

Message from Peter Brook, Interim Director of HR

With Trinity term now behind us, I know that for many of us this summer will, again, be busier than usual with work already underway for Michaelmas term. Over the last year we have all had to adapt to many challenges whilst continuing to deliver world-class teaching and research. I hope that despite these pressures you have the chance to take some time off over the summer period and enjoy a very well-deserved break.

New: Menopause in the workplace guidance

Menopause is a natural stage of life. All stages and types of the menopause are different and symptoms can vary from person to person, and range from very mild to severe and can also fluctuate. For many people symptoms last about 4 years, but in some cases symptoms can last a lot longer. Managing the effects of the menopause at work is therefore important.

Until recently menopausal symptoms were generally considered to be simply hot flushes and mood swings. Whilst these can be difficult enough to manage in the workplace, it is now recognised that many other symptoms may be attributable to menopause. Some of these symptoms can impact on ability to function effectively at work, including:

- Anxiety or low mood
- Difficulty concentrating (often referred to as brain fog) and memory problems
- Night sweats and difficulty sleeping
- Aching joints
- Palpitations

The University has new [guidance on menopause in the workplace](#) with information for individuals who might be experiencing negative effects of menopause in the workplace, and for the line managers who support them.

Alongside the guidance there are links to some carefully selected external and internal resources.

We are planning some formal launch and awareness raising activities and communications to coincide with World Menopause month in October – more details to follow.

In the meantime the HR Policy team are compiling some case studies from colleagues around the University. If you have experience you would be willing to share, please [get in touch](#) - we would love to hear from you.

Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) 10 year review

The 10-year review of the EJRA has now concluded and the Review Group's report is available [here](#). Having considered the Review Group's recommendations, Council is proposing to Congregation changes to the coverage and age of the EJRA, in summary that:

- grades 8-10 and clinical equivalents and ALC6 should be removed from the EJRA with effect from the date of the Congregation decision; and
- the age at which the EJRA is set for those staff for whom it is retained (Statutory Professors, Associate Professors and RSIV and clinical equivalents) should be raised by one year to 30 September preceding the 70th birthday, with effect from 1 October 2023.

Draft legislation will be published in the *Gazette* on 21 July 2022. Decisions on the proposals will be made by Congregation in Michaelmas term 2022 and if they are approved transition arrangements will be put in place to ensure fairness in implementing the changes.

Fit Notes: change to who can issue

From 1 July 2022 the rules on statements of fitness for work ('fit notes') have changed.

In addition to doctors these can now be issued by nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists and physiotherapists. [Find out more](#).

Fit notes should be issued after an assessment and cannot be issued simply on request or 'over the counter'. The issuer will still be required to specify any adjustments which might help facilitate the return to work e.g. phased return, amended duties or hours, if they choose the 'may be fit for work' option.

Find out more about the changes to Fit Notes on the [Gov.uk website](#)

Apprenticeships

The Annual Apprenticeship awards are a great way to celebrate all of our amazing apprentices and what they have achieved throughout their apprenticeships so far.

This year's awards ceremony is taking place on **Thursday 8th September 18:00-21:00 at the Oxford University, Museum of Natural History.** [Register here.](#)



Researchers: Concordat Action Plan

The Concordat Action Plan to support the Career Development of Researchers outlines the steps that the University is taking to support researchers in their career development to identify and achieve their career ambitions.

Have a look at the University's [action plan](#) and the [current activity](#) on this issue.

If you are interested in a conversation with either the Researcher Hub or the Research Strategy and Policy Unit please email. researchsupport@admin.ox.ac.uk.

CONCORDAT TO SUPPORT THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCHERS:
ACTION PLAN (2022-2025)

Work+Family Space – Supporting you and your family

The [Work+Family Space](#) benefits and resources are available to support you and your entire family. If you are looking for support during the summer for childcare then please see the [webpage for resources and Holiday Club discounts](#). There are discounts for Camp Beaumont, Fit for Sport and Supercamps.

New webinar sessions for next term:

- Workplace Happiness: Why, what & how? – 21/9/22 12.30pm
- Ditching the Guilt: Proactive solutions for work-life balance – 19/10/22 12.30pm
- Dealing with Bullying, Gaslighting & Intimidation – 17/11/22 12.30pm

Registration is free for University employees: find out more and register for [Work+Family Space](#). You just need your employee number (from your payslip or HR self-service, NB it is **not** the number on your University card) and your SSO (eg admn1234).

Annual leave

University employees get generous annual leave entitlements, and time away from the workplace is essential for wellbeing and work-life balance.

Therefore, the University's policy is that staff may not be paid in lieu of accrued, untaken holiday in any circumstances except where they are leaving the University completely.

If you will be transferring into a new role in a new department you should discuss any outstanding holiday entitlement with your current department as early as possible.

Wherever possible, this should be used up before the transfer takes place. Exceptionally, and only with the agreement of **all** parties, the balance may be transferred to the new employing department.

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