

Service Time Policy and Procedure

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1. Introduction

As outlined in [King's Strategic Vision 2029](#), the ethos of the university is to try to make the world a better place, putting the needs of others first, beyond what is expected or contracted. In order to support this vision the university is committed to facilitating all staff, should they so wish, to spend up to three days per year, pro rated for part-time staff, on external Service activities (Service Time), i.e. volunteer work within the community or for charitable institutions.

The benefits of Service Time for the university and external parties are set out in the [Service Strategy: A framework for delivery 2018-23](#). For the individual, benefits might include building relationships with the local community; learning new or building on existing skills; professional and personal development, and improving morale and physical and mental health.

This document relates to undertaking voluntary work with an external party rather than an internal, King's, department or activity. It provides information on eligibility, the application process, and other considerations.

All requests for Service Time must be agreed in advance with the line manager.

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2. Eligibility

All employees of King's College London – including Academic, Research and Professional Services staff; part-time staff, and those on fixed-term contracts - are entitled to take 21 hours' Service Time in any 12-month period, paid at the member of staff's normal hourly rate of pay. The entitlement will be pro rated for part-time employees.

The university is committed to enabling all of its staff to participate in Service activity. As such a member of staff may submit a request to undertake Service Time from the first day of their employment with King's; there is no qualifying period. For the avoidance of doubt, staff that are undergoing a probationary period are eligible to apply for Service Time.

Applications for Service Time cannot be considered in the case of a member of staff who will be absent from work for another reason on the day that their Service Time is due to

take place, e.g. maternity leave¹, sickness absence, non-working day, academic study leave, etc².

Flexible working arrangements may be more appropriate for regular voluntary activities. Any requests for flexible working arrangements are to be made through the normal [Flexible Working](#) application process.

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3. General principles

- The expectation is that the activities or events undertaken during Service Time will involve undertaking organised community or charitable activities, including:
 - community care work;
 - environmental work and conservation projects;
 - fundraising for community projects or charities; and
 - the administration of public events.

This is a non-exhaustive and non-definitive list of indicative examples.

- The annual allocation of Service Time does not necessarily need to be used in three days. However, in order to facilitate its administration, the expectation is that, where possible, Service Time, particularly in the case of full-time members of staff, will be taken in blocks of no less than half a day.
- It is the member of staff's responsibility to arrange the voluntary work undertaken during Service Time. Staff may use a reasonable amount of time during the working day to make Service Time arrangements, but more extensive activity may need to be undertaken outside of working hours.
- It is the responsibility of the member of staff to identify the voluntary work to be done; check the health and safety arrangements and insurance of the host organisation; and ensure that they are trained to cope with the work and environment. Additionally, they will need to comply with the host organisation's policies and practices, e.g. regarding safeguarding.
- In authorising a member of staff to undertake voluntary work for an external party, the university bears no responsibility for the member of staff's welfare during those activities.

¹ Members of staff may not take Service Time on the same day as a Keeping In Touch (KIT) day during maternity leave or Shared Parental Leave In Touch (SPLiT) day during shared parental leave.

² Applications will also be declined where the member of staff is subject to a formal disciplinary or capability sanction (including sanctions that commence after the application has been submitted), or is subject to a formal investigation under the university's Academic Regulations or NHS equivalent.

- During Service Time, the member of staff is not seen to be undertaking work on behalf of King's College London nor are they the university's agent in this regard.
- The university is not able to reimburse the member of staff for any costs incurred during Service Time, such as travel, meals, insurance, reference/vetting checks, equipment, clothing, membership fees, etc.
- Members of staff undertaking Service Time must not receive financial reward or benefit in kind from the external party for work they perform under the arrangement.
- Staff are under no obligation to undertake Service Time. Where staff do not participate, no detriment will ensue.
- Unused Service Time may not be accrued or taken as holiday.
- Service Time is not suitable for use for [Jury Service](#).

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4. Application procedure

All requests for Service Time must be agreed in advance with the line manager and others as may be appropriate³. It is recommended that early discussions take place between members of staff and line managers about plans to participate in voluntary activities or events, to enable both to consider how this may be accommodated.

Members of staff should submit a written request to their line manager, no later than two weeks before the intended date of each period of Service Time⁴. In the case of colleagues who are currently sponsored by the university under Tier 2 of the points-based immigration system, members of staff **must** include the address where the volunteering activity will take place. This is a requirement of the Home Office. The university must be able to report on the location of such members of staff during Service Time.

Once the line manager receives the request, it will be considered as soon as possible. Whilst line managers will endeavour to agree such requests, they are entitled to turn down applications should they potentially have a detrimental impact on the organisation or operational needs of the member of staff's team, department or area. Should the

³ For example, in the case of clinicians, it may be necessary to seek agreement from the appropriate Clinical Lead.

⁴ Failure to disclose relevant details of the Service Time, or a deliberate attempt to falsify information, may lead to dismissal.

request be declined, the line manager should discuss an alternative date with the member of staff, with a view to agreeing a mutually acceptable date.

As part of the application the line manager may ask the member of staff to present from the voluntary organisation a written letter of confirmation of the volunteering commitments.

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5. Record keeping and reporting

Faculties and Directorates must keep a centralised record of:

- the dates of Service Time taken by individual members of staff; and
- in the case of colleagues currently sponsored by the university under Tier 2 of the points-based immigration system, the address where the volunteering activity will take place.

Such records are required so that the university:

- may receive anonymised reports from areas on take-up rates;
- may compile employee statistics and diversity and inclusion monitoring; and
- is compliant with Home Office obligations, in the case of colleagues currently sponsored by the university under Tier 2 of the points-based immigration system.

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