



# MUAST

MARONDERA UNIVERSITY  
OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

TITLE	LEAVE POLICY
POLICY NUMBER	
RECOMMENDED BY	
APPROVED BY	
REVIEWED BY	
REVIEWS AND APPROVALS	

## 1. Preamble

Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (MUAST) values its human resources and acknowledges the need for employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance by taking leave occasionally for them to remain productive and to ensure that MUAST adheres to anti-corruption circulars, policies and measures as directed to the attention of the University by other agencies of the State. The policy shall also abide to the growth, prosperity and inclusive development of the country in promoting good governance buttressed by transparency, accountability, integrity and rule of law. This policy also acknowledges the responsibility to lead by example in the fight against corruption and to ethically render services with integrity.

## 2. Objectives of the Leave Policy

- 2.1 To provide a framework for the smooth administration and management of various forms of leave.
- 2.2 To provide guidance to staff in managing various types of leave.
- 2.3 To augment the various leave provisions in support of the terms and conditions of staff of various categories and those provided for in the Labour law.
- 2.4 To encourage work-life balance of employees.

2.5 To ensure that leave management is managed in a fair, uniform, accurate and efficient way.

### **3. Legislative Framework**

3.1 Constitution of Zimbabwe

3.2 Labour Act (28:01)

3.3 Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology Act (25:29)

### **4. Guiding Principles**

4.1 Fairness

4.2 Transparency

4.3 Equity

### **5. Definition of Terms**

5.1 **Contact leave** refers to the period employees in certain grades are granted for visitations to other universities for a specified period of time for purposes of learning and benchmarking.

5.2 **Duty leave** refers to the time an employee is officially on duty away from the usual station of work.

5.3 **Leave of absence** refers to time granted to an employee to be away from work without pay and benefits for an extended period due to personal circumstances that may not be covered by any other type of leave.

5.4 **Maternity leave** refers to approved absence from work granted to a female employee for purposes of prenatal, giving birth and post-natal care.

5.5 **Sabbatical leave** refers to paid extended period of time which is granted to an employee to be away from his/her usual duty and station.

5.6 **Sick leave** refers to time off from work granted to an employee due to the employee's temporary inability to perform one's duties as a result of illness.

5.7 **Special leave** refers to time off from work granted to an employee to attend court as a witness, or on compassionate grounds or other grounds as specified in the Labour Act 28:01 and employee's Terms and Conditions of Service.

5.8 **Study leave** is a type of leave granted to employees to pursue educational opportunities.

5.9 **Vacation leave** refers to leave entitlement as a result of respective employee's monthly accrual of leave days.

### **6. Scope of the Leave Policy**

This policy applies to all MUAST employee categories. The policy covers vacation leave, sick leave, maternity leave, special leave, leave of absence, duty leave, contact leave and sabbatical leave. Provisions of this policy do not include staff employed on a part-time basis.

## 7. Eligibility

Eligibility for vacation leave, sick leave, special leave, maternity leave, contact leave and Sabbatical leave is as provided for in individual employee Terms and Conditions of Service.

## 8. Vacation leave

- 8.1 Every head of department shall after consulting members, compile the department's vacation leave plan for the year for all staff members in the department. The vacation leave plan shall be submitted to the Human Resources Department by 31 January of each year.
- 8.2 Vacation leave shall be taken at the discretion of the employer and such discretion shall be exercised in the interest of University business. During semester time academic staff may only proceed on approved short vacation leave to attend to urgent private business.
- 8.3 Vacation leave shall be applied for on the official HR leave forms. Planned vacation leave shall be applied for at least five (5) working days in advance to allow sufficient time for processing.
- 8.4 No employee may proceed on leave before the leave application has been approved. An employee may proceed on short emergency vacation leave not exceeding three days subject to permission being granted by the respective head of department but such leave should be regularised within seventy-two (72) hours of the employee reporting back for work.
- 8.5 Vacation leave not regularised in terms of Section 8.4 shall be considered as absence from work and may qualify as an act of misconduct.
- 8.6 The employer through the Human Resources Department may on justifiable grounds cancel vacation leave in the interest of University business and such cancellation should be effected through the Human Resources Department by any means deemed practicable and immediately thereafter communicated in writing. Such cancelled leave shall be granted at a later date.
- 8.6.1 The Human Resources Department should provide quarterly reports of members who have accrued more than 60 days. Heads of Departments should rotate members who proceed on vacation leave and should ensure that no member accrue 90 days at any given time.
- 8.6.2 Where a member has no vacation leave accrued, he/ she may be granted vacation leave without pay.
- 8.6.3 Vacation leave shall not be taken in advance; no employee may take vacation leave in anticipation of future vacation leave earning.
- 8.6.4 A member who falls sick during a period of vacation leave may cancel his vacation leave and apply for sick leave.

## 9. Sick leave

- 9.1 Sick leave may be granted to a member who is prevented from attending his duties because he/ she is ill or injured or undergoes medical treatment which was not occasioned by his failure to take reasonable precautions.
- 9.2 During any one-year period of service a member may be granted a maximum of ninety days' sick leave on full pay and ninety days' sick leave on half pay.
- 9.3 A head of department may grant sick leave not exceeding three days, or, in the case of a member stationed sixteen kilometres or more from the nearest medical practitioner, six days, without the production of a medical certificate.
- 9.4 A head of department may grant sick leave with pay for a continuous period not exceeding ninety days on production of a certificate in the prescribed form signed by a registered medical practitioner: Provided that if, in the opinion of the head of department, the illness is likely to exceed ninety days, the head of department concerned shall report the matter to Human Resources twenty-one days before the expiry of the leave in order to facilitate the convening of a medical board.
- 9.5 Sick leave on half pay which extends beyond the period of sick leave on full pay may only be granted by the Vice Chancellor if recommended by a medical board appointed by the University, if in the opinion of the medical board, it is probable that the member concerned will be able to resume duty after such further period of sick leave.
- 9.6 If a medical board has established that a member will be unable to resume duty because of illness or injury, the head of department shall take steps to have the member retired on the grounds of ill health.
- 9.7 If, when a medical board has been convened to examine a member who has been notified accordingly, such member fails without adequate excuse to attend that medical board, the University may proceed to charge the member with misconduct.
- 9.8 The Vice Chancellor may grant a member who is not eligible for sick leave on full pay or half pay, sick leave without pay for a period not exceeding forty-five days.
- 9.9 The Vice Chancellor may grant an additional period of sick leave to a member to cover the period between the hearing of a medical board which recommends the member's retirement on ill health and the effective date of such retirement.
- 9.10 A member who so wishes may be granted accrued vacation leave or annual leave instead of sick leave on half pay or without pay.
- 9.11 All Saturdays, Sundays and gazetted public holidays falling within a period of vacation leave shall be counted as part of vacation leave.
- 9.12 Sick leave (irrespective of duration) shall be applied for on the official HR form and shall be accompanied by a medical certificate. Where an employee's medical condition such as hospitalisation, precludes him/her from personally

making a sick leave application, the sick leave application shall be done by a proxy who shall submit a sick leave certificate to the head of department within five working days. The head of department shall complete the relevant Human Resources form and submit it to the Human Resources Department.

9.13 Abuse of sick leave constitutes an act of misconduct.

## **10 Maternity leave**

- 10.1 Maternity leave shall be applied for to enable a female member to proceed on such leave not earlier than forty-five (45) days and at least twenty-one (21) days before the expected date of delivery and shall be supported by the relevant medical certificate signed by a registered medical practitioner or State Registered Nurse.
- 10.2 Paid maternity leave shall be for a period of ninety-eight (98) days. Any maternity leave in excess of the ninety-eight (98) days may be granted as unpaid maternity leave.
- 10.3 A female member who is on maternity leave will continue to receive her normal benefits and entitlements, including her rights to seniority or advancement. Pension right shall continue uninterrupted in the manner in which they would have continued had she not gone on such leave and her period of service shall not be considered as having been interrupted, reduced or broken by the exercise of her right to maternity leave.
- 10.4 A female employee who is the mother of a suckling child shall be granted at her request at least one or two half hour periods as she may choose during normal working hours for the purpose of nursing her child.
- 10.5 A female employee who is granted normal breaks in terms of section 10.4 may combine the portion or portions of time with any other normal breaks so as to constitute longer periods for the purpose of nursing the child.
- 10.6 In granting a female member break during normal working hours for the purpose of nursing her child, the line manager of the female employee should consider all exigencies to ensure that there are no interruptions to normal production processes.
- 10.7 A female member shall be entitled to the benefits in subsection 10.4 for the period during which she actually nurses the child or six months whichever is the lesser.

## **11 Special leave**

- 11.1 An employee may be granted paid special leave not exceeding twelve (12) days in a year. Special leave may be granted to an employee-
- (a). On the death of a spouse, parent of the employee, child or legal dependant;
  - (b). Who is subpoenaed to attend court as a witness in Zimbabwe;
  - (c). Who is detained for questioning by the Police;

- (d). Who is required to attend as a delegate or office bearer at any meeting of a registered trade union representing employees;
- (e). To prepare for and sit an examination required for his advancement in the service or which his head of department considers will increase his value to the department;
- (f). Who is required to be absent from duty on the instructions of a medical practitioner because of contact with an infectious disease and
- (g). On any other compassionate grounds.

11.2 Special leave may not be rolled over to the ensuing year.

## **12. Leave of absence**

12.1 Leave of absence may be granted by the Vice Chancellor where an employee has demonstrated exceptional personal circumstances including for study purposes in critical skill areas or where an employee is required to be away for an extended period on national duty. Ordinarily all benefits including salary shall be frozen during the period of leave of absence, however, the Vice Chancellor may use his/ her discretion.

## **13. Duty leave**

13.1 All duty leave should be applied for in advance and should, for all academic staff be approved by the Vice Chancellor while duty leave for non-teaching staff is approved by the Registrar.

13.2 No employee may proceed for duty leave without the approval of the approving authority.

## **14. Contact leave**

14.1 Contact leave may be granted to a Professor after serving for a period of four semesters for thirty-five (35) days and to other eligible employees after serving for six (6) semesters or three years for a period not exceeding twenty-eight (28) days subject to availability of funds.

14.2 When a Contact leave falls due in the same year as an employee is entitled to Sabbatical Leave, the contact leave must be taken during his/her Sabbatical Leave.

14.3 If contact leave is not taken when due, the right to the leave and to its benefits shall lapse unless the Vice-Chancellor has agreed otherwise.

14.4 A member who gives notice of resignation at any time forfeits entitlement to contact leave and to the benefits attached thereto.

14.5 No member may tender resignation letter whilst on contact leave.

14.6 Any tenured academic staff and non-academic staff in grades 5 and above are eligible for contact leave.

## 15 Sabbatical leave

- 15.1 Subject to availability of funds, a tenured member who has completed six years' service with the University will become due for Sabbatical Leave on full salary; thereafter Sabbatical Leave on full salary may be due in every seventh year reckoned from the date of appointment except that a member may not begin Sabbatical Leave in the calendar year in which he will retire.
- 15.2 Sabbatical Leave will consist of a continuous period of 240 days which must be taken, during a long vacation and the preceding and subsequent semesters unless in the Vice Chancellor's opinion there is good cause for Sabbatical leave to commence at any other time.
- 15.3 A member who gives notice of resignation at any time forfeits consideration for Sabbatical Leave.
- 15.4 Unless the Vice-Chancellor has determined otherwise, a member who does not take Sabbatical Leave when due will forfeit his entitlement to that period of leave, and in any event should a member not take his full Sabbatical Leave within two years of its due date, he shall be deemed to have forfeited that period of leave and/ or any balance still due to him of that period of leave.
- 15.5 A member whose fixed term contract expires and is not granted another term may subject to availability of funds proceed on Sabbatical leave to allow the member to adjust to a new role.

## 16. Study leave

- 16.1 In line with a philosophy of developing its human resources to their maximum capacity, the University shall grant reasonable periods of study leave to employees wishing to develop themselves in areas that are relevant to the University's activities.
- 16.2 Study leave with full pay on the basis of one day study leave for every day on which the employee has to sit for an examination may be granted, provided that in the opinion of the head of department:
- (a). It has the object to better equip the employee concerned for a career in the University.
  - (b). The field of study will address the university interests in full or in part.

16.3 In all the above cases, an examination time-table must be submitted to the Head of Department at least 3 weeks prior to writing of first paper, or 1 month if the period of absence will be more than 2 weeks, unless there are factors beyond the staff members control, for example, late issue of timetable by the institution.

16.4 If the study leave granted in terms of subparagraph 14.1 precedes and succeeds a day of rest (week end or holiday) or two or more consecutive days of rest, such day or days of rest, must be included when calculating the number of study leave days which may be granted to the employee.

16.5 An employee who studies part-time or by means of correspondence at a recognized educational institution and who, as a result of her/his studies, is required to be absent from her/his place of work, may be released from duty and be granted study leave on full pay.

16.6 Where any employee intends to proceed on study leave for a period of more than one day, the employee shall take half of the days as vacation leave, and the remaining half will be granted to her/his as study leave with the University approval.

16.7 Only tenured academic staff are eligible for study leave.

16.8 Heads of non-academic departments can recommend to the Vice Chancellor study leave for staff under their departments if in their opinion the study leave can address the issues set in 14.2.

## **17. Unpaid leave**

The University may grant vacation leave without pay, where an employee has no vacation leave accrued

## **18. General Provisions**

18.1 Any Saturday, Sunday or public holiday falling within a period of leave shall count as part of that period of leave.

18.2 A cash payment in lieu of ordinary leave which has been accumulated shall be made in the following circumstances: -

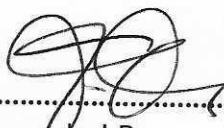
- (a). To members who resigns or is given notice of termination of his appointment;
- (b). To a member whose post is declared redundant;
- (c). To a member who is discharged on grounds of ill-health;
- (d). To a member who retires;
- (e). On the death of a member, either to his widow, or to such persons on behalf of his dependent children as the University may determine, or to his estate, or divided among them at the discretion of the University.
- (f). If disciplinary proceedings are instituted against a member payment may be suspended pending the result of the proceedings.

**19. Effective Date**

This Policy document shall take effect from the date it is approved by the MUASt Council and shall be read in conjunction with the applicable terms and conditions of service.

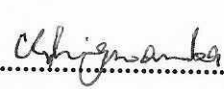
**20. Review of Policy**

and amendments to this Policy may be undertaken as and when necessary but at least once after every four years.

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 Recommended By

Date.....21/10/2024

**Professor Justice Nyamangara**  
**Vice Chancellor**

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 Approved By

Date.....21/10/2024

**Mrs. Constance Chigwamba**  
**Council Chairperson**  
**Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology**