



UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

REASSIGNMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 This Policy and Procedure outlines the circumstances in which reassignment of employees will be considered and the Procedure to be applied in such circumstances. The purpose of the Policy and Procedure is:

- To ensure that employees in a reassignment situation are retained by the University, wherever possible;
- To ensure that employees are treated with dignity and respect during the reassignment process;
- To maintain efficiency in the working environment, through the effective management of reassignment;
- To ensure a fair and consistent approach to reassignment.

1.1.2 This Policy replaces *Policy and Procedures for Redeployment of Employees and Employee Transfer Policy*.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 *To whom does the Policy apply?*

1.2.1.1 This Policy and Procedure applies to all employees of the University of Limerick.

1.2.2 *In what situations does the Policy apply?*

1.2.2.1 Instances where reassignment of employees may be required include meeting organisational and operational needs, organisational restructuring, management of resources, a job no longer exists in its current format or it substantially changes, facilitating employee/post compatibility, and within the context of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

1.2.3 *Who is responsible for ensuring that the Policy (and any associated Procedure) is implemented and monitored?*

1.2.3.1 The Human Resources Division has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Reassignment Policy and Procedure, with the relevant Head of Department/School / Dean / Divisional Director playing a key procedural role.

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 Reassignment involves the transfer of an employee from one position to another within the University. In general, reassignment would be to a similar position and at a grade and terms and conditions of employment no less favourable than those in place for the employee prior to reassignment.

1.3.2 Reassignment may be on a temporary or a permanent arrangement.

1.3.3 “Temporary Reassignment” means the temporary transfer of an employee into another area to cover a short-term service need, for a minimum period of one month and for a maximum period of twelve months, at the end of which the employee will revert to their original position or to a similar position at a grade and terms and conditions of employment no less favourable than those in place for the employee prior to reassignment.

1.3.4 “Permanent Reassignment” means the long-term permanent movement of an employee.

2 Context

2.1 Context

- 2.1.1 Reassignment of employees may be required for a number of reasons including the following:
- as a result of changing organisational and operational needs;
 - improve use of resources;
 - to meet operational and financial need;
 - where, as a result of organisational restructuring, the individual's job no longer exists in its current format or it substantially changes;
 - for developing skills/abilities required in the longer term by the University;
 - matching of employee skills and abilities with specific organisational requirements;
 - to facilitate an employee who, by reason of disability and/or other medical reason, can no longer continue in their current role, despite consideration of adjustments to that role;
 - to fulfil a request made by an employee.

3 Policy Statements

3.1 Principles for the Reassignment of Employees

- 3.1.1 The University of Limerick is committed to the development and maintenance of a positive working environment in which all employees are valued equally and are encouraged to enhance their work life and develop themselves.
- 3.1.2 Reassignments will be decided in a fair, consistent and transparent manner, taking into account the needs of the University and the legitimate career interests and aspirations of employees.
- 3.1.3 The University is committed to a process of consultation and engagement with employees and their representatives (where employees choose to be represented) regarding proposed reassignment. The consultation process will commence immediately during which time no reassignment will take place. The process should not take any longer than three months.

4 Related Procedures for the Reassignment of Employees

4.1 General Procedure – Permanent Reassignment

- 4.1.1 Where an employee is considered for reassignment, managers will initially be encouraged to identify suitable opportunities for reassignment within their own department/division/faculty. In such cases, an employee may be integrated to a new role where this is deemed to be suitable alternative employment in line with the rationale above. Such opportunities should, however, be publicised to all employees subject to reassignment within a department/division/faculty and an agreed structured assessment process undertaken where more than one employee wishes to be considered for the position.
- 4.1.2 Where practicable, the University will seek to reassign individuals to work of a similar position. Where this is not possible, the following criteria will be used to determine the suitability of alternative employment:
- the nature of the work;
 - qualifications, skills and experience required to carry out the work;

- aptitude or capability of the individual to undertake the work;
- working arrangements e.g. hours of work, shift arrangements, leave arrangements etc.;
- level of responsibility relative to previous role;
- grade and pay.

4.1.3 The University will, in the spirit of Partnership, inform the trade union in advance of all new workplace-related initiatives, which may require reassignment of employees. Notification will be given in advance and in sufficient time to allow discussions with the employees involved, and their trade union representatives (where employees choose to be represented). The process should not take any longer than three months.

4.1.4 Consultations between the University and affected parties will cover the nature of the changes involved, the reasons for the changes, the main foreseeable impacts on employees and proposed implementation dates. The consultations will be approached in a partnership manner and will be concluded in time to allow the changes to be introduced by the proposed implementation date.

4.1.5 Where exact matches are not possible following a reassignment decision, flexibility and a constructive approach will be required from the employee being reassigned and the managers concerned.

4.1.6 Where a full skills match does not exist following a reassignment decision then, following consultation with the employee, appropriate training (off-site and on the job) will be arranged by the Human Resources Division in order to equip the employee with the skills necessary for their new role. The nature of the training will be mutually agreed between the University and the employee and will take place when the employee takes up their new role. This will include the provision of the costs of any training identified and approved.

4.1.7 Reassignment will generally take precedence over recruitment except in circumstances where skills are required.

4.2 General Procedure – Temporary Reassignment

4.2.1 The University reserves the right to temporarily reassign employees if necessary to promote efficient operations, improve use of resources, or to meet other essential organisational needs.

4.2.2 Temporary reassignments are subject to approval by the most senior person in the Academic Unit / Division / Dean / Divisional Director and the approval of the Director, Human Resources. In cases of temporary reassignment, the following conditions apply:

- The employee's temporary reassignment does not, in any way, guarantee the temporary reassignment position to the employee on a long term / permanent basis;
- The temporary reassignment does not confer any preference to the employee in competing for the position, should a similar vacancy arise;
- Temporary reassignment shall be for a minimum of one month to a maximum of 12 months.

4.3 General Procedure – Requests for Reassignment

4.3.1 The University recognises that there may be occasions when individuals wish to seek reassignment to an alternative role for a variety of reasons of their own. Whilst the University has no obligation to support such requests, the University may consider individual requests for reassignment in certain situations on a case-by-case basis.

- 4.3.2 The process to be followed in such cases will depend on the circumstances of the situation. Reassignment of this nature is subject to approval by the most senior person in the Academic Unit / Division / Dean / Divisional Director and the Director, Human Resources.

4.4 Review

- 4.4.1 Following a reassignment decision, employees being reassigned, and employees in the department/division/faculty to which reassignment has been made or is about to be made, shall be informed of the reassignment decision at least ten working days prior to the effective date of the reassignment.
- 4.4.2 Affected parties may seek a review of the reassignment decision.
- 4.4.3 To seek such a review, the employee will indicate in writing to the Chief Corporate Officer or their nominee, their intention to seek a review within five working days of notification of the reassignment decision. All decisions must take account of this timeframe in order to facilitate a review if required.
- 4.4.4 Affected parties will make a written submission setting out the entire grounds for their review request to the Chief Corporate Officer within fifteen working days of the notification of the reassignment decision.
- 4.4.5 Upon notification of a request for a review, the Chief Corporate Officer or their nominee will appoint an independent investigator to conduct the review.
- 4.4.6 The independent investigator, if satisfied that the application falls within 4.4.2 above, will determine the conduct of the review. Any such review will be completed within a reasonable timeframe, where possible not to exceed two weeks. The reasoned determination of the external independent investigator will be submitted to the Chief Corporate Officer and will be provided subsequently to the affected party who sought the review.
- 4.4.7 Subject to any statutory or other legal remedy available to the affected parties, the result of this review will be final. It will be the responsibility of the Human Resources Division to ensure that no employee shall be subsequently disadvantaged or victimised for exercising their right to seek a review.

4.5 Monitoring

- 4.5.1 In the spirit of Partnership, this Policy and Procedures for Reassignment will be evaluated on a regular basis. This will involve consideration of the number of reassignment decisions and reviews and the general effectiveness of the process.

5 Related Documents

University of Limerick Equality and Diversity Policy.
National Agreements.

6 Document Control

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