

Career Break Policy

The Bristol Methodist District. (Charity Number 1134873)

First Issued	January 2025
Last review	January 2025

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In offering the opportunity to take a career break, we recognise the importance of work-life balance and personal development, whether that be via life-long learning, charity work, leisure activities, travel or other interests.
- 1.2 In turn, we recognise that staffing levels must at all times remain in line with the demands of the business.
- 1.3 Long-serving employees are therefore eligible to make a request for a career break to, for example, fulfil caring responsibilities, undertake a university or college course, pursue a particular project or research, or travel.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to employees. It does not apply to workers, contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

3 Length of career break

- 3.1 Career breaks must last more than 12-months and no more than 5-years.
- 3.2 Where you wish to take at least 1-month's leave but no more than 12-months' leave, you should make a sabbatical request.
- 3.3 Where you wish to take less than 1-month's leave, you should request holiday in the usual way.

4 Eligibility

- 4.1 Employees with 10 or more years' continuous service are eligible to request career breaks.
- 4.2 Both full-time and part-time employees with the relevant service are eligible.

5 Resignation prior to career break

- 5.1 An employee who wishes to take a career break will be required to provide us with their written resignation prior to its commencement.
- 5.2 If you wish to take an extended period of leave without resigning, you should make a sabbatical request.
- 5.2 Once a career break is authorised, you should discuss the timing of resignation with your Line Manager.
- 5.3 Normally, you will be required to work your notice and time your written resignation with that in mind.
- 5.4 Your career break commences on the first day after the termination of your contract of employment (i.e., the day after your notice period expires).

6 Requests for career break

- 6.1 All requests for career breaks should be made in writing by email or letter to your Line Manager, stating the preferred start date of the career break, duration of the career break, and the proposed objectives of the career break.
- 6.2 You should also state how we might be affected by your proposed absence on a career break and how any potential problems might be overcome.
- 6.3 We will consider any request for a career break, but the decision as to whether or not to grant the career break will be entirely at our discretion. There is no right of appeal against the decision.

7 Terms and conditions during career breaks

- 7.1 During a career break, your contract of employment will not remain in force, and you will not be an employee of ours for statutory or contractual purposes. For clarity:
- 7.1.1 You will not be paid any salary
 - 7.1.2 You will not accrue annual leave
 - 7.1.3 You will not be entitled to any other benefits during the career break, and
 - 7.1.4 Your continuity of employment will be broken by the career break.

8 Return to work

- 8.1 On completion of the career break, there is no guarantee that we will re-engage you in your previous position or in any other role. However, should you express a wish to return, we will endeavour to identify a suitable post.

9 Review

- 9.1 This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of any member of staff, but it will be automatically reviewed two years after initial approval and thereafter on a biennial basis unless organisational changes, legislations, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

10 Definitions

- 10.1 The Bristol Methodist District ("we", "us", "our")
- 10.2 The Employee ("you", "your")

Document control box

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