

<p style="text-align: center;">CAREER BREAK SCHEME</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEACHING STAFF</p>
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1. INTRODUCTION

This Scheme has been developed by the Employing Authorities, in consultation with the recognised Teachers' Unions, to create flexibility in employment in the Education Service, consistent with good employment practice, by providing teachers with the facility of taking a break in their teaching careers. The Scheme is promoted as providing not only opportunities for staff, but also benefits to the school and the service as teachers widen their experience and enhance the skills and knowledge they bring to the profession on their return to school.

2. DEFINITIONS**a. Career Break**

A Career Break is a period of special leave of absence without salary for a period of not less than one year and not more than three years. This is distinct from unpaid maternity, parental or other authorised unpaid leave of less than one year's duration.

b. Teacher

For the purpose of this scheme, "teacher" means a teacher employed in a grant-aided school and includes teachers appointed to the posts of principal and vice-principal.

c. Relevant Body

Means the Board of Governors.

d. Employing Authority

Means for controlled schools, the Board responsible for the management of the school and for Catholic Maintained Schools, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools. In the case of voluntary grammar schools and grant maintained integrated schools, the Board of Governors is the employing authority.

3. OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the Scheme are:

- a.** to provide teachers with flexibility within the course of their teaching careers.
- b.** to widen the experience of teachers and enhance the skills they bring to the profession.

- c. to provide teachers with an opportunity for personal development.
- d. to enable teachers to return and continue their career following the Career Break.

4. ELIGIBILITY

- a. The scheme shall be available only to a permanent teacher.
- b. Normally a teacher must have completed an aggregate of not less than three years' teaching service in their current school prior to the proposed commencement of the Career Break.
- c. A teacher shall not normally be granted more than two Career Breaks, of any duration, during his/her service in schools.
- d. A teacher shall not normally be granted a second Career Break until at least five years after the completion of a previous Career Break.

5. DURATION

A Career Break shall be granted for a period of not less than one year and for not more than three years. A Career Break of one or two years may be extended for a period of not less than one year on each occasion provided that the total period of special leave does not exceed three years in all.

6. PURPOSE

A Career Break may be allowed for most purposes, but normally it will not be permitted for the purpose of taking alternative salaried or wage earning employment. In all cases the prior written approval of the Employing Authority must be obtained and such approval will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

7. PROCEDURE

- a. A teacher wishing to apply for a Career Break shall make application by submitting the agreed form (CBI/T attached) to the Principal of his/her school.
- b. An application for a Career Break, or an extension to a Career Break, shall normally be made at least four months prior to the proposed date of commencement or extension.

- c. It shall be for the relevant body of the school to consider all applications along with details of the arrangements which the principal proposes to put in place to ensure the continuation and quality of teaching for the duration of the Career Break and to approve or reject the application. Where a Board of Governors is considering rejecting an application it shall seek the advice of the Employing Authority before making the final decision.
- d. The relevant body shall complete form CB2/T and copy the form to the teacher. Where it has decided to reject the application the reasons for that rejection shall be stated. A copy of the form shall be forwarded to the Employing Authority and, where the application is approved, to the Department of Education.

8. SUPERANNUATION AND INCREMENTAL CREDIT

- a. A Career Break shall normally not count for Superannuation or incremental credit purposes and it is **strongly recommended** that a teacher considering a Career Break should fully investigate the impact of the Career Break on service, salary placement and pension.
- b. Under Regulation 27 (1) (b) of the Teachers' Superannuation Regulations a teacher who wishes to remain within the Teachers' Superannuation Scheme during a Career Break has to make an election in writing within three months from the start of the Career Break.

The teacher will be required to pay both the employee's and the employer's contributions based on the salary the teacher would have received had he/she remained in service. The maximum period a teacher can cover is three years on each Career Break.

- c. If the teacher on a Career Break applies for infirmity within 6 months of ceasing employment in reckonable service, he/she would receive the normal infirmity enhancement. If the application is outside the 6 month period, benefits would normally be based on actual reckonable service, without enhancement.

9. CONTINUITY OF SERVICE

A teacher retains continuity of service while on a Career Break. However, this period of unpaid absence will not count as service in the calculation of sickness and redundancy payments. Service before and after a Career Break will be accrued for these purposes.

10. CONDUCT DURING CAREER BREAK

During a Career Break a teacher will be subject to the relevant body's and the Employing Authority's requirements in matters of conduct. Disciplinary action may be taken, where appropriate.

11. RETURNING FROM A CAREER BREAK

- a.** A teacher on a Career Break must contact the Principal of his/her school (in writing) not less than four months before the end of the Career Break:
 - i.** to confirm the intended date of return to school duties; or
 - ii.** to apply for an extension to the Career Break; or
 - iii.** to indicate his/her intention to resign.
- b.** A teacher shall normally retain an entitlement to resume duty in the teaching post which he/she vacated at the commencement of the approved Career Break. Where, in exceptional circumstances, this is not possible, the teacher shall be assigned to another post. Where the teacher had previously undertaken additional responsibility and had been in receipt of remuneration, the duties attaching to that remuneration may be changed on return to work.
- c.** Sympathetic consideration will be given to a teacher wishing to return early from a Career Break when specific reasons warrant such early resumption.

12. GENERAL

- a.** It is the responsibility of the teacher to determine from the Department Health and Social Services and Inland Revenue his/her entitlements, if any, for the duration of the Career Break.
- b.** A teacher, while on a Career Break:

- i.** must ensure that the school has a current contact address.
- ii.** shall not be exempt from consideration from the consequences of redundancy/reorganisation in the school;

A week's pay for the purpose of calculating for example redundancy payments shall be based on what the teacher's pay would be at the date of termination if the teacher had remained in post subject to the provisions of paragraph 7.

- iii.** shall be eligible for consideration for any vacancies or promotions within the school which become available during the absence. It shall be the responsibility of the teacher to ascertain whether or not assistance with travelling expenses will be provided.
- c.** Any post of responsibility which becomes vacant as a result of a Career Break should be filled, if necessary, through the normal procedures.
 - d.** Nothing in this Scheme shall prejudice existing arrangements for the granting of other categories of special leave.
 - e.** The operation of this Scheme shall be subject to review after three years.

**APPLICATION FOR A CAREER BREAK OR
AN EXTENSION TO A CAREER BREAK**

TEACHING STAFF

To be completed by the teacher and submitted to the Principal for consideration by the Governing Body at least 4 months prior to the proposed date of commencement or extension.

Teacher's Personal Details

Full Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Teacher's Reference No: _____

Number of Years Teaching Service in Current School _____

School: _____ Ref no. _____

Home Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Tel Number: _____

Details of Career Break

Duration: Date of Commencement _____ Date of Return _____

Reason for request for Career Break (or extension): _____

Contact Address during Career Break:
(if not home address given above)

_____ Postcode: _____

UNDERTAKING

I undertake to:

- a. ensure the school has a current contact address at all times.
- b. contact the Principal not less than four months before the end of the Career Break to:
 - i. confirm the intended date of return to school duties, or
 - ii. apply for an extension to a Career Break, or
 - iii. indicate my intention to resign.

I understand that:

- a. whilst on Career Break:
 - i. I shall not be exempt from consideration from the consequences of redundancy / reorganisation in the school.
 - ii. I shall be eligible for consideration for any vacancies or promotions within the school which became available during my absence and will be responsible for ascertaining whether or not assistance with travelling expenses will be provided.
 - iii. I shall be subject to the relevant body's and the Employing Authority's requirements on matters of conduct.

and

- b. where I held a post of responsibility, the duties attaching to the post may be changed on my return from Career Break.
- c. in relation to superannuation:
 - i. if I wish to remain within the Teachers' Superannuation Scheme, I will be responsible for paying both the employee's and employer's contributions;
 - ii. if I leave the Teachers' Superannuation Scheme, any application to rejoin the Scheme must be made within one year of returning to teaching service.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPLICATION FOR A CAREER BREAK OR AN EXTENSION TO A CAREER BREAK

TEACHING STAFF

To be completed by the Board of Governors and copied to the teacher, the Employing Authority and, where the Career Break or extension is approved, to the Department of Education, Waterside House, Londonderry.

School: _____ Ref. No. _____

Teacher's Name: _____ Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr

Teacher's Ref. no: _____

Home Address:

_____ Postcode: _____

Tel Number: _____

Contact Address:

(If different from above)

_____ Postcode: _____

Details of Career Break:

Duration: Date of Commencement _____ Date of Return _____

Application Approved: Yes/No (Refer to paragraph 7c of the Scheme.)

If the application is to be rejected, please detail reasons below:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Governors)