



## DBF Study Leave (Sabbatical) Policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) recognises that periods of study leave will help to develop and maintain flourishing, in terms of personal and professional well-being, and ministerial outcomes and wishes to support employees taking periods of study leave for genuine continual ministerial and professional development purposes.
- 1.2. Whilst being supportive, the DBF also recognises that providing cover for employees for periods of study leave raises significant issues of resource and finance. Therefore, it is important that these periods of leave are appropriately recorded and approved in each instance to ensure our approach is fair and consistent for all DBF employees.
- 1.3. Study leave opportunity is offered at the discretion of the Diocesan Secretary and is not a right to be claimed.
- 1.4. This policy applies to all DBF employees. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

### 2. Who is eligible to apply for Study Leave?

- 2.1. Those applying for Unpaid Study Leave must have been employed by the DBF for at least 2 years.
- 2.2. Those applying for Short Study Leave and Extended Study Leave must have been employed, ordained or licensed by the Diocese for at least 7 years, and have been in their current post for at least 3 years. In addition, they will in most cases be at least 3 years away from their intended date of retirement.
- 2.3. Discretionary study leave with pay will be considered for those who require professional development relating to their role and where it has been identified and agreed in line with the DBF's Objective Setting and Review process.

### 3. What is Study Leave and when does it apply?

- 3.1. There are three types of study leave available as follows:

Type of Study Leave	Period of the leave	What is it for?	Who can apply?
<b>Unpaid Study Leave</b>	up to 4 weeks to be taken once every 3 years	to complete a course of study relevant to the role or the work of the Church.	All DBF employees undertaking a course of Higher Educational study
<b>Short Study Leave</b>	lasts for 4 weeks, and may be taken once every 5 years subject to the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, the availability of a	As set out in the Clergy Study Leave (Sabbatical) Policy	Ordained DBF employees whose role specifically involves an element of Preaching and Teaching

	place and the agreement of the Diocesan Secretary.		
<b>Extended Study Leave (sabbatical)</b>	lasts for 12 weeks, and may be taken once every 10 years, subject to approval of the Diocesan Bishop, the availability of a place and the agreement of the Diocesan Secretary.	As set out in the Clergy Study Leave (Sabbatical) Policy	Ordained DBF employees whose role specifically involves an element of Preaching and Teaching

**4. Can periods of Study Leave be extended?**

- 4.1. Periods of Study Leave cannot exceed 12 weeks and no further annual leave can be added to the term to extend it beyond the agreed period of time.
- 4.2. Only one type of Study Leave can only be taken at any one time and the employee will return to work by the agreed date.
- 4.3. Previous periods of agreed Study Leave will be taken into account and Study Leave is restricted to a maximum of 16 weeks in each 10 year period.

**5. How do I apply for a period of Unpaid Study Leave?**

- 5.1. In the first instance the intention to apply for Unpaid Study Leave must be discussed with your line manager giving as much notice as is possible. This will be an opportunity to consider any issues that may impact on the team and wider organisation should a period of study leave be agreed.
- 5.2. The request must be made in writing to the Diocesan Secretary with a recommendation from the Line Manager including the following:
  - Dates and the length of Unpaid Study Leave requested
  - The reason for the Unpaid Study Leave
  - What the benefits to the employee and the organisation will be
  - What issues are foreseen to the team/organisation and any suggested solutions to overcome these.
- 5.3. A decision will be made, and the applicant and line manager notified in writing.

**6. How do I apply for a period of Extended/Short Study Leave?**

- 6.2. Employed clergy hoping to take a period of Extended Study Leave should apply to the Diocesan Secretary up to two years in advance using the attached proforma.
- 6.3. The applicant will be asked to meet with the Bishops’ Ministry Officer for an initial discussion of their application.
- 6.4. Applications will be considered by in January and July by the Bishops and Archdeacons, and the Diocesan Secretary.

6.5. Once a decision has been made on the application, the minister will be notified and, if approved, should discuss provision of their absence with the line manager.

6.6. Nearer the time of the Study Leave, the minister will be asked to complete a more detailed proposal for their Study Leave and may meet again with the Bishops' Ministry Officer.

## **7. What will the Diocesan Secretary take into account when considering Study Leave applications:**

7.2. For all applications of Study Leave (Sabbatical) the following considerations will be given:

- The relevance to the role being carried out by the applicant
- The benefit to the employee and the organisation
- The number of employees on Study leave during the period requested
- The financial cost to the DBF, including the cost of providing cover
- The timing of the period of study leave
- The ability to provide alternative resource to cover the period of absence and the impact the absence will have on the applicant's workload and area of responsibility

## **8. Is any funding available?**

6.1. If eligible some funding may be available from the annual CMD allowance. An itemised application on the usual CMD grant application form must be made for this. Grants are also available from other organisations and details can be found on the diocesan website.

6.2. If approved by the Diocesan Secretary then the period of Extended Study/Short Study leave can be taken as paid leave. The Diocesan Secretary will consider requests not meeting the criteria as eligible for unpaid leave.

## **9. What happens after the Study Leave (Sabbatical)**

9.2. At the end of Study Leave, the employee will be asked to write a short reflection detailing what has been done, what has been learnt, how it has refreshed and resourced the employee personally or professionally and whether anything has emerged that might benefit the wider organisation. DBF employees may be asked to share some of their findings with colleagues in an appropriate forum and a copy of the reflection note will be filed in the personnel file as part of Training and Development records.

9.3. For periods of Extended or Short Study Leave, a short report must be sent to the Bishop's Ministry Officer as detailed in the Clergy Study Leave (Sabbatical Policy)

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