

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	3
2. Eligibility	3
3. Buying Leave	3
4. Payment for additional leave	4
5. Responsibilities	5
6. General Considerations	5
7. Implementation and Review	6

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The University is committed to supporting employees to achieve a healthy balance between their work and personal lives, this is in the best interests of the University and the well-being of individual employees. This policy outlines the option and process for buying additional leave and builds on the existing leave provisions available to employees.
- 1.2 The opportunity to buy additional annual leave complements the other elements offered within Bangor Benefits such as salary sacrifice for pensions, Cycle to Work scheme and other forms of leave available such as parental leave. Further information on these can be obtained by contacting the HR department or visiting the HR web-pages. It is also separate from other forms of leave such as unpaid leave, compassionate leave and so forth.
- 1.3 The ability to buy additional leave is via a salary sacrifice arrangement. Salary sacrifice is an agreement between the University and the staff member to vary the terms and conditions of employment to reduce the entitlement to cash pay, in return for non-cash benefit. The non-cash benefit in this case is additional annual leave. The salary sacrifice arrangement is financially beneficial as the non-cash benefit (additional leave) is exempt from tax and national insurance contributions.

2 Eligibility criteria

- 2.1 This benefit of being able to purchase additional annual leave applies to Bangor University staff members, excluding the following:
- Employees engaged on a fixed-term / temporary contract for less than 12 months.
 - Employees engaged on contracts that do not contain fixed hours (referred to as 'zero-hours' or 'variable hours' contracts)
 - Individuals employed directly by University subsidiary companies.
 - Individuals where any salary sacrifice amount requested, would bring their pay below the National Minimum Wage level.

3 Buying Leave

- 3.1 Members of staff who satisfy the eligibility criteria can currently apply to buy an unspecified amount of annual leave. The University retains the right to alter and specify maximum leave application amounts in the future.
- 3.2 The request to buy additional leave can be made via the I Trent Self Service Portal. The portal will provide individuals with the gross cost of any annual leave hours they wish to purchase. A FAQ section is available on the Bangor Benefits Website, giving more information on the scheme. Details of how to utilise a possible salary calculator to work out estimated net cost is also provided.

Individuals will enter the hours they wish to purchase on I Trent, view a gross cost and submit this for consideration. (see I Trent webpages on My Bangor for details)

and further guidance on how to apply within the system). The request will then be shared on I Trent with their line manager for review and approval.

All applications will be given full consideration by the Line Manager in light of the operational requirements of the work area, and the application is only approved once the Line Manager has completed the authorisation on I Trent.

Once approved a Salary Sacrifice agreement will be issued by HR for individuals to review and e sign within I Trent Self Service.

3.3 Where it is not possible to accommodate the request, the Line Manager will provide the staff member with an explanation as to why the request cannot be approved. Should the staff member wish to appeal against this decision, this must be done so in writing to the Head of School / College (or equivalent within service areas) within 10 working days from being notified of the decision. Should the application be approved via appeal, but this take place after the respective cut-off date has passed (1st of August), then salary deductions will commence from the next available month, with two monthly deductions being made in the first month.

3.4 Staff members will have an opportunity to apply for additional bought leave at one points during the year, prior to the start of the annual leave year, details of the period of application will be noted on the Bangor Benefits website.

Staff members should discuss their requirements as soon as is practicably possible with their Line Manager, so the impact on the work area can be assessed in good time..

3.5 The leave may be taken at any time during the year. It does not have to be taken together as a single block or the dates specified at the point of the application being made. When the leave is to be taken, it is to be processed in the same way as contractual annual leave – by application and approval from the line manager, via the I Trent system.

3.6 The bought leave is a temporary addition to annual leave entitlement for one year.

4 Payment for additional leave

4.1 As was outlined in section 1.3 the additional days' annual leave will be bought by the employee through a deduction from their pay via a salary sacrifice arrangement. The arrangement is financially beneficial as the additional leave is exempt from tax and national insurance contributions. The net deduction and savings received will however to be subject to an individual's tax position.

4.2 12 monthly deductions will be made through the leave year from August to July.

4.3 Pension contributions will remain unchanged as both the employer and employee contributions will continue to be made on normal pay i.e prior to the deduction for bought leave being made.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 The table below outlines the responsibilities of the parties involved.

Employee	Line Manager	HR Department
To request the additional leave within the required time period through I Trent.	To administer the application of this policy fairly for all employees.	To communicate this policy to staff members.
To provide the necessary information when requesting additional leave (accurate completion of the on-line application and sign off of the sacrifice agreement).	To consider all requests to buy additional leave promptly.	To provide guidance to staff members and Line Managers on the application of this policy.
To monitor own annual leave entitlement, including any additional leave purchased and utilise within annual leave period.	Where a request cannot be approved, to provide the staff member concerned with an explanation and inform them of appeal process.	To monitor the uptake of this policy and benefit.
	To monitor the leave of their staff, including any additional leave purchased.	To issue the Salary sacrifice agreement to individuals.

6. General considerations

- 6.1 The additional leave bought will be added to the employee's annual leave entitlement for the year and may be taken at any time during the annual leave year subject to the usual approval arrangements.
- 6.2 Any additional leave purchased cannot be carried over into the next leave year unless there were exceptional circumstances that prevented the leave being taken. It is therefore assumed that the additional bought leave is used first.
- 6.3 Once an agreement has been made and the monthly deductions have commenced it becomes a binding agreement between the staff member and the University. The staff member cannot normally reverse their decision unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances are referred to key life changes, which would include marriage or divorce, severe illness of either the staff member or a member of their family, having to reduce hours of work or pay, or the potential job loss of either the staff member or partner.
- 6.4 Where an employee leaves part way through the leave year, any remaining monthly payments due will be deducted from their final salary, no pro rata adjustment would be undertaken for any bought annual leave and any outstanding leave should normally be taken in the notice period.

7. Implementation and Review

- 7.1 All parties involved in the operation of this policy have the responsibility for ensuring that the application of this policy is in line with the University's Equality, Diversity and inclusion Policy.
- 7.2 This policy will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis, to ensure that it meets the needs of the University and to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation.
- 7.3 This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed based on consultation and information available at the time of the policy being developed..