

Secondment Policy (Individual and People Exchange Wales)

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Version	Date	Description
0.1	20/04/06	First draft
0.2	25/04/07	Initial presentation to Management Board
0.3	17//05/07	Presentation to Works Council
1.0	14/06/07	Approved at HRC
2.0	Jan 08	Policy updated with style guide, OD, IS control table and equality impact assessment
2.1	October 09	Amendments following EIA

1. Introduction

Seconding employees between departments, sectors and organisations can enhance careers and help develop organisations through the sharing of knowledge and skills as well as encouraging diversity in HEFCW. It should also facilitate greater movement between public, private and voluntary sectors and help the development of collaborative solutions to common issues.

Seconding is a key development tool to address the need for a highly skilled, energised and adaptable workforce within the public sector. It will assist the personal development of employees providing opportunities, increasing knowledge, skills competencies and a range of experiences, being of benefit to both employees and organisations.

Secondments to a host organisation will need to be agreed and supported by the employee's line manager, Head of Team and Chief Executive/Director of Strategic Development/Director of Finance & Corporate Services (as appropriate). Employees are encouraged and should feel confident to discuss with their line manager, a potential secondment at the earliest opportunity.

Where HEFCW feels that the secondment would be of serious detriment to the business of HEFCW, HEFCW has the right to withhold its support.

2. Secondment definitions

A secondment might be:

- long term opportunity – over 12 months;
- loan agreement;
- short term placement up to 12 months;
- attachment up to three months;
- shadowing, if under one month.

Definitions are in accordance with People Exchange Wales, Interchange Policy

3. Benefits

3.1 Benefits to the employee

- improved motivation, morale, knowledge, skills and competencies;
- personal development;
- transfer of skills;
- project or assignment opportunities;
- provide insight into different management styles and practices.

3.2 Benefits to HEFCW and host organisations

- filling a vacancy where the team lacks the expertise which the secondment can provide;
- improving motivation, morale, knowledge, skills and competencies;
- sharing best practice;
- developing specific skills not available in HEFCW;
- organisational flexibility;
- encouraging diversity;
- providing collaborative solutions.

4. Advertising

Secondment opportunities (in and outwards of HEFCW) through Public Service Management Wales's (PSMW) membership contacts and the People Exchange Wales Bulletin will be made available on HEFCW's website, intranet and will be advertised on the PSMW web site through the People Exchange Wales Programme.

5. Direct approaches to HEFCW employees

If a HEFCW employee is approached by an organisation directly to undertake a secondment, the employee needs to obtain support from their line manager, Head of Team and either the Chief Executive, Director of Strategic Development or Director of Finance & Corporate Services (as appropriate) The employee will also need to inform HEFCW's HR to enable them to facilitate the secondment.

6. Application process

Application processes will be detailed within each vacancy. People Exchange Wales provides a clear and accessible application process through application packs and full job descriptions.

7. Selection process

Selection of a secondee for appointment to a host organisation will be made in accordance with the host organisation's selection criteria.

Selection of a secondee for appointment to HEFCW will be made in line with other selection decisions and in accordance with our normal selection criteria:

- shortlisting undertaken on experience, competencies, skills and development needs;
- interviewing those successful following shortlisting;
- panel interviews for chosen candidates using agreed selection criteria;
- candidates rated and suitable candidate agreed based on rating;
- notifying candidates of results;
- offering feedback.

8. Vacancies created by secondments to a host organisation

For short term secondments of up to 12 months, the assumption will be that the secondee will return to their substantive post within HEFCW. The post may be filled on a temporary basis or in consultation with the secondee on a permanent basis.

If the opportunity is longer term, over 12 months, it may not be feasible for the secondee's substantive post to be kept open for their return for the purpose of business continuity. Advance planning is required, and if the secondee is not going to return to their previous post, HEFCW and PSMW (where relevant) will aim to carefully manage the secondee back into HEFCW. The process will be supported by HR and the Director of Finance & Corporate Services to ensure the secondee has the opportunity to be placed where their new skills will be valued.

9. Termination

Should it be necessary to terminate the secondment the following action will take place. The secondment may be terminated by either the secondee, HEFCW or host/seconding organisation, giving not less than one month's notice in writing. The secondee will then return to their original department, HEFCW or the host/seconding organisation.

This can take place:

- at the end of the secondment term;
- earlier, by agreement with all parties;
- as a result of breach of terms and conditions;
- because the secondee resigns/retires;
- as a result of organisational restructure;
- on disciplinary grounds.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

For secondments to a host organisation, it is essential to HEFCW that progress is monitored and evaluated. The host organisation has a responsibility to give regular feedback and, where the secondee is away for a significant period, the secondee's HEFCW line manager will maintain contact to check on progress.

For secondments into HEFCW, the secondee's HEFCW line manager will follow HEFCW's MoPD scheme and will provide, where requested by the secondee's organisation, copies of completed MoPD documentation.

For secondment arrangements organised through the PSMW, People Exchange Wales Team will monitor the process of exchanges they administer throughout the duration of the secondment to ensure that the objectives are being met for all parties. The necessary preparation will be put in place for the secondee to return to their work place and plans put in place to use the knowledge and skills gained.

Following the secondment, action will be taken to evaluate the benefits gained for the employee and HEFCW. This will be used to continue the development of the employee on return to their original department, HEFCW or the host organisation.

11. Funding

The secondee's salary will be paid from their substantive organisation and their salary will be reimbursed by the host organisation retrospectively.

Some secondments may attract a temporary up-lift to salary **which is not consolidated or pensionable**. If agreed it will be reflected in the secondment agreement and confirmed in writing at the beginning of the secondment. Any temporary addition to salary will cease at the end of the secondment period.

Occasionally the secondment may be funded by a partnership agreement between a number of different organisations where there are outcomes and benefits for each party.

For opportunities from HEFCW to a host organisation, including placements, attachments and shadowing, HEFCW will continue to pay the secondee's salary for the duration of the opportunity. Terms and conditions of employment will remain unaffected.

12. Terms and conditions

Host organisations will have their own secondment policy and processes. HEFCW employees being seconded to a host organisation will retain HEFCW's terms and conditions of employment, policies and procedures as appropriate for the duration of the secondment.

HEFCW will retain its normal employer duties and legal responsibilities for the duration of the secondment.

13. Paternity/maternity (secondments to a host organisation)

The secondee retains their HEFCW contractual paternity/maternity rights during the period of the secondment.

14. Travel and subsistence (secondment to a host organisation)

Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by the secondee in the host organisation in the course of their duties shall be paid by HEFCW within the limits and conditions set out in HEFCW's travel and subsistence policy. Travel and subsistence forms will be authorised by the host organisation's line manager and forwarded to HEFCW for payment. HEFCW will recharge the costs to the host organisation.

15. Hours

Hours of attendance and working patterns will be agreed between HEFCW, the host/seconding organisation and secondee.

16. Pension arrangements (secondments to a host organisation)

If the secondee, as part of their terms and conditions of employment with HEFCW, is a member of the pension scheme, the pension contributions will continue to be paid to the operating pension scheme for the duration of the secondment.

17. Annual leave (secondments to a host organisation)

Secondees retain their annual leave allowance in line with HEFCW's annual leave policy.

18. Sickness absence

In the event of sickness absence the secondee will comply with the procedure used by the host organisation. The host organisation must notify HEFCW (and vice versa) on the first day and last day of when a period of sickness absence has occurred.

19. Health and safety

Host organisations are expected to carry out a risk assessment and comply with legislative provisions governing health and safety environmental and welfare. HEFCW has carried out its risk assessment and has in place the necessary arrangements.

20. The secondee will, in addition and where appropriate, adhere to the host organisation's policies and procedures.

21. Personal development reviews

The host organisation, whether HEFCW or other, will be responsible for providing operational performance management to the secondee.

For People Exchange Wales managed secondments, where there is not a performance management system in place it will be the responsibility of the seconding People Exchange Wales Programme Manager along with HEFCW and the host organisation to agree key activities and objectives with the secondee and identify the benefits they wish to obtain.

22. Discipline and grievance procedures

The host organisation will advise HEFCW (and vice versa) of any grievance which arise or any potential disciplinary action. An investigation into any alleged incident will be held jointly with HEFCW and the other organisation. For HEFCW employees, following an investigation, any action to be taken will be the responsibility of HEFCW. Where there is a case of gross misconduct the host organisation may remove the secondee concerned from its premises with immediate effect. For secondees into HEFCW, HEFCW may also remove the secondee concerned from its premises with immediate effect

23. Managing the return

At the end of the secondment whether terminated prematurely or realised full term, an evaluation will be undertaken by all three parties. It is essential that on return from a secondment, employees be given the opportunity to practice and share their new knowledge and skills.

For longer term secondments, HEFCW employees seconded to a host organisation will be contacted three months prior to their return to start the process of supporting the re-integration back to their substantive post or the process of searching for an alternative post.

24. Vacant posts

The HEFCW seconded employee will remain eligible to apply for vacant posts within HEFCW.

Glossary of terms for secondment type

- **A loan** is similar to a long term secondment, the secondee's salary will continue to be paid by HEFCW and be reimbursed from the host organisation. HEFCW will agree to retain the seconded employee after the loan period. This normally only takes place between civil service organisations.
- **Attachments** are from one day to three months. They can be used for fact-finding, working alongside an individual in another organisation on a project. These are basically the same as short-term placements. Terms and conditions of employment and salary are not affected.
- **Shadowing** - where an employee has the opportunity to work alongside a colleague in another organisation for a short period of time, normally under one month. Terms and conditions of employment and salary are not affected.