflict with the approved purpose of the release
- compromise the ability of the staff member to achieve the intended outputs or outcomes of the period of release

Where a staff member submits a release proposal involving financial assistance in the nature of remuneration or consultancy fees, advice must be obtained from Human Resources prior to the proposal being approved.

- 5.5 A staff member who resigns while on Research and Study Release, or within six months of returning from that release, will be required to refund all or a portion of any Grant-in-Aid as determined by the Bond Agreement (refer Schedule 2), provided that the Employer may waive the duty to refund.
- 5.6 Nothing in this section shall prevent the Deputy Chief Executive approving financial support in excess of the limits set out in 5.3 where appropriate justification is provided.

6 Release Reports

- 6.1 Staff members who take up Research and Study Release must supply their Release Report to their Senior Manager, copied to the Research Office, within three months of returning from release. Staff members shall include in a Release Report a statement of the extent to which the original goals, activities, outcomes and benefits to the Polytechnic have been achieved relative to those anticipated at the time of application. The Release Report should provide evidence of outcomes (eg copies of papers submitted to journals and copy of letter of receipt or acceptance by journals).

7 Financial Responsibility

- 7.1 The responsibility for making adequate budget provision for Research and Study Release shall rest with the Senior Manager. All costs associated with Research and Study Release shall be allocated to the Cost Centre in which the staff member is employed.



Costs to be considered are:

- Grants-in-aid
- Special Responsibility Allowances where a Head of Department / School or Programme Manager is on release
- Replacement teaching staff, usually at part-time rates

8 Appeals

- 8.1 A staff member, who has just cause to believe that he/she has been disadvantaged by the decision of the Deputy Chief Executive, may lodge a written appeal with the Chief Executive, setting out the grounds for appeal. Such appeal shall be lodged within 20 working days of the advice of the decision.

Referral Documents

MP0461 Staff Development

Employment agreements for both academic and allied staff. If there is any conflict between any terms of the relevant employment agreement and this policy, then the employment agreement shall apply.



Application for Research and Study Release

Title _____

Surname _____ First Names _____

Position _____

Department/School _____

Period for which release is now requested

From _____ To _____

Financial Assistance from Outside Sources:
(Give details of any external financial assistance)

Grant-in-Aid

(Refer to Policy – Research and Study Release)

Are you applying for a Grant-in-Aid Yes No

If Yes, attach budget including financial assistance from other sources.

NOTE:

Previous Research and Study Release

Attach a copy of last Research and Study Release (*if any*).

Research and Study Release Programme

Please attach a detailed description of your proposed Research and Study Release programme. This should give details of the following:

- a) The overall purpose of the release.
- b) The expected outcomes which will benefit the Polytechnic (e.g. publications, conference presentations, development of new courses/research/teaching methods, professional activity, postgraduate study, collaborative projects, changes in management or leadership). Applicants will need to provide specific details in this section.
- c) Activities which will lead to the accomplishment of your objectives for the release (eg a summary of your study or research project, individuals with whom you will be working, universities and other organisations you will be visiting, letters of invitation). Applicants will need to provide specific details in this section.
- d) Itinerary and contact details at each place.
- e) Your teaching/research or other employment responsibilities and state how they will be discharged during your proposed absence on Research and Study Release. This needs to be signed off by the Senior Manager.

Applicant's Declaration:

- I have read and understand the Polytechnic's Research and Study Release Policy:

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Deputy Chief Executive's Decision:

- Previous release reports up to date
 - Correct documentation included in application
 - Satisfactory arrangements can be made to cover applicant's teaching/research/other commitments during the proposed Research and Study Release
 - Eligible for study release of _____ weeks
 - Grant-in-Aid of \$_____ approved for the purposes of the Research and Study Release
- State Reasons:*

- I approve this application
- I decline this application – State reasons

Deputy Chief Executive _____ Date _____



Bond Agreement

The following shall be included in any letter of offer relating to Grant-in-Aid. No monies shall be paid in respect of a Grant-in-Aid until this agreement is signed.

Grant-in-Aid

- 1) The employee agrees that, should the employee leave his or her position with the Polytechnic within six months of returning from Research and Study Release, the employee shall repay to the Polytechnic a proportion of the Grant-in-Aid, that proportion being determined by the following formula:

$(\text{Grant-in-Aid} \div 6) \times (6 - \text{number of complete months employed since returning from Research and Study Release})$.

All or part of any sum payable to the Polytechnic by the employee under this clause may be deducted by the Polytechnic from the employee's final pay.

- 2) The employee shall not be liable to repay this proportion of the Grant-in-Aid if the reason for leaving his or her position is dismissal, death, or serious illness, accident or injury which would reasonably be expected to necessitate leaving this position of employment.

