**Academic Returners Policy
Funding available for academics returning from extended leave**

As part of our commitment to creating a fair and inclusive working environment for all, the University is proud to launch our [Academic Returners Policy](https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=68909) which offers funding of up to £8000 for academic colleagues returning from an extended leave period (of 6 months or more).

We recognise that when colleagues take extended leave it can be challenging to maintain or re-establish academic research and educational scholarship activity when they return to work, which can have a detrimental impact on career progression.

This policy aims to support academic colleagues (on Teaching and Research and Teaching and Scholarship contracts whereby contractual duties include educational scholarship and research activities). The policy is inclusive of all genders and reasons for taking extended leave (including sickness, maternity, shared parental leave, adoption or a career break).

The funding can support colleagues to develop and focus on their research and educational scholarship which is likely to have been impacted by the leave, enabling them to maintain their career trajectory and meet their professional goals and aspirations and the goals of the University.

The available funding consists of:

* Funding of up to £8,000 to help prioritise research and educational scholarship activity to provide short-term cover (the minimum duration of cover will be 1 semester, 0.5 FTE support, but Faculties can agree a longer period up to 6 months but within the £8,000 funding limit).
* Within the Faculty of Biology Medicine and Health specific funds for research, scholarship, professional development and career profiling raising activity are additionally available to apply for. The Faculties of Science and Engineering and Humanities have other specific funding support for such activity. Employees should contact their Line Manager or Head of School to discuss other specific funding opportunities further.

The funding is designed to be flexible for colleagues and their line managers in arranging a best-fit for the individual’s research or scholarship and the cover and support required by the School.

**Quotes from previous applicants**

 *‘Returning to academic and scholarly work after a period of parental leave is extremely daunting. This scheme provides vital time and space for academic thought and writing and has the potential to keep more returning parents in academic careers’.*

*‘The best thing that has happened to me in the Uni’.*

*'Hugely beneficial to me... I have been able to submit one internal and three small external research grants, … and have another larger grant in progress. I’m delighted to say my applications this year have been successful... These are my first wins after two years … they are a huge boost to my confidence and hopefully the longevity of my research career.’*

* **Eligibility**

This scheme is available for academic employees (on Teaching and Research and Teaching and Scholarship contracts whereby contractual duties include educational scholarship and research activities) who have been on, are currently on, or are due to commence a period of leave which is over a 6-month continuous period.

Employees on a fixed-term contract should hold a contract of employment for a sufficient period and no less than 12 months beyond the date of their application to permit the funds to be spent.

**Application process**

* Eligible employees are required to complete the [Academic Returner Application Form](https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=68893)
* **Head of Department’s and Heads of School** are responsible for approving the application form. If approval is not granted to the applicant the Head of Department/Head of School must ensure that the reason is confirmed via the application form.
* The final outcome of the application will be confirmed via the **Head of Department/Head of School Operations** to the applicant within one month of the application being made.
* **Evaluation**

As a condition of the funding, successful applicants are required to complete an [Academic Returners Three Month Evaluation Survey](https://www.qualtrics.manchester.ac.uk/jfe/form/SV_eOKwCle1iJ5q1L0) outlining the benefits of the policy, how the funding was utilised and how the funding supported their career advancement specifically highlighting any outputs and impacts such as publications, grants, senior roles promotion, wellbeing benefits etc.

 **More Information**

For more information read the [Academic Returners Policy](https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=68909).