

University of Benin
Professional Development Leaves – Administrative and Support Staff

Approved: June 2020
Review due date: June 2025
Responsibility: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration)

A. Background and Definitions

B. Purpose

Clearly outline standards, criteria and method of evaluation for professional development leaves for admin and support staff.

C. Practice Statements

1. All professional development leaves will be used to pursue suitable activities which enable staff members to enhance their expertise, to build upon initiatives they have undertaken relative to their work at the University, to develop new competencies or to pursue suitable renewal activities in order to address expanded career goals deemed to be consistent with UNIBEN's objectives for professional development leaves.
2. Such opportunities may be in response to needs associated with current job requirements, to the evaluation of an individual's developmental needs, to enhancing an individual's opportunities for advancement or to assisting an individual to move to a new area of responsibility.

Suitable Activities for Professional Development Leaves

3. Suitable activities would include:
 - a) research, study or applied learning in the individual's specialized area of endeavor at the University, study of professional/vocational advances at other institutions;
 - b) vocational activities (e.g., involvement with business, industrial or service sectors to remain current or to learn new methods); and
 - c) other appropriate activities (e.g., task force leadership; survey activities; business, professional or industrial service activities).

Suitable Objectives for Professional Development Leaves

4. Activities pursued during the professional development leave should be directed towards the fulfillment of one or more of the following objectives:
 - a) enhance the staff member's knowledge and effectiveness within his/her, vocation or related fields;
 - b) be consistent with the aims of a particular area of the University, department or division;
 - c) provide direct benefit to students and/or department/divisional operations;
 - d) promote relevant opportunities for the employee to pursue or build upon activities/ initiatives which have been undertaken external to the University but of direct benefit to it; and
 - e) augment the University's ability to respond to community needs.

Professional Development Leave

5. Professional development leaves to a maximum of twelve (12) months may be granted subject to the following conditions:
 - a) an employee has been continuously employed within the University for a period of not less than six (6) years;
 - b) the employee's absence from work can be accommodated;
 - c) the purpose of the leave is for University-approved professional development;
 - d) the employee, upon termination of the leave, will return to the University for a period of one (1) year, failing which he or she shall repay the University all salaries and fringe benefits received by him or her while on professional development leave;
 - e) subject to available funds in that budget year, the salary paid to the employee can be up to 70% of earnings for a maximum period of up to four (4) months. Should the leave exceed four (4) months; the remaining portion will be unpaid;
 - f) it is understood that the University's payment is subject to reduction if the aggregate of the University's payment and compensation or payments from other sources during the period exceed the amount of an employee's normal salary; and
 - g) an application for professional development leave shall be submitted to an employee's supervisor at least six (6) months prior to the proposed commencement date.
6. All applicants will be notified in writing by the Registrar, as to the disposition of the application for professional development leave.
7. An applicant who is denied professional development leave shall be notified in writing of the reasons for the denial.

Evaluation of Applications for Professional Development Leaves

8. All applications for professional development leave will be evaluated by the Chairperson of the Leaves Committee according to the following criteria:
 - a) the relevancy of the proposed activity to University objectives;
 - b) relevance to personal development of the employee in his/her role at the University and his/her professional affiliations/goals;
 - c) the content and quality of the leave application (e.g., evaluation of proposed activity);
 - d) the applicant's employment profile (e.g., ability of the applicant to achieve the objectives of the leave based on the applicant's past experience and academic background; applicant's length of University service, demonstration of prior self- development activities; previous leaves granted to the applicant); and,
 - e) other factors (e.g., cost) deemed appropriate by the HR Committee.

Procedures on Professional Development Leaves - Administration & Support Staff

9. Staff members requesting professional development leave should fully complete the Application for Professional Development Leave form

- (Attachment A) and submit it to their immediate supervisor at least six (6) months prior to commencement of the leave. For budget planning and staffing purposes, it would be beneficial if staff would submit their request by January 30 for leaves starting in September and by May 30 for leaves starting in January. The immediate supervisor may assist with the preparation and presentation of the application and the preparation of the leave request. A detailed statement of the nature of the leave should be appended to the application.
10. Applications for professional development leave, endorsed by the immediate supervisor, will be submitted to the Centre for Professional and Organizational Development to coordinate the process.
 11. The HR Committee will review the leave application and, if endorsed, will recommend the application for approval to the President through the office of the appropriate Deputy Vice Chancellor. All candidates will be notified by the Registrar regarding the disposition of the leave application three months prior.
 12. During the leave, the staff member will provide brief written progress reports to his or her immediate supervisor who will copy the HR Committee. These progress reports are due, minimally, once every four (4) months.
 13. Within one (1) month following the completion of the professional development leave, the staff member shall provide his or her immediate supervisor with the following:
 - a) a brief summary of the leave noting adherence or deviation from the original proposal;
 - b) an evaluation of the success of the leave as it relates to stated objectives;
 - c) a description of personal benefits resulting from the leave;
 - d) a letter from employer, if on industry or secondment leave, responding to the objectives met during the experience;
 - e) a letter from faculty advisor, if on graduate educational leave, regarding progress in a program of studies;
 - f) a commitment to share the knowledge obtained during the leave including any of the following mechanisms:
 - Professional Development newsletter;
 - Professional Development workshop;
 - departmental seminars or projects; or,
 - dissertations or project reports filed permanently with the Learning Resources Centre.
 14. The immediate supervisor is to forward a copy of the completed report to the HR Committee through the office of the appropriate Deputy Vice Chancellor

APPLICATION FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE

The information on this form is collected under the legal authority of the the University Statute. The information will be used by the University for making decisions regarding the granting of leaves as well as for related administrative and statistical purposes. Questions about this collection should be directed to: The Registrar, University of Benin

Applicant's Name:

Department/Division:

Job Title:

Years of University Service:

Requested Dates of Professional Development Leave

From:

To:

Note: The proposed leave schedule should be discussed with the immediate supervisor in advance of this application

Dates of last Professional Development Leave (if applicable)

From:

To:

Are you presently on a prepaid leave plan? Yes No

Please summarize the details of your proposed professional development leave activities succinctly responding to the questions below. Full details of the objectives, activities, timeframes and benefits should be appended to this application.

(a) What objectives do you hope to achieve during your professional development leave period?

- (b) Please identify the activities you wish to pursue during your professional development leave period.

- (c) What benefits will the University derive from the completion of your proposed professional development leave activities and outcomes?

- (d) What benefits will you derive (professionally/personally/educationally) from the completion of your proposed professional development leave activities?

Signatures

Date

Signature of Applicant

Date

Dean/Director/Chair/Manager

Date

Chair, Professional Development Leaves

Date

Deputy Vice- Chancellor (appropriate area)

Date

Vice Chancellor