



CAREER BREAK POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Company acknowledges that individuals perform best when able to balance work with other aspects of their lives. The Company values the contribution that employees make to the success of the business and wants to support the wider responsibilities and interests that employees may have in their lives.
- 1.2 A career break is a period of unpaid leave away from the workplace. This document informs employees and managers about the policy and procedure to follow and ensures there is a consistency of interpretation and application across the Company.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This is a group level policy that applies to all employees of Anglian Water Group Limited, with the exception of Anglian Water (Ireland) Limited and Wave Limited (and their respective subsidiaries, which include Celtic Anglian Water and Anglian Water Business (National)).

3. STATUS

- 3.1 This policy and procedure are subject to regular review by the Company and are updated as appropriate.

4. POLICY OWNER

- 4.1 Head of Employee Relations.

5. POLICY

- 5.1 The career break scheme is a discretionary scheme and each case will be considered on its own merits.
- 5.2 An employee will be eligible to apply for a career break provided they:
- have five years' continuous service with the Company; and
 - do not have a live disciplinary written warning on their record.
- 5.3 Career breaks can be used by employees to provide 'time out', e.g. to:
- undertake further education;
 - extend maternity/ paternity leave; and/or
 - pursue personal goals, e.g. voluntary work or travel.
- 5.4 Employees cannot use a career break to undertake any other paid employment without the Company's prior consent.
- 5.5 Employees are entitled to one career break during their period of employment with the Company. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible for this to be increased provided there has been a reasonable length of time between the career breaks. The approval of more than one career break will be at the Line Manager's discretion and subject to the approval of the Business Unit Director.

- 5.6 A career break is a period of **unpaid** leave. The amount of unpaid leave can be any length of time between seven months and three years. For periods of unpaid leave for six months or less, refer to the Sabbatical Policy and Procedure documents, which can be viewed on [Lighthouse](#).
- 5.7 Employees taking a career break are **not guaranteed** to return to their current position or a position at the same level or in the same geographical area. However, the Company will make reasonable efforts to find the employee a suitable post.
- 5.8 The impact of a career break on an employee's employment contract and terms and conditions is detailed in Section 7 below.

6. PROCEDURE

- 6.1 An eligible employee, wishing to take a career break should submit their request for a career break absence to their Line Manager on Workday.
- 6.2 The Line Manager will meet with the employee to discuss their request and the implications of taking an unpaid career break on their terms and conditions of employment.
- 6.3 The Line Manager will consider the application, seeking approval where appropriate from the Business Unit Director, and communicate their decision to the employee.
- 6.4 The Line Manager will approve or decline the request on Workday. The employee will receive notification of the decision through Workday.

7. TERMS & CONDITIONS DURING A CAREER BREAK

7.1 Employment Contract

- 7.1.1 Employees taking a career break remain employees of the Company. Their employment contract is suspended at the start of the career break period and will re-commence at the end of the period.

7.2 Continuous Service

- 7.2.1 An employee's continuous service date will remain intact throughout the career break period. However, career break related absence does not count as continuous service for the purposes of calculating service-related benefits e.g. redundancy.

7.3 Pay

- 7.3.1 Whilst an employee is on a career break, pay, contractual entitlements and benefits will be suspended from the effective date of the career break.

7.4 Annual Leave

7.4.1 Employees do not accrue annual leave or bank holiday leave whilst on a career break. An employee may choose, however, to extend their career break by taking any outstanding annual leave owed to them at the start of the career break.

7.5 Pension Arrangements

7.5.1 An employee will leave the pension scheme when they start their career break, and can re join the scheme when they return to work.

7.6 Personal Accident Cover

7.6.1 Personal Accident insurance does not cover employees on a career break.

7.7 Life cover

7.7.1 Life cover insurance, e.g. for death in service, does not cover employees on a career break.

7.8 Loyalty Savings

7.8.1 Loyalty Savings Scheme deductions will cease during a career break. When the employee returns to work deductions can recommence if the employee notifies Payroll, in writing, within 14 days of their return to work, but there will be no entitlement to the bonus payment due at the end of the three year period as per the scheme rules.

7.9 Private Healthcare

7.9.1 During a career break employees will not be covered by the Company's private health care scheme arrangements. If employees wish to arrange for cover they should contact the health scheme provider directly.

7.10 Employee Assistance Programme

7.10.1 The employee assistance programme does not cover employees or their families during a career break period.

7.11 National Insurance Contributions

7.11.1 If an employee wishes to continue paying their NI contributions whilst they are on career break, instruction on how to pay these directly are available from <https://www.gov.uk>. This is not arranged via payroll.

7.12 Trade Union/ Water Aid and other Subscriptions

7.12.1 These subscriptions will take place as normal in the last salary payment. The deductions will then cease during the career break but will recommence once an employee has returned to work.

7.13 Company Car/Cash for Cars

- 7.13.1 Employees who take a career break will not be entitled to retain their company car or cash for cars equivalent during their leave period.
- 7.13.2 Employees should arrange to return their car before the first day of their career break.

7.14 Sick Pay

- 7.14.1 Whilst an employee is on an unpaid career break they will not be entitled to Company sick pay.

7.15 Returning to Work

- 7.15.1 Whilst employees are not guaranteed to return to their current position or a position at the same level or in the same geographical area, the Company will make reasonable efforts to find the employee a suitable post.
- 7.15.2 If it is not possible to find the employee a position at the same level they will be offered a reasonable alternative. If no such alternative exists, the employee will be made redundant. Normally, redundancy payments will be the statutory provision in force at the time.
- 7.15.3 If a reasonable alternative is offered and the employee declines the position, it will be deemed that the employee has resigned, and no redundancy payment will be offered.
- 7.15.4 Normally, the Company will need to recruit into the vacancy created by the employee who takes a career break. If this post is then outsourced the individual on the career break does not TUPE across. At the end of the employee's career break the Company will try to find them a suitable role at a similar level and in a similar geographical area. If such a post cannot be found, the employee will be redundant.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Line Manager Responsibilities

- 8.1.1 During a career break managers are expected:
- To act as a point of contact for the employee.
 - To communicate with the employee on a regular basis.
 - To ensure the employee receives regular information about the Company, including any potential re-organisation that may affect them and the type of post to which they may return after the career break.
 - Where there is a change in line manager, to inform the new line manager that they have an employee on a career break. It is the new manager's responsibility to ensure communication continues.

8.1.2 Keeping in contact with the employee will help them to maintain contact with their team and keep them abreast of changes at the local level.

8.2 Employee Responsibilities

8.2.1 During a career break employees are expected:

- To keep in touch with the organisation on a regular basis.
- To contact their Line Manager at least three months (12 weeks) before the date they are due to return to give notice of their return to work and to discuss arrangements for finding a suitable position.
- To take an active role in finding suitable employment by accessing Career Opportunities.
- To confirm their return to work date on Workday by closing their career break absence.
- If wishing to return to work at an earlier date than originally agreed, the employee **must** provide their Line Manager with at least three month's notice of their intention to return. Where sufficient notice is not provided, the Company reserves the right to delay the employee's return to the date that was originally agreed.
- If wishing to terminate their employment with the Company, the employee **must** give the Company adequate notice, i.e. the notice period in their contract.

9. RECORDS

9.1 It is the Company's standard practice to send all written correspondence by Workday/email. Where this is not possible (i.e. the employee does not have a Company email account), it will be sent by standard mail or it may be sent to a personal email address with consent from the employee.

9.2 All information will be held on the employee's record in accordance with the Company's Data Retention [Policy](#).

10. FURTHER ASSISTANCE

Please contact your HR Business Partner or Employee Relations Manager for further assistance.

LAST REVIEWED

January 2024