

## RESEARCH COUNCIL RETIREMENT POLICY

### Management Guidance

This document provides additional guidance for managers, employees and HR in the handling of retirement. It includes the Research Council's Retirement Policy which is contractual. The additional guidance, which is shaded, is not intended to be legally binding and does not form part of the Retirement Policy.

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## RESEARCH COUNCIL RETIREMENT POLICY

### Policy Statement

The Research Council is committed to creating a positive and inclusive environment, respecting equality and diversity and encouraging good relations between people of all ages. The Research Council recognises the valuable contribution made by employees of all ages including the skills and experience of older employees, and will work towards eliminating prejudice and discrimination irrespective of age.

The Retirement Policy sets out the Research Council's approach to the retirement of employees. The Research Council recognises that employees are no longer required to retire at a specific date.

The Retirement Policy has been agreed with the Trade Union Side and complies with statutory legislation as well as ACAS best practice.

This policy applies to all Research Council employees of a temporary and permanent nature. This includes those employed on permanent or temporary contracts, and for the avoidance of doubt, does not include visiting workers, students or those workers provided by a third party agency.

The UK Shared Business Services Ltd (SBS) provides HR Services across the Research Councils. However some employees are deployed at establishments/facilities/ships that do not access services from SBS. In these cases references to the SBS or System (Employee Self Service) will not apply and employees should refer to their Research Council HR team for assistance.

Whether a worker is deemed to be a worker or employee is not always clear under employment legislation. In cases where managers or individuals have any doubt as to whether the Retirement policy and procedure should apply, advice should be sought from the Research Council HR team.

### 1. Principles

- 1.1. The Research Council does not operate a compulsory retirement age for its employees.
- 1.2. Employees may indicate a date at which they plan to voluntarily retire from employment with the Research Council (an indicated retirement date). This informal indication is not binding on the employee.
- 1.3. The Research Council currently offers retirement planning courses which can be booked through the System.

### 2. Workplace discussions

- 2.1. Line managers should have regular workplace discussions with all their employees (at least annually), about their development needs, future plans and expectations in the short, medium, and long term. This will normally form part of the annual Appraisal and Personal

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Development Review (APDR) procedure but need not necessarily be limited to this process.

- 2.2. A record of any such workplace discussion should be kept on file and a copy given to the employee. Again, this could form part of the formal APDR record.

Whatever the age of the employee, discussing future aims and aspirations during an appraisal discussion can help the line manager and the employee identify development needs. It provides an opportunity to discuss the future work requirements and how these impact on the employee.

Objectives, targets and work expectations do not need to be identical for all employees. However, they should not be different for reasons of age or other protected characteristics unless it can be justified. For further information please refer to the Research Council Appraisal and Personal Development Review (APDR) Policy and Procedure.

If an employee indicates that they would like to retire, the meeting can be used to discuss a retirement date. However the employee cannot be required to agree a date. They can expect to continue working as long as they are competent in the role and working to the required standard. As with all employees, any failure to meet the required standard will need to be managed under the Research Council Capability Policy.

### **3. Retirement procedure**

- 3.1. Employees who wish to retire are encouraged to provide written notice to their line manager as far in advance as possible. All employees are advised to give 3 months' notice to enable arrangement of pension payments. If less than 3 months is given payment of pension may be impacted.
- 3.2. Upon receipt of an employee's notice to retire, the manager will notify SBS who will then write to the employee to acknowledge receipt and confirm the intended retirement date.
- 3.3. Once the employee has given notice to retire, the manager should meet with the employee to discuss arrangements for succession and handover plans.
- 3.4. Should the employee subsequently change their mind, the Research Council is under no obligation to agree to withdrawal of an employee's notice to retire once they have given written notice.

### **4. Pension benefits**

- 4.1 The SBS will write to the employee approximately eight months before their pensionable age informing them of their ability to take up their pension entitlement.
- 4.2 If an employee does not respond it will be assumed that they intend to continue working until advising otherwise, giving the required contractual notice.

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### 5. Flexible retirement Options

- 5.1 Employees who are interested in making a phased transition from work to retirement may be able to take partial retirement, whereby the pension is drawn and the employee continues to work on a part time basis. This is subject to management agreement and the relevant pension scheme rules. Decisions on whether requests can be accommodated will be based on business needs.
- 5.2 Other flexible working options are available to increase flexibility for employees approaching retirement. Opportunities to work flexibly are at management discretion. Further details are contained within the Research Council's Flexible Working Arrangements Policy.

### 6. Policy review

- 6.1 This policy will be regularly reviewed to incorporate any legislation changes. The TU may request that a policy is reviewed.

### 7. Amendment History

Version	Date	Comments/Changes