

Human Resources  
Goireasan Daonna

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# Secondment Policy

## Poileasaidh fo-fhastaidh

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# Document Control

## A: Version History

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## B: Document Approval

Name	Title	Role
Elaine Barrie	Head of HR	Final Approval
Louise McGunnigle	HR Manager	Final Reviewer
HR Sub Group	TU Representative	Reviewer
Talent Team	HR	Author



## Introduction

The Highland Council recognises the value of secondment opportunities for both employee and organisational development. Secondments encourage growth and flexibility, enabling employees to gain skills and knowledge that may not be available within their own substantive post or organisation. These career opportunities develop skilled employees, complementing and linking into succession planning and the Council's Talent Strategy. This will make better use of our resources and utilise the talent and creativity of our workforce across all services.

Secondments must operate within the context of the Council's Secondment Guidance and Equal Opportunities Policy, for internal secondment also the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy & Guidance.

## Policy Purpose

The Council aims to be ambitious, sustainable and connected in the delivery of our Services. We are a constantly changing organisation and the skills needed to deliver services also change. The use of secondments can provide employees with the opportunity for professional development and the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and experience. Equipping our staff with the right skills will build an agile and flexible workforce with wider and more transferrable skills to the overall benefit of the Council going forward.

Secondments should be planned and structured and must fit the organisation's business needs and the Employee's Review and Development (ERD) plan. The purpose of the secondments must be agreed and clearly understood, and employees should be aware that secondment requests which do not meet the organisation's business needs will not necessarily be supported.

This secondment policy aims to:

- provide a robust, fair and transparent process for all internal and external employee secondments.
- provide the secondee a positive and rewarding experience to progress their professional development whilst keeping their permanent employment with the Highland Council

- build an agile and flexible workforce within the Council that is more able to encompass and adapt to change.
- address short term service gaps or projects.
- provide guidance to Managers outlining a fair and consistent approach in recruiting employees to secondment opportunities.

## Who is this policy for?

This Policy applies to Scottish Joint Council (SJC) employees. Procedures for teaching staff and associated professionals is governed in accordance with locally established Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers Agreements (LNCT No. 9) which may vary from the guidance referred to in this Policy, however the general principals will apply. For staff employed on Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions, the [NHS Scotland PIN Policy](#) will apply.

## Policy in Practice

### Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, Secondment is defined as 'the temporary loan of an employee to a different team, section or service in the Highland Council or to another organisation for a specific purpose and for a specific time, to the mutual benefit of employees and Highland Council generally.'


This policy identifies two types of secondment:

- Internal secondment (i.e. to another team, section or service in the Highland Council);
- External secondment (e.g. to NHS, Scottish Government etc)/

### Roles & Responsibilities

**Seconded** – a permanent Council employee who is seconded to a different role, either within the Council or with an external organisation.

**Substantive Manager** – Seconded's Manager within their substantive role.



**Secondment Manager** – Manager that is responsible for the management of the secondment role and Secondee.

## Policy Principles

### Terms and Conditions

Secondments are offered under the terms and conditions of the seconded post with regard to number of hours worked, location and grade. The Secondment Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Secondee including performance, annual leave and attendance management.

Secondments will usually specify the grade and this will apply for the secondment period. This may be higher than the Secondee's substantive grade. However, if the secondee's substantive post is a higher grade they will continue to receive payment at this higher grade during the secondment period. Employees are not eligible to apply for a post that is more than one grade lower than their substantive role.

### Secondment Opportunities

It is essential that all parties are clear about their obligations, expectations and accountabilities before the secondment commences.

Employees wishing to apply for a fixed-term vacancy on a secondment basis must seek approval from their Line Manager before doing so. All secondments should be approved unless there are clear, demonstrable business reasons why it is not practicable. In any such cases, input from Head of Service and HR must be sought prior to making a final decision. Where a secondment is refused the reasons should be communicated to the employee in writing.

All fixed term posts should be advertised as secondment opportunities for permanent members of staff to apply for if they wish. Internal applicants who meet the essential criteria are guaranteed an interview.

Where a fixed term post has not been advertised as a secondment opportunity, this can be requested by an employee. If the Manager of the advertised fixed term post agrees to this request, then approval to apply for the post on a secondment basis must still be gained from the employee's substantive post Manager.

## Managing Secondments

### Communication during a secondment

The employee and Substantive Manager must retain contact. This will enable the secondee to keep abreast of any ongoing Service developments and, if necessary, to participate in any essential training or other personal development requirements.

Employee Review & Development (ERD) arrangements must be clarified and formalised between the Secondee, their Substantive Manager and their Secondment Manager.

Where the secondment is external the Secondment Manager must provide an annual performance report for the Secondee to their Substantive Manager in the Highland Council.

### Extending a secondment

Managers may consider extending the period of secondment provided that there are operational reasons for doing so and to ensure that the organisation continues to best use the skills and experience available to it. See [Secondment Guidance](#) for further information.

### If the post becomes permanent

A seconded employee does not have an automatic entitlement to be 'slotted' into the post they are seconded into if it becomes permanent. Where a fixed term job is being made permanent, or where a secondee is in a permanent job on a seconded basis, and it is proposed to make a permanent appointment, depending on the circumstances the incumbent can be considered on a permanent basis, without further advertising providing:

- the post has previously been advertised
- the secondment appointment was made following a formal recruitment process

Secondments are not guaranteed to become permanent, however where there is a possibility of the secondment becoming permanent, this should be reflected in the job advert. Each post is treated individually. See [Secondment Guidance](#) for further information.

## Termination of a secondment

At the end of a secondment agreement the secondee will normally return to their substantive post and salary grade. However, if restructuring of the substantive Service occurs during the secondment, then the secondee will be informed of any potential effects on their substantive post at the same time as other employees involved. They will also be involved in any redeployment/redundancy arrangements and in any consultation process.

If the secondee chooses to terminate the secondment early for personal reasons and their substantive post has been backfilled, there will be no guarantee that they will be able to return to their substantive post immediately. The Secondee may be given alternative reasonable duties for up to the remainder of the period of secondment.

A secondment may be terminated early by the Secondment Manager with agreed notice been given to the employee. In such cases the employee would return to the substantive post immediately where possible.

In exceptional circumstances, the Substantive Manager may request an early termination of the secondment agreement. This should be discussed with HR before any action taken.

## Guidance

Guidance, information and tools relating to the management of this policy have been developed and will be maintained in accordance with the Highland Council Partnership Framework. Guidance, procedures and associated documentation can be found on the HR Microsite – see Quick Links below.

## Legislation

The development and application of this policy is guided by:

- [Employment Rights Act 1996](#)
- [Employment Relations Act 1999](#)
- [Employment Act 2008](#)





## Monitoring

The application of this policy will be monitored through the Highland Council Partnership Framework and the Corporate Resources Committee.

## Quick Links

The Hyperlinks listed here will redirect you to the related guidance, letters, information, and relevant organisations mentioned in this policy.

<b>HR Microsite</b>	<a href="#"><u>Click Here</u></a>
<b>Secondment Guidance</b>	<a href="#"><u>Click Here</u></a>
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection Guidance</b>	<a href="#"><u>Click Here</u></a>
<b>People Strategy</b>	<a href="#"><u>Click Here</u></a>
<b>Talent Strategy</b>	<a href="#"><u>Click Here</u></a>
<b>Workforce Planning Strategy</b>	<a href="#"><u>Click Here</u></a>
<b>Equal Opportunities Policy</b>	<a href="#"><u>Click Here</u></a>
<b>PIN / SNHS Policies</b>	<a href="#"><u>Click Here</u></a>