

Policy Title:	MIE Career Break Policy
Description:	Policy outlining how staff may apply for career breaks and the guidelines around timelines for career breaks.
Author (Position):	Human Resources
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Approved By:	MIE Governing Body
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MIE Career Break Policy

1. Context

Marino Institute of Education (MIE) wishes to ensure that it maintains the highest possible standards in all its activities. This policy document aims to set out in easy-to-follow terms how to apply to be considered for a Career Break and to provide guidelines on timelines.

2. Purpose

To set out MIE's Policy with regard to career breaks.

3. Eligibility

Full-time or part-time members of staff employed on a permanent or contract of indefinite duration basis or staff on a fixed term contract, who have satisfactorily completed their probation, are eligible to apply for a career break.

4. Benefits

The objective of the scheme is to facilitate staff who wish to take career breaks in so far as practicable having regard to the operational needs of MIE.

5. Principles

- 5.1. A career break may be allowed for a variety of purposes including further education, domestic responsibilities, and appropriate research activity starting a business or a stay abroad.
- 5.2. Career breaks will not normally be granted for the purpose of taking up alternative employment unless the employment is specifically related to MIE's needs or is an integral but subsidiary arrangement essential to the individual's capacity to discharge the primary purpose of the career break.

6. Definitions

- 6.1. A career break shall consist of special leave without pay for a period of not less than one year and not more than five years.
- 6.2. The career break scheme does not form part of an employee's contract of employment. The scheme is concessionary and may be terminated or altered at the will of the Governing Body of MIE¹.

¹ See [Code of Governance](#) and [Matters Reserved for the Governing Body of MIE](#)

- 6.3. The granting of any [application and the duration of the special leave](#) (including in relation to any extension of the special leave) is at the complete discretion of MIE and will depend on the merits of the application and on the demands and requirements of MIE at the time of application.
- 6.4. Within the foregoing limitations, MIE will endeavour to facilitate staff as far as possible but refusal of some applications must be expected.
- 6.5. Staff returning to MIE after a career break will be re-assigned to their Department to a fillable vacancy at the appropriate grade within that Department. Delay in returning to duty is likely to arise only in exceptional cases.

7. Policy

- 7.1. Applications for career breaks should be made to the relevant Head of Department, with a copy to the Head of Human Resources (HR) at least 26 weeks before the desired start date, and not later than January 31st of the current academic year for commencement in the following academic year, by completing the attached [career break application form](#).
- 7.2. If approved, it will be passed to the President of MIE for their consideration and if approved by the President it will be brought to the Governing Body² at the earliest opportunity for consideration and final decision.
- 7.3. The granting of a career break is made by the Governing Body of MIE², subject to recommendation by the relevant Head of Department and by the President of MIE. The decision of the Governing Body² is final and will be communicated to the applicant in writing by HR as soon as practicable following the Governing Body's² decision.
- 7.4. In every case the staff member is required to notify in writing their Head of Department with a copy to the Head of HR not later than 16 weeks before expiry of their career break, to indicate whether or not they wish to apply for an extension, resume duty on expiry of the career break, or resign from MIE. Should a staff member wish to apply for an extension to career break they must re-apply within 16 weeks of their expected return to work date. The same criteria, application and approval process will apply. Career breaks including any extensions shall last no more than five years in total.

² See [Code of Governance](#) and [Matters Reserved for the Governing Body of MIE](#)

- 7.5. If the staff member fails to contact their Head of Department and HR before the expiry of their career break, they will be deemed to have resigned from their employment with MIE.
- 7.6. A career break career is unpaid leave therefore an individual's own pension contributions (if the applicant is a member of the pension scheme) cannot be deducted during this period. MIE's pension contribution to an individual's pension (if the applicant is a member of the MIE [pension](#) scheme) will be suspended for the duration of the entire career break. As such no contributions will be paid by MIE to an MIE pension member's pension fund for the duration of the career break.
- 7.7. Time-off for the career break will not be reckonable as service for incremental or other purposes. Cover for MIE's [illness benefit](#) and Death-in-Service benefit will be suspended for the duration of the career break. It is up to the employee to make their own arrangements for the provision of Death-in-Service Benefit and/or income continuance (disability pension cover) for the duration of the special leave period. Remission of tuition fees will be suspended for the duration of the career break unless there is specific agreement by MIE to do otherwise.
- 7.8. It is recommended that staff seek a full health assessment before taking a career break.

8. Responsibility

Responsibility for the maintenance of this policy rests with HR.

9. Related Documents

- 9.1. [Illness Policy](#)
- 9.2. [Code of Governance](#)
- 9.3. [Matters Reserved for the Governing Body of MIE](#)
- 9.4. [MIE Retirement Policy](#)

Appendix 1

Special Unpaid Leave for a Career Break Application Form

Section 1:

To be completed by the Applicant in full

Name of Applicant: _____ Staff Number: _____

Department: _____

Start Date of Career Break: _____ Return to Work date: _____

Duration of Career Break: _____

Any previous Career Breaks: _____ If Yes, for how long? _____

Purpose of the Career Break: _____

I agree to the terms & conditions as laid out in the MIE Career Break Policy:

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: _____

Section 2:

To be completed by Head of Department and Manager Human Resources

We recommend that _____ be granted a Career Break as outlined above

Signatures: _____ Date: _____

Please Print Names: _____

Is a replacement required for this post? Yes/No

If yes, please specify details _____

Section 3:

To be completed by the President of MIE.

I note and approve the above Career Break as specified above and approve the consequential filing of the vacancy as outline above (if applicable)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return to Human Resources