

Assistant Staff handbook

This Handbook helps to explain your terms and conditions of employment. It relates specifically to staff with the status of 'University Assistant'. Other categories of staff may have different terms and conditions in some respects. Please navigate using the links below.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | 2 |
| Pay | 3 |
| Hours of Work (Rules B1–B21)..... | 5 |
| Overtime and Bank Holiday Compensation..... | 5 |
| Holidays (Rules B22–B30) | 6 |
| Maternity and other family-related Leave and Pay (Rules J1–J27)..... | 8 |
| Special Leave (Rules B31–35) | 13 |
| Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure..... | 14 |
| Termination of Employment (Rules A6 to A8)..... | 14 |
| Individual Grievance Procedure (Rules G1–G4) | 16 |
| Bullying and Harassment (Rules K1–K2) | 16 |
| Disciplinary Procedures (Rules H1 to H20)..... | 17 |
| Probationary arrangements (Rules L) | 21 |
| Further Information | 22 |

Introduction

This handbook is a supplement to your letter of appointment. It sets out your terms and conditions of employment in greater detail and explains the processes and rules involved. You are employed as a member of the Assistant Staff, a staff group which includes technical staff, clerical, secretarial and library staff, and general and ancillary staff, and this booklet is specific to the Assistant Staff structure.

You have been appointed to a post in a particular institution. You will be responsible to your Head of Institution via your immediate supervisor, and will be subject to the particular local arrangements of your institution. In this booklet we use the word Institution to apply to the unit of the University in which you are employed, and which may be a Faculty, a Department, or another type of University institution.

However, you are a member of staff of the University, not simply of your own institution. Your contract of employment is with the University as a corporate body. This booklet explains the rules and arrangements for the employment of assistant staff throughout the University, and is based on the document entitled '[Regulations governing Employment by the University and Rules](#)'. Your conditions of employment are set out in the Rules, and in this booklet we give under each heading the numbers of the Rules which apply. You can ask your Head of

Institution or your supervisor if you wish to see a copy of the Rules. You may also look at the document 'Schedules of Grades, Salaries and Wages', which is sent to your Head of Institution. You will be sent the schedule which applies to the division in which you work with your letter of appointment.

You will find more general information about the University as an organisation, and the facilities which are available to you as a member of staff, in a booklet currently in preparation which will apply to all staff groups.

You will also find a good deal of information on the University's website. HR information, including documentation on HR policies, the most up-to-date version of this handbook, and lists of contacts in the Human Resources Division, can be found on the [HR Website](#).

If you require a paper version of this booklet (also available in large print), please contact the Human Resources Division.

Miscellaneous

Established status

The Rules specify that certain procedures are different for established and unestablished assistants. All assistants achieve established status (Rule A9) after 12 months' continuous service.

Medical screening

Before you are offered a post you may be asked to complete a medical questionnaire and you may be required to attend the Occupational Health Service for a medical examination (Rule A2). If you do not disclose information about health problems this may result subsequently in the termination of your employment. You may also be asked to attend the Occupational Health Service for a medical examination during the course of your employment with the University if your Head of Institution believes that your state of health is causing difficulties for your work. (Rule C9).

Employment after the normal retiring age (Rule A10)

The conditions of employment set out here apply only to assistants who are below the normal retirement age of 65. In exceptional circumstances and with the consent of the Personnel Committee a member of staff may be employed over the age of 65. Staff who are over the normal retirement age can expect to have terms and conditions of service similar to those set out here where appropriate, subject to the following conditions:

1. You cannot attain established status.
2. Your employment may be terminated at any time by your Head of Institution and you have no right to appeal against such termination.
3. Your employment will be terminated no later than your seventieth birthday.
4. Any other special conditions set out in your letter of appointment.

Pay

Method of payment

Your salary will be paid directly into your bank, building society or equivalent account. Salaries are paid on the 26th of the month (or the Friday before if that date is a non-working day). You will receive a monthly statement of your pay showing relevant deductions and any Statutory Sick Pay or Statutory Maternity Pay payable to you. The statement is issued by the Payroll Section of the Human Resources Division through your Head of Institution.

Salaries are normally paid monthly, and newly-appointed staff do not have the option of weekly pay. A few members of staff are still paid weekly. If you are paid weekly and wish to change from weekly payment to monthly credit, or if you are promoted to a scale where payment has to be made by monthly credit, the University will make you an advance of salary to enable you to change from weekly to monthly pay. You should make application to the Payroll Section, Human Resources Division, on the form UAP/4, available from that office or from your institutional pay office.

If you work part-time throughout the year, you will be paid a salary based on your weekly hours. If you work for part of the year only (e.g. term-time), your salary will be based on the number of hours worked over the year and you will receive this salary in twelve monthly instalments.

The Payroll Section automatically makes standard deductions and any other deduction which you authorise. The University reserves the right to make deductions from your salary of any monies which have been overpaid to you or as directed by court order or other agreement. The rate and timescale of such deductions will be agreed with you. If you have any queries about your salary you should approach your institution's pay office in the first instance, and you may also approach the Payroll Section.

The University reserves the right to withhold payment of salary for any day or days when you are absent from work without permission or medical certification. You should notify your Head of Institution of the details of the account to which your salary should be credited.

Salary scales

You will find details of the salary structure for your Division in the document 'Schedule of Grades, Salaries and Wages', which you will receive together with your letter of appointment. This document shows the salary structure for your Division, the scale of pay for each grade and information about point of entry and arrangements for increments.

[Salary scales](#) are normally revised annually. New rates of pay are determined by negotiation with the trades unions recognised for each Division of Staff, and are approved by the University and Assistants Joint Board and the Council. Revised salary scales are effective from 1 August.

Increments

The salary scales for the CS, T and M Divisions include a number of incremental points for each grade within the Division.

You will normally be appointed at the first point of the salary scale for the grade of your post. Exceptionally an applicant who has specific and relevant qualifications and experience over and above the requirements of the post may be appointed at a higher starting point.

If you are appointed to a post for which you do not possess the minimum required qualifications or experience, you may be appointed at a lower grade, and you will transfer to the grade of the post when you have acquired the necessary skills.

If you move to a higher grade by promotion within your Institution, on upgrading of your post or on transfer to a different Institution you will normally be placed on the first point of the scale for the new grade, but if you are already on a scale point equivalent to or higher than that point you will be placed on the next highest point which would give you an increase in salary of about 5%. If you transfer to another post at your existing grade, you will remain on the same scale point.

If you have been in post for three months at the incremental date, you will normally move to the next point on the incremental scale on the incremental date for your Division (1 April for the M Division, 1 July for the CS Division, 1 October for the T Division). Staff whose performance or behaviour is unsatisfactory may have an increment withheld.

If you are employed on a training or age-related scale you will be appointed at the appropriate age-point and thereafter you will progress through the scales as you make progress in your training programme.

Discretionary payments and additional increments

Most salary scales contain discretionary points which are marked with an asterisk on the published scales. You will not move automatically to these points. If you are at the top of the normal scale you may be considered for progression to a discretionary point in recognition of exceptional performance in the post. If you are not at the top of the normal scale you may be considered for an award of an additional increment in recognition of exceptional performance in the post. Heads of Institution make recommendations for discretionary payments and additional increments to Awarding committees. Requests are considered once a year.

Additional increments and discretionary payments are awarded where an assistant's performance is considered to be at an outstanding level, over and above the level normally required for the grade, and this performance has been maintained over a long period of time. In considering recommendations the criteria include: outstanding performance, the specialist nature of the work undertaken, the rarity value of skill involved, the output of work achieved, and any other factors which may make the award appropriate.

An annual increment may be withheld, or a discretionary payment or additional increment withdrawn, if an assistant is subject to a disciplinary procedure because of his or her performance or conduct.

Hours of Work (Rules B1–B21)

The pattern of hours of work varies between institutions according to the particular needs of each institution. You may not be required to work the same number of hours in each week, depending on the workload of the institution. Each institution has an ‘approved scheme’ of hours per week which has been agreed by the Personnel Committee according to the overall rules for hours of work. You will be informed of the number of hours per week worked in your institution and your times of attendance, and will receive a copy of the relevant scheme with your letter of appointment.

The Rules specify hours of work as annual hours so that each institution can define a pattern that best suits its needs. You are expected to work for between 1666 and 1676 hours in any one year if you hold a full-time post in the CS Division, between 1689 and 1699 in any one year if you hold a full-time post in the T Division, and between 1712 and 1722 hours if you hold a post in the M Division. The typical working week is 36.5 hours, although staff in some institutions work a longer week and thus earn additional days of leave.

You will normally be expected to take a mid-day break of not less than one hour, which will not be included in your paid hours of work. In addition, subject to arrangements in your institution, you may take short morning and afternoon breaks, which should not add up to more than two hours per week in total. You should not normally leave the premises during these times, and if you do not take these breaks you may not deduct them from your hours of work. Legislation requires employees to take a break after a specified number of hours of work.

The Head of your Institution may require you to record your time of starting and finishing work each session.

Overtime and Bank Holiday Compensation

You may be required to work reasonable overtime, but overtime is worked only when necessary in the interests of the University, and must be authorised beforehand by your Head of Institution.

You will be compensated for overtime worked either by payment or by time off in lieu. Your Head of Institution will decide whether payment or time off in lieu is granted.

The hourly rates for calculating overtime or time off in lieu are:

- For overtime worked Monday to Saturday (at any time): 1.5 × basic hourly rate (i.e. an additional payment for the hours worked at half normal rate), or time off in lieu at the rate of 1.5 hours for each hour of overtime worked.

- For overtime worked on Sunday (at any time): 2 × basic hourly rate (i.e. an additional payment of the hourly rate for hours worked) or time off in lieu at the rate of 2 hours for each hour of overtime worked.
- For any hours worked on any public holiday:

If you receive overtime payments you will be paid 2 × your basic hourly rate; in addition you will be able to take the day's or part-day's leave on another occasion. If you are compensated by time off in lieu you will be able to take the day's or part-day's leave on another occasion; you will also be given additional time off at the rate of 1 hour for each hour worked on a public holiday.

These arrangements apply only if you are required by your Institution to work on a public holiday. If your Institution is open on a public holiday, and you choose to work on that day although you are not required to do so, you will be entitled to take that day's leave at another time, but you will not receive any additional compensation.

If you work part-time you will normally receive payment at overtime rates only when the total hours you have worked in any week are more than the hours in the standard working week for that Institution or division. However, if your Head of Institution requires you to work outside the normal hours of attendance for assistants working full-time, you may be paid for any such hours at the appropriate premium rates.

If you perform work voluntarily which is outside the terms and conditions of your appointment you may be paid for such work at a special rate.

Holidays (Rules B22–B30)

As explained in the previous section, hours of work are calculated as an annual number of hours. The standard working week is 36.5 hours, although staff in some institutions work a longer week and thus earn additional days of leave.

The leave year normally runs from 1 October to 30 September and the normal annual leave entitlement for those working the standard week is 36 working days, not including Saturdays and Sundays, but including public holidays.

If you start work after the beginning of the leave year your leave entitlement for that year will be calculated pro rata to the proportion of the leave year remaining.

You will earn long-service leave at the rate of one day after nine years' unbroken service and thereafter one additional day for each period of three years' unbroken service up to a maximum of four days after eighteen years' service.

Payment for annual leave days will be made at the basic rate.

You must take your annual holidays at times approved by your Head of Institution and which suit the workload of your institution. This means that you may be required to take, for example, five or more days' leave at Christmas, Easter, or some other period when the institution is closed. You may not be able to take leave at particular periods of the year when

there is a particular need for your work, e.g. during term or at the end of the financial year. In each leave year you can normally expect to have one unbroken period of leave of not less than two weeks.

If your Head of Institution requires you to work on any Bank Holiday you will be permitted to take that day's leave on another day. In addition you will be given additional time off equivalent to the number of hours worked or an additional payment for the number of hours worked. The Head of Institution will decide whether you receive time off in lieu or payment.

You may not carry leave forward from one leave year to the next. If in special circumstances you have been unable to take all your leave by the end of the leave year your Head of Institution may give you permission to take the balance during the following three months.

You are not normally entitled to payment in lieu of holidays. If you resign and have not taken your holiday entitlement to date, you will be entitled to take the balance of your annual leave before your service ends. The amount of annual leave due is pro rata to the proportion of the year you have already worked. You may be paid salary in lieu of leave only if your Head of Institution finds it impracticable to grant you your holiday entitlement before your service ends.

If you transfer to another institution in the University in the course of the leave year you will retain your entitlement to any leave still due to you for the part of the year already worked, and you should discuss with your present and your new institution how and when this leave can be taken in the light of the needs of both institutions.

If you work part-time your leave will be calculated as follows:

1. If you work less than five days per week, your annual leave entitlement will be calculated pro rata according to the number of days worked.
2. If you work each week for less than the normal number of hours for your institution, and if you work five days per week throughout the year, you are entitled to 36 working days' paid holiday, and for each week you will receive your normal weekly pay. This applies even if staff working full-time in your institution for more than the standard weekly hours receive additional days' leave, because you would not be working for more than the standard weekly hours for your Division.
3. If you work for only part of the year, for instance term time only, you will be paid for the number of hours worked over the year. Your paid annual leave entitlement will be calculated on the basis of the number of weeks actually worked, and payment for the leave you earn will be added to your salary, which you will receive in twelve monthly instalments. You will normally be expected not to take leave during the weeks you are contracted to work.

Your institution will have arrangements in place for requesting annual leave. You will normally be expected to book leave in advance, so that the institution's workload can be covered.

Maternity and other family-related Leave and Pay (Rules J1–J27)

The University has published a maternity policy which applies to all staff and includes general guidance including health and safety advice. This is also available from your Head of Institution.

All University staff are entitled to a maximum of 52 weeks' maternity leave, consisting of 26 weeks' paid leave during which they will receive their normal rate of pay (no qualifying period), plus 13 weeks, if entitled, during which they will receive Statutory Maternity Pay, and additionally, up to 13 weeks unpaid leave. In normal circumstances your maternity leave should begin no earlier than 11 weeks before the expected week of birth. You may not return to work for at least two weeks after the birth.

Maternity pay

You will receive maternity pay equal to your normal salary for 18 weeks. In the following period, if the amount due under the Statutory Maternity Pay scheme (if eligible) is greater than your normal salary, you will receive full Statutory Maternity Pay. If you are not entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay the Payroll Section will inform you of this and will give you a form SMP1 which you should forward to your local Benefits Agency office in order to claim Maternity Allowance. Your salary payable will be reduced by the amount of Maternity Allowance which you are entitled to receive, unless you provide proof via your Head of Institution that you are not eligible for Maternity Allowance. During paid maternity leave (whether on full pay or on Statutory Maternity Pay) you are not permitted to undertake paid work. You will normally be paid on the same date as your salary would be paid.

Risk assessment and ante-natal care

Risk assessments of working environments in the University are routinely carried out in order to be able to protect the safety of mother and child for any member of staff who may become pregnant. Should your working environment pose a threat to your health and safety, your duties will be modified or alternative work will be found for you. Should this not be possible you will be suspended from work on full pay on medical grounds.

During your pregnancy you will be entitled to time off with pay in order to attend ante-natal appointments, which may include classes. You should inform your Head of Institution of the dates of such appointments and you may be asked to produce an appointment card from your clinic.

Notification

You should give notice of your intention to take maternity leave by the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (using [Form CHRIS/60](#)), available from the Human Resources Division, accompanied by a certificate from your doctor or midwife, form Mat B1, stating the expected week of childbirth) of the date you intend to commence your maternity leave unless this is not reasonably practicable, in which case you should give as much notice as is reasonably practicable. You may subsequently change your mind about when you want to

start your leave provided that you give at least 28 days' notice (unless this is not reasonably practicable), in which case you should give as much notice as is reasonably practicable. If you are absent from work due to a pregnancy-related reason after the beginning of the fourth week before the expected week of childbirth, your maternity leave will begin on the day after the first day of the absence, even if you had intended it to begin later than that date.

Return to work

On receipt of your formal application the Human Resources Division will write to you granting leave, and will inform you of the last permissible date for return from maternity leave. If you wish to return earlier than this date, you should give four weeks' notice of your intended date of return.

If you intend to return to work at the end of your paid maternity leave period you are not required to give notice of your return; if you wish to return earlier you should give 8 weeks' notice of your intention to return (using Form CHRIS/61); if you give less than 8 weeks' notice, your maternity leave may be extended for 8 weeks after the date of giving notice of return, to allow your institution to make any necessary arrangements.

Although there is no legal requirement for employees to give advance notice of your intention to return at the end of the maternity leave period, if you intend to do so it is helpful to keep your Head of Institution informed of your intentions so that appropriate cover arrangements can be made and workloads can be planned.

If you are unable, because you are medically unfit to work, to return to work at the end of your entitlement to maternity leave, you should submit medical certification in the usual way and you will then transfer from maternity leave to sick leave. Subsequently the normal procedures relating to absence on account of sickness will be followed.

If you do not return to work following a period of maternity leave, your job remains open and you do not automatically lose your right to return. However, your absence may be treated as unauthorised absence under the University's disciplinary procedure.

If you do not return to work after the specified period, or return to work but do not remain employed in the University for a period of at least three months, the University will normally reclaim from you any amount of maternity pay in excess of your Statutory Maternity Pay. The amount deducted will be all the excess pay if you do not return, two thirds of the excess pay if you return and continue in employment for one month, and one third of the excess pay if you return and continue in employment for two months. In exercising this right the University shall have regard to individual circumstances.

You will be able to return from maternity leave by graduated steps, and/or part-time, provided that your institution can make arrangements to cover your duties at no extra cost to the University. If you wish to discuss any change in working arrangements on your return to work, you should contact your Head of Institution at the earliest opportunity and not later than four weeks before you return to work. Any agreement to a change in working

arrangements (e.g. to work part-time) will be considered on the basis of the operational requirements of the department.

Temporary posts to cover for maternity leave

Usually a temporary member of staff will be appointed to cover for maternity leave. If you are appointed to a temporary post of this kind you will be informed of this in your letter of appointment, and also of the fact that you may be dismissed with one week's notice when the permanent jobholder returns from maternity leave.

Adoption leave (Rules J20–23)

A member of staff, male or female, who adopts a child will be entitled to adoption leave provided that only one of the adoptive parents may take adoption leave. The other parent will be entitled to take paternity leave.

An assistant adopting a child under 5 years of age who is the prime carer may apply (using [Form CHRIS/64](#)) for up to 52 weeks' leave to care for the child, consisting of 26 weeks leave during which they will receive their normal rate of pay, followed by 13 weeks during which they will receive, if they are entitled, Statutory Adoption Pay and up to 13 weeks' unpaid leave.

The leave and pay offered to employees who adopt a child aged over five years will be at the discretion of the Personnel Committee but will be no less than the statutory provision.

Paternity/Co-Parent leave (Rules J25–27)

The following employees are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks paid paternity leave:

- The biological father of the child
- The spouse, civil partner or partner of the mother or birth parent who themselves expects to have responsibility for the child's upbringing.
- Employee who is adopting a child but is not taking adoption leave.
- Employee who is having a child via surrogacy but is not taking adoption leave.

Paternity leave can be taken as one block of up to 12 weeks or split into two blocks. The leave needs to be taken in full week blocks, which can start on any day of the week on or following the child's birth/placement. Paternity leave must be taken within 52 weeks of the actual date of birth/placement of the child (or if the child is born early, within the period from the actual date of the child's birth up to 52 weeks after the expected week of birth).

To qualify for paternity leave, you should give notice of entitlement (using [Form CHRIS/65](#)) no later than the fifteenth week before the baby is expected, or within seven days of being notified by the adoption agency that you have been matched with a child for adoption, unless this is not reasonably practicable. In surrogacy cases, the employee needs to confirm that they intend to apply for a parental order within 6 months of the child's birth. You must

provide (using [Form CHRIS/65](#)) no less than 28 days' notice before the earliest date of each intended period of leave or within 7 days of notification by an adoption agency of being matched with a child. If for any reason you wish to change the start date of the leave period, you should give at least 28 days' notice of the change, unless this is not reasonably practicable.

Employees should discuss the timing of their paternity leave with their line manager as far in advance as possible to help ensure that this meets their needs and minimises any operational disruption. The manager cannot ask the employee to change the requested dates of two weeks of their paternity/co-parent leave (as this is the employee's statutory entitlement). The timing of the other 10 weeks of paternity/co-parent leave should be discussed between the manager and the employee.

Shared Parental Leave (Rules J28 – 34)

The Shared Parental Leave Policy applies to all assistant staff whose child is born or placed on or after 5 April 2015 and who meet the statutory requirements. Shared parental leave enables eligible parents to choose how to share the care of their child during the first 52 weeks following birth or adoption. Its purpose is to give parents more flexibility in considering how to best care for, and bond with, their child.

Eligible assistants will be entitled to take up to maximum of 50 weeks shared parental leave, consisting of 18 weeks' paid leave (minus any period of paid maternity, adoption or paternity leave they have already received) during which they will receive their normal rate of pay, followed by up to 19 weeks statutory shared parental leave pay (if entitled) and up to 13 weeks unpaid.

The number of weeks shared parental leave available is calculated using the mother's/adopter's entitlement to maternity/adoption leave, which allows them to take up to 52 weeks' leave. If the mother/adopter reduces their maternity/adoption leave entitlement then they and/or their partner may take any remaining weeks as shared parental leave.

Eligible assistants can apply for up to three periods of shared parental leave up until their child's first birthday/anniversary of placement. An application can contain either: a request for a period of continuous leave which is a number of weeks taken in a single unbroken period of leave (for example, six weeks in a row); or for two or more periods of discontinuous leave, which means asking for a set number of weeks of leave over a period of time, with breaks between the leave where they will return to work (for example, an arrangement where the assistant will take six weeks of shared parental leave and work every other week for a period of three months).

An assistant can agree to work for the University (or attend training) for up to 20 days during shared parental leave without bringing their period of leave to an end or impacting on their right to claim statutory shared parental leave pay for that week. These are known as "Shared Parental Leave In Touch" or "SPLIT" days. Any work carried out on a day or part of a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes.

SPLIT days are in addition to any KIT days that the mother/adopter may have taken during their maternity/adoption leave.

The University has no right to require an employee to carry out any work, and is under no obligation to offer an employee any work, during the employee's Shared Parental Leave. Any work undertaken is a matter for agreement between the Institution and the employee.

An employee, with the agreement of the organisation, may use SPLIT days to work part of a week during SPL. The Institution and the employee may use SPLIT days to affect a gradual return to work by the employee towards the end of a long period of Shared Parental Leave or to trial a possible flexible working pattern.

During shared parental leave the contract of employment continues in force. All terms and conditions of the contract continue with the exception of salary. Continuity of service is maintained, and any standard incremental progression taking place during the Shared Parental Leave will be implemented.

Emergency leave

Employees who are faced with an unforeseen emergency involving dependants, for instance an unexpected disruption in childcare arrangements, may be allowed to take paid leave of up to 5 working days in any rolling 12-month period (pro-rated for part-time employees), with a limit of 2 working days' paid leave permitted on any single occasion. Where paid leave is exhausted, employees may have a statutory right to reasonable time off (unpaid) to deal with unforeseen emergencies involving dependants.

Employees may also request up to 1 day of unpaid leave to deal with severe and unexpected domestic emergencies unrelated to children or dependants, which necessitates their presence at home, for instance a burglary, fire or flood at their home.

Full details of the University's provisions on emergency leave can be found in the University's Special Leave Policy.

- [Special Leave Policy](#)
- [Special Leave \(Paid and Unpaid\) Application Form CHRIS/68](#)

Parental leave

If an employee has been employed by the University for more than a year, they may be entitled to take up to 18 weeks' unpaid leave to look after their child, until that child's 18th birthday.

If they need to take such leave, they should inform their Head of Institution as soon as possible. Full details of the University's provisions on unpaid parental leave can be found in the University's Ordinary Parental Leave policy and procedure.

- [Ordinary Parental Leave: policy and procedure](#)
- [Parental leave application form: CHRIS/66](#)

Flexible working

All employees who have 26 weeks' service at the date of application have a statutory right to apply to work flexibly to care for the child. The University has a flexible working policy which sets out the procedure when staff ask to work flexibly to achieve a better work-life balance.

Special Leave (Rules B31–35)

In addition to the provision for annual leave and for maternity, paternity and parental leave, there are a number of schemes which provide for special leave in particular circumstances. Some schemes are open only to staff with a minimum length of service in the University.

Unpaid leave and compassionate leave (Rules B31 and B34)

In exceptional circumstances your Head of Institution may agree to allow you to take unpaid leave or may grant paid compassionate leave up to a maximum of 5 working days. Such leave is subject to the needs of your Institution and must be recommended by your Head of Institution to the Human Resources Division for approval in advance.

Unpaid leave can be granted only infrequently. Before applying to the Human Resources Division for approval, the Head of Institution must be sure that the work of the institution will not suffer and that no undue burden will fall upon the other members of staff who have to cover your work in your absence. There is no appeal against the decision once it has been agreed between the Human Resources Division and the Head of Institution.

Paid compassionate leave is normally only granted where an employee needs to care for a dependant or close relative who is seriously ill, or where they require compassionate leave due to the death of a dependant or close relative (including time to deal with practical matters which may arise as a result). The number of days given has to be very limited, but if a longer period of leave is required you may be allowed to take part of it as paid annual leave, and part of it as unpaid leave.

Longer-term unpaid leave for family reasons (Rule B35(a))

If you have five or more years' service with the University, you may apply to your Head of Institution for a period of unpaid leave of up to six months in order to deal with family responsibilities. Leave may be granted by the Human Resources Division on the recommendation of the Head of Institution provided your duties can be covered at no extra cost to the University.

Long-term study leave (Rule B35(b))

If you have ten or more years' service you may apply to your Head of Institution for a period of unpaid leave of up to nine months to undertake a course of study or personal development which will be of benefit both to you and to your institution. Leave may be granted provided your duties can be covered at no extra cost to the University. In

recommending leave to the Human Resources Division, your Head of Institution will take into account your performance in your job.

Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure

If you cannot attend work due to ill-health you should notify your manager (or a designated person within your Institution) of your absence by telephone as soon as possible on the first day of absence and, normally, before the start of their normal working day. Full details of the sickness absence reporting procedure can be found in the [Sickness Absence Policy](#).

On your return to work you should complete a [Self-Certification Form \(CHRIS 62\)](#) for absences up to seven calendar days. For absences of eight calendar days or more you must provide a Statement of Fitness for Work (or 'Fit Note') from a doctor. Further information regarding sickness absence certification can be found in the [Sickness Absence Policy](#).

Sources of Information

Management of Sickness Absence

- [Sickness Absence Policy](#)

Sick Pay Entitlement

- [Occupational Sick Pay](#)
- [Statutory Sick Pay](#)

Support

- [Occupational Health](#)
- [Staff Counselling Service](#)
- [Stress at Work](#)

Termination of Employment (Rules A6 to A8)

Resignation

If you wish to resign from your employment with the University, you must inform your Head of Institution in writing providing four weeks' notice.

Dismissal

If the University wishes to terminate your employment you will be given, except in the case of serious misconduct, periods of notice not less than the following:

| Period of unbroken service | Notice period |
|--|----------------------------|
| Less than five years | Not less than four weeks |
| More than five years but less than nine years | Not less than eight weeks |
| Nine years or more | Not less than twelve weeks |

The University may not require you to work your period of notice, but instead may pay you in lieu of notice.

In a case where serious misconduct is alleged, your Head of Institution may suspend you with pay immediately until the Personnel Committee makes a decision. If the University considers that there are grounds for dismissal for serious misconduct, you may be summarily dismissed without notice.

Appeal against dismissal (Rules H16–17)

You have the right to appeal against the termination of your employment.

Termination of limited term appointments

If your post is supported by funds received from outside the University or if you have been appointed on a temporary basis to meet a specific need or because of unusual circumstances, you will be notified of the date upon which your appointment terminates when you are appointed. You should therefore enquire of your supervisor well in advance of the termination date whether your appointment is likely to be extended.

If your appointment is to be extended you will be given notice of this in writing. Normally the University will be informed in good time by the sponsor that new funding will be provided; however if when the date when your employment is due to terminate is close further funding has not yet been guaranteed, your supervisor or departmental administrator will discuss the situation with you and you may wish to seek alternative employment in the University as described below.

If new funding is not available to continue your employment with the University after the date notified to you on your appointment, and if by that date you will have been continuously employed by the University for one year or more, the University will attempt to find you alternative employment. Your supervisor or departmental administrator will discuss the situation with you. If you wish to seek redeployment within the University, your institution will notify the Human Resources Division and you will be sent a personal copy of the internal vacancies list. You should apply directly for any post for which you wish to be considered, and should notify the HR Consultant responsible for your department of your application. S/he will arrange for you to be interviewed for the post providing that you have the necessary skills.

If on the date when your temporary appointment with the University ends you will have less than one year's continuous service with the University, you may apply for any vacant posts which are advertised, and you should contact the Human Resources Division to discuss vacancies.

Retirement (Rule A10)

If you hold an established post, you will normally retire by the end of the academic year in which you reach the age of 65. The academic year runs from 1 October to 30 September, so you may continue service until the September following your 65th birthday.

Individual Grievance Procedure (Rules G1–G4)

As an assistant, whether or not you are a member of a trades union, you have the right to raise any grievance relating to your terms and conditions of employment under this procedure unless the matter is subject to other agreed procedures. Your right to ask for a personal interview with your Head of Institution is not limited in any way by this procedure.

Procedure

1. If you have a personal grievance relating to your employment, you should discuss it with your immediate supervisor. If your supervisor is unable to resolve the matter, he or she will inform the Head of Institution. You may then raise the matter with your Head of Institution, who will see you wherever possible within five working days.
2. If after the interview with your Head of Institution, you are not satisfied that the problem has been resolved, you should inform the Director of Human Resources in writing within ten days of discussing the matter with your Head of Institution that you wish to invoke the second stage of the grievance procedure. The Director of Human Resources will then arrange a meeting between yourself, your representative who should be an accredited trades union representative or another member of the assistant staff if you want one to accompany you, your Head of Institution and a representative of the Human Resources Committee. This meeting will normally be arranged within five days after the Director of Human Resources receives your letter.
3. If the matter is still not settled satisfactorily, and you inform the Director of Human Resources in writing within ten days of the joint meeting that you wish that the matter be considered at the next stage, the matter will be referred to the University and Assistants Joint Board, who will deal with the matter wherever possible within ten working days of your letter being received. You will then be told of the result of their discussion within five days of their deliberations.

Bullying and Harassment (Rules K1–K2)

The University is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, welcoming and inclusive community that nurtures a culture in which we treat one another with courtesy and professionalism, even while robustly challenging each other's views and opinions. There is no place for bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct or victimisation in our community and each of us is responsible for the way we interact with and treat others. By fostering and maintaining a culture of courtesy and professionalism in the workplace, we strengthen academic freedom and freedom of thought and expression by ensuring that all voices can be heard clearly and all views discussed responsibly.

The Dignity at Work policy (2023 ed.):

- sets out the standards of behaviour expected from University employees and workers to ensure a common understanding of how everyone should behave towards one another
- ensures that staff are able to disclose inappropriate behaviour if it does occur and are supported in the process of resolving it
- promotes the early resolution of inappropriate behaviour wherever possible and appropriate, to prevent the psychological, health, and work related problems such behaviour can cause
- refers to what actions can be taken through the informal and formal resolution processes set out in the University's grievance and disciplinary policies if this Policy's principles are not observed.

Links:

- [Dignity at Work Policy \(2023 ed.\)](#)
- [Sources of Support](#)

Disciplinary Procedures (Rules H1 to H20)

A disciplinary procedure is helpful to the proper and successful functioning of the University and in ensuring that individuals are treated fairly. The University has therefore agreed a detailed procedure that will be followed if an assistant should breach his or her conditions of employment, or if his or her general conduct is unsatisfactory. The assistant will be given an opportunity to state his or her case at each stage of the procedure.

The types of conduct which may lead to disciplinary action being taken according to the procedures detailed below are as follows:

1. Wilful failure to perform the duties of the post.
2. Refusal to comply with reasonable requests from the job supervisor.
3. Persistent unsatisfactory timekeeping.
4. Unauthorised absence from work.
5. Incapacity to perform the duties of the post effectively due to drunkenness or unauthorised drug-taking.
6. Acts of discrimination against any member of the University community on the grounds of sex (including gender reassignment), marital or parental status, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or age.
7. Bullying or harassment of any member of the University community.
8. Malicious accusations of bullying or harassment against another person.
9. Breach of confidentiality.
10. Breach of University or departmental safety regulations or rules.
11. Breach of other University or departmental regulations or rules.
12. Breach of any other conditions of employment.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Where an employee fails to perform the work expected of them to the required standard consideration should be given to the [Capability Policy](#) which addresses these situations. Capability may be assessed by reference to an employee's skill, aptitude, health or other physical or mental quality in relation to the job they are employed to do. Advice should be sought from the HR Division if it is unclear which procedure is appropriate.

Disciplinary Procedure for established assistants (Rules H3 to H7)

The first action will normally be that the job supervisor and/or the Head of Institution will informally warn the assistant and will offer advice on how to remedy the situation.

First formal warning

If the informal warning fails to have any effect, the Head of Institution will see the assistant with the job supervisor. The assistant may choose to be accompanied by a representative, who should be an accredited trades union representative or another member of the Assistant Staff, and the Head of Institution may ask a representative of the HR Committee to be present at the interview. At the end of the interview, if it is considered necessary the Head of Institution will formally warn the assistant and then write to the assistant confirming the warning and the reason for issuing it and specifying when the matter will be reviewed. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Human Resources Division and the assistant will sign and return a copy of the letter to acknowledge its receipt.

Second formal warning

At the time specified for a review of the matter, the Head of Institution will again see the assistant with the job supervisor. The assistant may choose to be accompanied by a representative, who should be an accredited trades union representative or another member of the Assistant Staff. A representative of the HR Committee will also be present at the interview. At the end of the interview the Head of Institution will either:

1. Inform the assistant that the matter is resolved and that the first formal warning is cancelled.
2. Extend the period of the first formal warning and specify a time at which the matter will again be reviewed.
3. Formally warn the assistant a second time and state when the matter will again be reviewed and the action that may be taken if the unsatisfactory behaviour continues.
4. In each case the Head of Institution will confirm the decision and the reasons for it in writing and send a copy of the letter to the Human Resources Division. The assistant will sign and return the copy of the letter to acknowledge its receipt.

Review of the case

The case will be reviewed at the specified time and this review will be not less than four clear working weeks after the second formal warning. The Head of Institution will see the assistant who may choose to be accompanied by a representative, who should be an accredited trades union representative or another member of the Assistant Staff. A representative of the

HR Committee will also be present at the interview. The assistant and/or his/her representative will be given the chance to make representations. Following the meeting, the Head of Institution will consider the facts of the case and consult the Director of Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources, on behalf of the HR Committee, will advise the Head of Institution on the action to be taken and, where appropriate, inform the assistant's representative of the decision and the action to be taken.

Final interview

The Head of Institution will inform the assistant of the decision. The assistant and his or her representative will be given the chance to make representations. A representative of the HR Committee will be present at the interview. At the conclusion of the interview the Head of Institution will confirm in writing the decision that has been taken.

Procedure for unestablished assistants (Rules H8 to H11)

The first action will normally be that the job supervisor and/or the Head of Institution will informally warn the assistant and will offer advice on how to remedy the situation.

Formal warning

If the informal warning fails to have any effect, the Head of Institution will see the assistant with the job supervisor. The assistant may choose to be accompanied by a representative, who should be an accredited trades union representative or another member of the Assistant Staff, and the Head of Institution may ask a representative of the HR Committee to be present at the interview. At the end of the interview, if it is considered necessary the Head of Institution will formally warn the assistant and then write to the assistant confirming the warning and the reason for issuing it and specifying when the matter will be reviewed. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Human Resources Division and the assistant will sign and return a copy of the letter to acknowledge its receipt.

Review of the case

The case will be reviewed at the specified time and this review will be not less than four clear working weeks after the formal warning. The Head of Institution will see the assistant who may choose to be accompanied by a representative, who should be an accredited trades union representative or another member of the Assistant Staff. A representative of the HR Committee will also be present at the interview. The assistant and/or his/her representative will be given the chance to make representations. Following the meeting, the Head of Institution will consider the facts of the case and consult the Director of Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources, on behalf of the HR Committee, will advise the Head of Institution on the action to be taken and, where appropriate, inform the assistant's representative of the decision and the action to be taken.

Final interview

The Head of Institution will inform the assistant of the decision. The assistant and his or her representative will be given the chance to make representations. A representative of the HR Committee will be present at the interview. At the conclusion of the interview the Head of Institution will confirm in writing the decision that has been taken.

Procedure in the case of alleged serious misconduct (Rules H12 to H15)

This procedure will be used if it is alleged that an assistant has committed any of the following acts:

1. Theft or misappropriation of University property, or the property of any member, employee, or visitor to the University.
2. Forgery.
3. Threatening or using physical violence against any member or employee of the University or any person legitimately present within the University premises, or against University property.
4. Wilful refusal to carry out the duties of the post.
5. Wilful and serious breach of confidentiality of work.
6. Wilful and serious breach of University safety regulations or rules.
7. Behaviour resulting from drunkenness or unauthorised drug-taking which endangers the health and safety of the assistant and/or others.
8. Serious acts of discrimination against any member of the University community on grounds of sex (including gender reassignment), marital or parental status, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or age.
9. Serious acts of bullying or harassment of any member of the University community.
10. Any other act of serious misconduct.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Suspension

In the case of alleged serious misconduct, the Head of Institution may suspend the assistant from duty with pay, and the assistant should not then attend for work until instructed otherwise. The Head of Institution will immediately inform the HR Committee of all the relevant facts. Suspension is not a disciplinary decision and does not imply that any decision has been made about whether or not the assistant has committed a disciplinary offence. It is simply a way of allowing time for an investigation to take place.

Investigation

The Head of Institution, after consultation with the Director of Human Resources, will see the assistant to investigate the matter. The assistant may choose to be accompanied by a representative, who should be an accredited trades union representative or another member of the Assistant Staff. A representative of the HR Committee will also be present at the interview.

Decision

Following the meeting, the Head of Institution will consider the facts of the case and consult with the Director of Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources on behalf of the HR Committee will advise the Head of Institution of the action to be taken. The Head of Institution will notify the assistant and where appropriate the assistant's representative, of the decision. Subsequently the Head of Institution will confirm this decision in writing.

Rights of appeal (Rules H16–H19)

Appeal against dismissal

All assistants have the right of appeal to the University and Assistants Joint Board under the Individual Grievance Procedure (see Rule G4) provided that an appeal is submitted in writing to the Director of Human Resources within five working days of the date upon which he/she is notified of dismissal.

This right of appeal shall not apply to any assistant whose employment is supported by funds from outside the University and who has been so informed in his/her terms and conditions of employment, if employment has been ended on the expiry date of the contract of employment and only because the outside support for it has ceased.

An established assistant has the further right of appeal to the Council against the ending of his or her employment, providing that an appeal has been submitted to the University and Assistants Joint Board under the Individual Grievance Procedure (Rule G4), and this appeal has been heard and not resolved, and written notice of such an appeal is lodged with the Director of Human Resources within five days of being informed of the decision made under Rule G4.

This right of appeal shall not apply to any assistant whose employment is supported by funds from outside the University and who has been so informed in his/her terms and conditions of employment, if employment has been ended on the expiry date of the contract of employment and only because the outside support for it has ceased.

Appeal against disciplinary decisions

Any assistant who is dissatisfied with any disciplinary decision affecting him or her, including the issue of any formal warning, may apply to the Director of Human Resources for consideration of the case, provided that he or she submits his or her application in writing within ten working days of being notified of the decision. The Director will then place the matter before the HR Committee for consideration.

Probationary arrangements (Rules L)

All new members of assistant staff on appointment will be subject to a probationary period of between three and six months, depending on the grade and level of responsibility of your post.

During this period your Head of Institution will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for induction, and that your performance is monitored and you are given all necessary guidance and training to enable you to perform well in the role.

During the probationary period your Head of Institution or supervisor will arrange a series of progress reviews at appropriate intervals. Towards the end of the probationary period your Head of Institution or supervisor will make an overall assessment of your performance and, where this has been satisfactory, will confirm the appointment.

Where the Head of Institution or his/her nominee is not able to confirm that probation has been completed satisfactorily, s/he, after consulting the Human Resources Division, will decide on an appropriate course of action, which may be

1. to extend the probation where more time is needed to assess performance, or
2. to authorize the termination of the appointment, with the appropriate notice period, where performance is unsatisfactory.

If your appointment is terminated, you will have the right to appeal, in accordance with the disciplinary procedure set out in Rule H16. You will be notified in writing of the right to appeal at the time that formal notice of dismissal is given.

Any misconduct during the probationary period will normally be dealt with separately in accordance with the disciplinary procedures set out in Rules H.

Casual and temporary appointments for less than 12 weeks will not be subject to a probationary period. If you are appointed for less than 12 weeks and your appointment is subsequently extended a probationary period will be set. In setting your probationary period, your Head of Institution will consider your performance in your initial period of employment and in any event your total probationary period will not exceed six months from your initial date of appointment.

Further Information

The following information does not form part of your contract of employment.

Grading of posts and career progression

On appointment you will be given a job description which outlines the activities and responsibilities of your post and identifies the person or persons to whom you are immediately responsible. The job description is not exhaustive, and you may be expected to carry out other duties appropriate to the grade of your post on the request of your supervisor or Head of Institution.

If you are asked to work at a level higher than the grade of your post for a prolonged period, you may be paid an allowance to take account of the higher level of duties.

Because the needs of the University and of departments change, your job description may change to take account of differing needs for work. You will be consulted about any permanent changes in your duties. If there is substantial change in your duties, your job

description may be considered for re-evaluation. The procedure is described later in this section.

All assistant staff posts except for a few temporary appointments are assigned to one of the Divisions of staff, and to a grade within the Division:

- Clerical, Library, and Secretarial Staff (CS Division)
- General and Ancillary Staff (M Division)
- Technical and Related Staff (T Division)

Grading and regrading of posts

At present posts are graded by the use of job evaluation with a separate scheme for each Division. The aim of these schemes is to fix a grade for each post which reflects fairly the duties and responsibilities of the post. In due course it is hoped to introduce a common grading methodology that will apply to all posts.

The duties for a particular post are set by the Head of Institution. From time to time there will be changes in the duties of a post. If there is a need for major changes in your duties your Head of Institution will consult you about those changes; however under your contract and your job description you are expected to accept reasonable changes. If changes may affect the grade of your post your Head of Institution will ask the Human Resources Division to re-evaluate the post.

If you consider that your post is incorrectly graded because the duties have substantially changed, you should approach your Head of Institution to discuss the matter. If he or she agrees that the post should be re-evaluated s/he will approach the Human Resources Division to request a regrading.

If your Head of Institution does not agree that the post should be re-evaluated you may request regrading. This should be done by asking your Head of Institution to put your request to the Human Resources Division.

In either case you and your Institution will need to prepare a new Job Description on the official form. You will need to prepare an account of your duties; other sections of the form will be completed by the Institution. You and your Head of Institution should sign the completed documentation.

A member of the Human Resources Division will then arrange to visit the institution to collect further information and will discuss the job description with you and other members of the institution who can help in understanding the duties of the post. The job will then be evaluated in the Human Resources Division, and the Director of Human Resources will make a grading recommendation to the appropriate authority. If you have asked for your post to be re-evaluated and your request is not approved, you have the right of appeal to the Job Evaluation Review Committee, and this will be explained to you in the letter notifying you of the outcome.

Posts submitted for re-evaluation are considered once a year. Completed Job Descriptions must be sent to the Human Resources Division during December and January each year. If an upgrading is approved, it will take effect from 1 January.

Career Progression

While it is possible to achieve promotion if a post is upgraded, it is more usual to do so either by being promoted within your own institution or by transferring to another institution in the University. You may wish to consider applying for a higher-graded post, or for a post at the same grade which would give you wider experience and prepare you for promotion. Transfer from one University institution to another is considered continuous employment.

The University offers a wide range of jobs. Vacancies for assistant staff posts and many other types of post are advertised weekly and circulated to every institution on the Internal Vacancies List. Heads of Institution select their own staff, and if you are interested in any particular vacancy advertised you should apply directly to the institution concerned.

You may also ask the Human Resources Division for assistance in finding a suitable vacancy. The University provides an extensive staff development programme and you can discuss your development needs with your Departmental Training Co-ordinator. If you are invited for interview in an institution other than your own, you should inform your Head of Institution or the deputy of your interest in the post and seek permission to attend the interview.

If you hold a post supported by funds received from an outside source which is due to terminate you will be assisted in finding a suitable vacancy in the University's employment.

Trades Unions and joint consultation

Membership of trades unions

The University recognises that fully representative trades unions are helpful to good staff relations and the University welcomes membership of a trades union, but this is not required as a condition of employment.

You are invited to take part in the activities of your trades union provided that those activities are outside your working hours or if within working hours are with the consent of your Head of Institution. Such activities include seeking to become an official of the trades union and carrying out the functions of such an office if appointed or elected.

As the employer, the University recognises the rights of the following trades unions to represent their members and to negotiate on behalf of assistant staff as follows:

The Association of Cambridge University Assistants (ACUA) for:

- Clerical, library and secretarial staff
- General and ancillary staff
- Technical and related staff

AMICUS for:

- Clerical, library and secretarial staff
- Technical and related staff

UNISON for:

- Clerical, library and secretarial staff
- General and ancillary staff

As a trades union member, if you wish you may authorise the University in writing to deduct trades union subscriptions from your salary to be paid directly to the union concerned.

Joint consultation

The University and Assistants Joint Board

The University and Assistants Joint Board is a joint consultative and negotiating body on which representatives of ACUA, AMICUS and UNISON sit, together with nominees appointed by Council and the General Board, under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor. Ex officio members of the Joint Board are the Registrar, the Secretary General of the Faculties, the Treasurer and the Director of Human Resources. The Joint Board is charged with keeping under review and reporting on the terms and conditions of employment of assistant staff, including rates of pay, recruitment, training and welfare.

Assistant staff are represented on the Joint Board in three separate bargaining units. A bargaining unit is a group of employees who have interests in common for negotiations. At present the bargaining units are:

- Clerical, Library and Secretarial Staff
- General and Ancillary Staff
- Technical and Related Staff

A separate Standing Joint Negotiating Committee for each bargaining unit, consisting of nominated representatives of the University and of the appropriate trades unions, deals with matters particular to each bargaining unit. Special Joint Negotiating or Consultative Committees, with representatives of the University and Trades Unions, may be set up to deal with matters concerning more than one bargaining unit. Agreements reached by the Joint Negotiating Committees are not subject to amendment by the University and Assistants Joint Board or by Council without the agreement of the Joint Negotiating Committee concerned.

Individual representation

All members of the assistant staff are entitled to be accompanied at any formal meeting with their Head of Institution relating to matters connected with their employment by another member of the Assistant Staff, or, if they are members of a recognised trades union, by an accredited official of that union.

Staff Review and Development (Appraisal)

A staff review and development scheme is in operation for staff. You will normally be invited to an interview about every two years. Your reviewer may be your immediate supervisor or another appropriate person nominated by your Head of Institution.

The purpose of the interview is to allow you and your reviewer to reflect on your job performance, your capabilities, and your future potential. The interview is designed to facilitate a constructive discussion of your achievements, difficulties and future development, to share ideas on your own work in the context of the overall work of your section, and to identify your goals and any training needs which may help you to achieve these goals. The staff review and development process in the University is not linked to pay.

Personal data

[How we handle your personal data](#)