

Buyout Policy

This document describes School rules for considering and granting buy-out requests from academic staff members. It must be read in conjunction with Section 11 “Academic Staff Leave” of the “Academic Staff Terms & Conditions of Employment”.

1. Buyout in the sense of this document is for the purpose of undertaking research which has been funded typically by an external funder or, occasionally, by funds internal to the School. Holding School offices, including the Directing of Research Centres or Institutes, is internal secondment even if it comes with resources transferred to the Department to buy an academic staff member out of their normal teaching and administrative (service/citizenship) duties. Internal secondment is not subject to the rules governing buyout.
2. Maternity/paternity/adoption/shared parental leave as well as the additional research leave that comes with such leave for a total period of eighteen weeks or greater is not subject to the rules governing buyout.
3. Academic staff members can request buyout by writing to their Head of Department. Buyout is not an entitlement and is at the discretion of Heads of Department. For buyout that extends into the term in office of a future Head of Department, the current Head of Department should consult with their successor.
4. Departments can restrict buyout beyond the rules described in this document, possibly to the extent of not allowing any buyout at all. However, these more restrictive local rules must be communicated in writing to all staff members and Heads of Department must apply more restrictive Departmental rules fairly, equitably, consistently and transparently.
5. A buyout of X% of a staff member’s time normally translates into an X% reduction in their commitments to teaching and service/citizenship relative to the normal teaching and service/citizenship load of a member of staff at that grade (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor) in a Department. Heads of Department can, however, impose certain conditions on the buyout in the interest of a smooth functioning of their Department. Such conditions must be applied fairly, equitably, consistently and transparently.
6. Normally, no academic staff member can be on more than 50% buyout in any one year, unless the conditions of the research grant or the type of research for which buyout is requested

(e.g., fieldwork abroad which requires a minimum amount of time away) requires a deviation from this rule. Since buyout leave is typically agreed at the point of research grant applications, staff members must give Heads of Department sufficient time to consider the buyout request.

7. Normally, no academic staff member can be on a combination of buyout and unpaid leave (other than unpaid leave on compassionate grounds) for more than 2 years out of 5, unless the conditions of the research grant requires a deviation from this rule.
8. In granting sabbatical leave in addition to buyout leave the following rule applies: no academic staff member should be on the combination of buyout/unpaid leave (other than on compassionate grounds) *and* sabbatical leave for more than 3 years out of 6.
9. Signing off on a research grant application that requires greater buyout as a condition of the grant than rules 6 and 7 allow is at the discretion of the Head of Department who should consult with the Pro-Director Faculty Development before taking a decision. Similarly, deviating from these rules on the basis that the type of research for which buyout is requested requires greater buyout than rules 6 and 7 allow is at the discretion of the Head of Department who should consult with the Pro-Director Faculty Development before taking a decision. In making these decisions, the Head of Department must act fairly, equitably and consistently and will take into account the extent and quality of the staff member's previous contributions to teaching/education and service/citizenship as well as the ability of a Department to deliver its teaching and education to high student satisfaction in the light of other staff being on other forms of leave.
10. In the interest of not deterring research grant applications given low success rates, Heads of Department should apply a probabilistic assessment to buyout requests contained in multiple research grant applications, and should not assume that all applications will be successful. A staff member should therefore not be barred from submitting multiple applications simply because if they were to be 100% successful, they would be in breach of the buyout rules, as such a success rate is usually very unlikely. Research Division can provide information on typical success rates though when making their decision Heads of Department can take into account that particular academic staff members may have demonstrated a higher than typical success rate.
11. If the academic staff member is more successful in grant applications than was to be expected and the combined buyout from multiple research grants exceeds the rules in 7 and/or 8, the staff member should first of all consider whether they can reduce their buyout commitments and take personal financial rewards in the form of income or research account money instead. To the extent this is infeasible, the staff member can "mortgage" buyout leave from future qualifying periods. To give examples: If a staff member has been on buyout for 3 out of 5 years, they will not be able to get any additional buyout or unpaid leave for at least 2 years after these 5 years. If a staff member has been on buyout for 4 years (or more) out of 5 years, they will not be able to get any additional buyout or unpaid leave for at least 5 years after these 5 years.
12. Academic staff members who wish to appeal against a decision made by their Head of Department can do so in writing to the Pro-Director Faculty Development. The Pro-Director will consult with the staff member and the Head of Department as well as the Pro-Director Research and potentially others. The decision of the Pro-Director Faculty Development will be final.

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Links

Reference	Link
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Contacts

Position	Name	Email	Notes
abc	abc	abc@lse.ac.uk	abc

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Will this document be publicised through Internal Communications?	Yes/ No
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