**DEPENDANT LEAVE – MANAGER GUIDANCE**

These notes are intended to provide information and practical guidance for managers to use for the purpose of managing dependant leave in their area of responsibility, and should be used in conjunction with the Dependant Leave Policy. Further support and advice is available from the People and Culture Directorate.

Dependant Leave includes bereavement leave, dependent emergency leave or to deal with domestic emergencies. The Dependant Leave Policy sets out the amount of leave that is applicable in the specific circumstances.

## MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES It is the responsibility of the manager to manage requests for Dependant Leave within their teams, and ensure that any Dependant Leave requests are recorded, including any refusal of Dependant Leave. Managers must also keep in touch with members of staff during a period of Dependant Leave, as appropriate in the circumstances. Areas for discussion may include:

* what support the individual needs at this time, if any
* how much leave is required
* what the individual wishes colleagues to be advised about their absence from work, if at all
* any support the individual requires on their return to work, if applicable
* if the member of staff requires additional leave in addition to that provided under this policy, what options they have available to them.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEPENDANT LEAVE Dependant leave should be used for short term, emergency or unforeseen situations. With the exception of bereavement leave, such leave should normally be for no more than one or two days.

If it should be the case that the situation becomes sustained, requires long term changes or time away from work, staff should consider making a flexible working request, using holiday, or taking unpaid leave.

## MANAGING REQUESTS FOR DEPENDANT LEAVE Requests for dependant leave are often, due to their nature, made at short notice. Managers must consider requests for dependant leave, and handle them sensitively and in confidence, considering each on its own merits and with regard to the particular circumstances. Factors to take into account when consider requests for Dependant Leave include:

* severity of the issue
* the nature and extent of the situations
* the amount of time requested
* impact on the University
* likely impact upon the member if staff or their family members and dependents
* any specific responsibilities of the employee (e.g. are they an executor of a will in the event of a bereavement)
* any dependant circumstances (e.g. a funeral taking place abroad)

Dependant Leave should normally only be refused in exceptional circumstances. Before declining a request for Dependant Leave, managers may wish to take advice from the People and Culture Directorate.

The amount of paid (or unpaid leave) is matter for the discretion of the manager, taking into account all of the relevant circumstances.

In the unusual event that Dependant Leave is refused, the manager must confirm the reason for the decision to the member of staff.

Managers may request evidence of the situation that has necessitated the request for Dependant Leave (e.g. a death certificate). Such requests should be handled sensitively and only when necessary.

## REPORTING PROCEDURE Where practicably possible, staff should request dependant leave via the usual application process in their department. Where this is not possible (for example, in an emergency situation), they should make the request verbally to their manager who should record it on their behalf or ask them to apply retrospectively / complete any forms on their return to work.

## OTHER SITUATIONS From time to time, unforeseen or serious situations may arise that are not dealt with in the Dependant Leave Policy. In these circumstances, the manager may apply their discretion and apply the spirit of the policy when deciding to award Dependant Leave. Advice is available from the People and Culture Directorate.

## ADDRESSING ISSUES There may be occasions were a member of staff takes excessive periods of dependant leave that are having an impact on the department, colleagues of the University. This may be indicative of underlying issues, such as insecure care arrangements or long term health issues of dependents. It may be appropriate to consider more appropriate / long term arrangements, such as flexible working. It is recommended that an informal discussion takes place initially with the member of staff to explore the issue. Advice is available from the People and Culture Directorate if required.