

# Staff Leave Policy

## 1. Background

The Leave Policy is designed to balance the rights and conditions of staff with the obligation to organize the college in the best way to achieve the highest standards of student learning. The replacement of staff on leave to ensure continuity of learning is vital to achieving high standards.

## 2. Purpose

- To provide a policy framework for the management of leave at Melton Secondary College.
- To provide guidelines for the approval of leave.
- To maintain merit and equity in dealing with leave applications.

## 3. Guiding Principles

- When considering applications for leave, the Principal and Local Consultative Committee (LCC) shall have regard to:
  - The requirements as set out in the Department's Human Resources guidelines, and
  - The policies and publications referred to in this document relating to the:
    - Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2015
    - Merit Protection Board
    - Melton Secondary College Positions of Responsibility

## 4. Implementation

### Application and approval

- The Department of Education and Training (DET) has delegated leave approval to the College Principal.
- It is expected that most applications for leave will meet the requirements of the DET. In those instances, leave applications may be approved by the Principal without reference to the Local Consultative Committee (LCC).
- Where the Principal determines however that reasonable grounds exist for refusal or variation of an application for leave, the Principal may refer the application to the LCC.
- The LCC shall consider all applications referred to it and make a recommendation to the Principal for approval, refusal, or variation of the application.
- Staff must access the DET's Human Resources guidelines via the department's website (see references below) prior to completing an application.
- Specific details relating to Long Service Leave and Leave Without Pay are included in the DET's Human Resources guidelines.
- With the exception of Personal Leave, all applications for leave must be on the appropriate leave application form available from the Business Manager.
- Applications for leave of **GREATER THAN 15 DAYS** or **3 SCHOOL WEEKS** should be lodged with the **BUSINESS MANAGER** no later than **the last working day in August in the year prior to the intended commencement of leave.**
- Applications of **LESS THAN 15 DAYS** or **3 SCHOOL WEEKS** must be lodged with the **BUSINESS MANAGER** **no later than two terms in advance.**
- Late applications will only be considered if they are based on compelling compassionate grounds.

- Where cancellation of leave is requested, the Principal must be notified in writing as soon as possible. **Cancellation prior to commencement of leave, or during the leave period** may not be granted unless suitable arrangements can be made that **do not impact on the curriculum delivery, minimization of disruption to classes, timetable arrangements, contractual arrangements or the College's financial position.**
- A staff member may seek reconsideration of a leave decision. The reconsideration would be undertaken by the Local Consultative Committee and will involve consultation with relevant members of the PCO team and the timetabler, as well as consideration of any additional information to support the application. A recommendation regarding the reconsideration will then be made to the Principal.
- Decisions in relation to leave should be communicated in writing to the applicant and should be honored by both parties.

#### **Criteria for approval:**

- The following criteria will be taken into account when determining applications for all types of leave:
  - Curriculum and operational needs of the College.
  - The effect on learning outcomes for all students.
  - Availability of leave credit.
  - Availability of suitable replacement staff.
  - The timing and length of leave sought, particularly if there are multiple leave applications from the same Learning Area or Program.
  - The legislative requirements in granting the particular leave.
  - Prior leave history and frequency of applications, and
  - Relevance of supporting statements or documentation to the application.
- The Principal may grant leave to applicants who do not meet these and/or following conditions in exceptional circumstances.

#### **Timing and length of leave**

- Leave Without Pay (LWOP) will not usually be granted for any extended period in the first five years of tenure with the DET. It is not available to fixed term employees.
- LWOP may be granted for periods of up to 12 months only, however the Principal may grant an extended period of LWOP with due regard to the impact on the educational program and operational requirements of the school.
- Granting of Long Service Leave at Melton Secondary College is usually for a period of 31 working days, a full term or multiples of a term. The usual minimum period is one week, however each application will be considered on its merit.
- While Long Service Leave is an entitlement, the timing of the leave is discretionary. Where LSL is not granted, the Principal may grant leave at an alternative date in the future in consultation with the staff member.

Staff who are granted leave are expected to provide all necessary work documents for replacement personnel. For teaching staff, the documents should include records of assessment, preparation for reports where appropriate, course work documentation and notes relating to work to be completed

#### **5. Evaluation and Review**

This policy will be reviewed in four years or as necessitated by changes/developments which may occur through requests by DET, School Council, Parents, Students or Staff within the timeframe stated above.

#### **6. References**

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx>

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