Aston University

Using Aston Staff Portal

Annual Leave General Guidance

Use of Aston Staff Portal

Annual leave is booked through Aston Staff Portal. Employees are responsible for requesting leave and ensuring their leave record is kept up to date. Managers are responsible for approving/rejecting leave.

For the majority of the University, employees will be using Portal to request annual leave from their managers. However, in a small minority of areas, managers will be inputting annual leave into Portal on behalf of their employees.

Booking Leave

Annual leave must be approved by line managers and approval is subject to operational requirements. In some departments there may be times of the year when annual leave cannot be taken due to business needs.

Please refer to the full annual leave guidance for more details. http://www.aston.ac.uk/staff/hr/benefits/holiday-leave/annual-leave-guidelines.

Approving/Rejecting Leave

Employees are entitled to their leave, and managers should only reject requests for good reason, for example:

- Insufficient cover within the office/service.
- Critical business period e.g. Graduation.
- Number of days exceeds quota for the period.
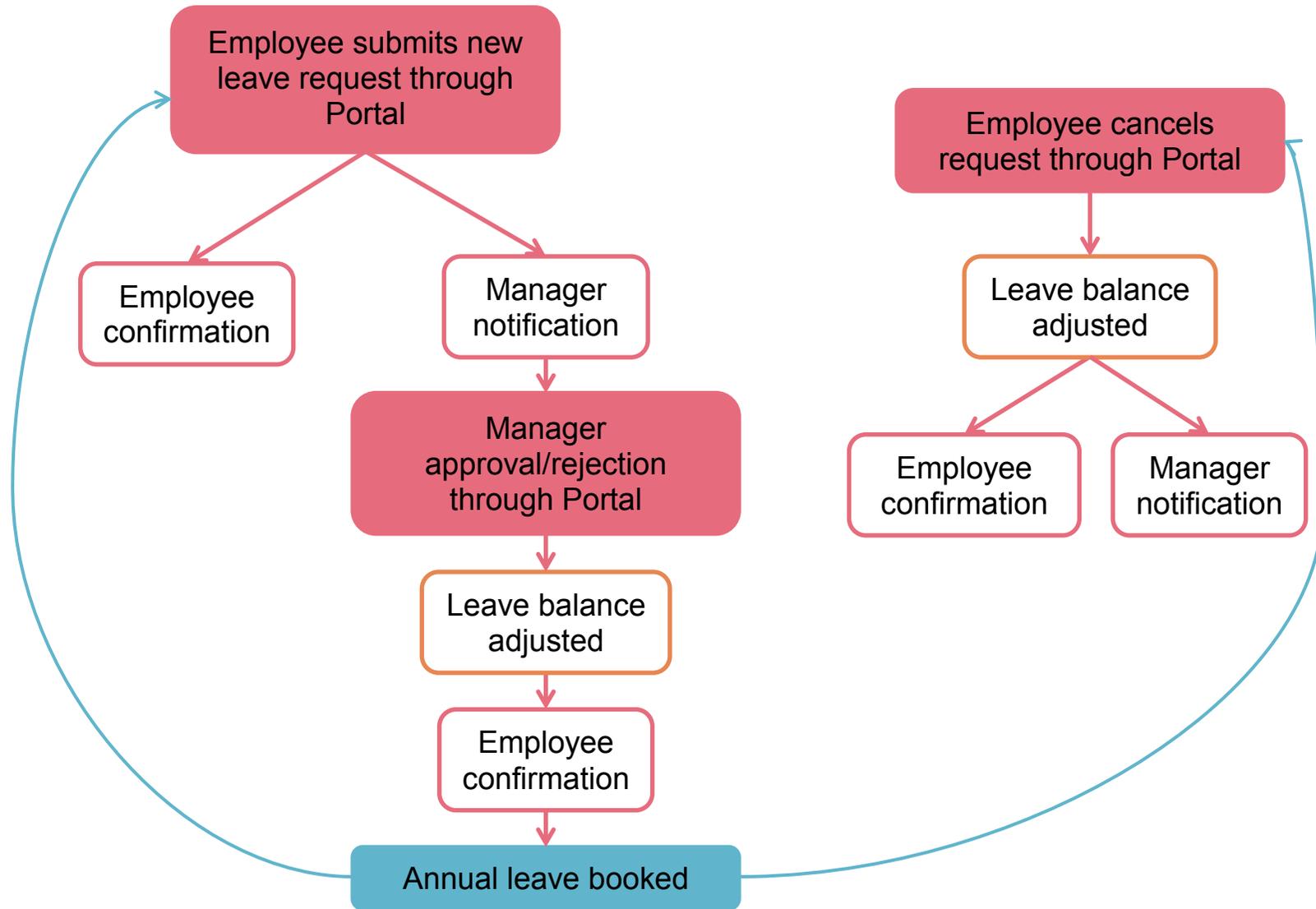
Annual Leave years

The standard leave year for academic staff and other related staff is 1 September to 30 August each year. The standard leave year for support staff, which includes research staff, is 1 April to 31 March each year.

Annual Leave Entitlements

For annual leave entitlements, please refer to the HR intranet for more information on this. http://www.aston.ac.uk/staff/hr/benefits/holiday-leave/annual-leave-guidelines.

Process Diagram for requesting/approving annual leave through Portal.

Annual Leave Balance in Portal

Portal will display an annual leave **balance** for employees. This balance will be based on:

- Whether the employee is an academic (September) or member of support staff (April)
- What grade the employee is
- Whether the employee has a defined/regular working pattern (annual leave in days or hours depending on if full or part time) or an undefined/irregular working pattern (annual leave always displayed in hours).

For example, where an employee:

- Is a support member of staff
- Is a grade 5
- Has a defined working pattern of Monday – Wednesday 7.3 hours each day, part time, 0.6 FTE

They will have an annual leave balance for 1 April – 31 March each year of 166.44 hours (including Public Holidays and University Closure days).

Portal will always show the <u>current</u> annual leave years balance. However, leave can still be booked into the next annual leave year, it just won't deduct from the employees balance.

Working patterns

A working pattern describes the number of hours per day and which days of the week an employee works. For example, Monday – Friday 7.3 hours per day (a standard week) or Monday to Wednesday 5 hours per day.

All employees need their working pattern set in the Core HR system in order for absences to be recorded accurately against them. HR have undergone an exercise to capture all working patterns and, where these have been notified to us, these have been entered into the system.

If, when requesting or approving leave, you notice that the number of hours/days do not seem right, it may be that the working pattern has not been set up, or it may have changed since we last collected this information. Please ensure that you inform your HR Administrator if this is the case.

Working patterns fall into one of two categories – regular or irregular.

Defined or 'Regular' Working Patterns

Where employees work the same hours/days each week, or over a set number of weeks, HR describe these as defined or 'regular' working patterns. We know what days and how many hours per day you work. This applies to the majority of full and part time staff at the university. <u>Leave for these staff should be recorded in periods, and in full or half days.</u>

Full time employees <u>should **not** book annual leave on Public Holidays or University Closure days</u>, as the system will count these as annual leave days, and take them out of the annual leave entitlement.

Part time employees should book annual leave on Public Holidays or University Closure days that fall on days they are scheduled to work as they have been given additional entitlement to do this.

Undefined or 'Irregular' Working Patterns

Where employees work shifts, variable or annualised hours, HR describes these as undefined or 'irregular' working patterns. Human Resources do not know what days and how many hours per day you are planning to work for any week.

This applies to some academics, researchers and support staff where any day of the week could be worked, and this is not always the same day/s each week or over a set number of weeks. This also applies to shift workers who need to swap shifts regularly with colleagues to maintain cover.

The unpredictable nature of these irregular working patterns means that is not possible to maintain accurate work patterns in the HR system. In these circumstances they will be managed locally.

Leave for these staff should be recorded in hours, on a day by day basis.

For example, if an employee is taking leave from one Monday and returns to work the next Monday but they were only scheduled to work on Tuesday – Friday for that week. They would need to request leave for Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday individually giving the number of hours they would have worked on each of those days.

These employees **must** book annual leave on Public Holidays or University Closure days that they were due to work, as these days need to be taken out of the annual leave entitlement.

I'm not sure if HR have my correct working pattern, what should I do?

If you are in doubt about what type of working pattern you or your employees have in the HR System, or think that it may be incorrect, please contact your HR administrator with the following details:

Employee Name:	
Job title:	
Effective Date of change:	
Number of hours worked Monday:	
Number of hours worked Tuesday:	
Number of hours worked Wednesday:	
Number of hours worked Thursday:	
Number of hours worked Friday:	
Number of hours worked Saturday:	
Number of hours worked Sunday:	

Frequently asked questions

1. What happens if my manager is off sick and can't approve my leave in Portal?
You should seek approval of your annual leave from whoever is looking after your manager's workload while they are away.

If your manager is on long-term sick the department can request for a designated manager to receive interim access for Portal whilst they are away.

2. What happens if I change my hours/FTE during the annual leave year?
Your annual leave balance will be adjusted accordingly, and you will be able to see this in Portal.

If you are going from part time to full time working, your balance will remain in hours for the current annual leave year. At the start of the next leave year this will be altered to display in days.

If you are going from full time to part time working, your balance will be re-calculated into hours for the current leave year, and will remain in hours for subsequent years.

3. Can I carry over leave from one year to another?
The annual leave guidelines state that:

"Entitlement shall not be carried forward to the subsequent leave year except in very exceptional circumstances as may be approved by the Dean/Head of Department. If a carry forward of leave is approved, employees may carry up to a maximum of 5 days leave from one leave year to the next, to be used within the next month."

Managers can add carry over annual leave for their employees in Portal.

4. What happens if I fall ill when I am on annual leave?
If you are unfortunate enough to fall ill over a period of annual leave, and wish to reclaim your annual leave days, you will need to contact your HR Administrator and:

- Provide a medical certificate to cover the period of sickness.
- Confirm the period of annual leave you would like to reclaim.

HR will amend the system on your behalf, and change your annual leave to sickness. You will also need to inform your line manager.

5. What do I need to do about Public Holiday/University Closure days?

Full time staff – You will need to ensure that you do not book annual leave on/over PH/UC days. If you do, these days will be taken out of your entitlement. For example, if you are having the week before and week after Easter off as annual leave, you will need to book this in two periods so to exclude Good Friday/Easter Monday/Tuesday.

Part time staff and full time staff on 'irregular' working patterns – You will need to ensure that you book annual on PH/UC days so that they come out of your bookable leave entitlement. For example, if you are having the week before and week after Easter off as annual leave, you can book this as one continuous period.

6. How do I book 2 ½ days leave?
You will need to book this in two periods through Portal– one for the two days, and one for the half day.

7. Can I book leave into the next annual leave year?
You can book annual leave in the next leave year, but this will not show in your balance until the start of the new leave year – Portal will only ever display the balance for the current leave year.

8. I am leaving the University and have outstanding annual leave, what do I do?
For employees leaving part-way through the annual leave year, their entitlement to annual leave will be pro-rated from the start of the current holiday year up to their leaving date.

You should aim to take all outstanding leave prior to leaving the University. If you are unable to do this, your manager will need to request payment of any outstanding leave from HR.

9. I am leaving the University and have taken too much annual leave, what happens now?
If an employee leaves the University having taken more than the accumulated holiday entitlement for the current holiday year then the University will make a deduction in respect of the excess holiday taken from any final payment to the employee.

Who to Contact

Your **manager** should be your first point of contact for all annual leave queries.

You may also wish to contact your **HR Administrator** with general queries concerning annual leave or your work pattern.

All current HR contacts are available on the HR website.
http://www.aston.ac.uk/staff/hr/hr-contacts/human-resources/

If you are having difficulty **accessing or using Aston Staff Portal**, please email astonstaffportal@aston.ac.uk.

If you have forgotten your **Aston network username or password**, contact the ISA Helpdesk isa_helpdesk@aston.ac.uk.