**University-wide Academic Voluntary Severance Scheme 2025**

**Introduction**

Given the current challenges facing the Higher Education sector, it is essential that the University continues to review how we deliver our business and that we take every opportunity to innovate, improve and further transform our operating model.  The University is therefore launching a University-wide Academic Voluntary Severance Scheme. Details of the scheme and how to apply are shown below.

**Staff Eligible to Apply for Voluntary Severance**

The scheme will be open to Academic staff who, at the date the scheme is launched:

* are permanent employees of the University including academic staff on fractional contracts
* have a minimum of 2 years continuous service
* are not on a fixed term or zero hours contract (part time hourly paid lecturers are on a zero hours contract and therefore not eligible to apply).
* have not resigned and are not in the process of being appointed to another post within or external to the University.
* have not formally expressed their intention to retire by submitting their notice.
* have not been given notice of leaving by the University.

**Voluntary Severance Scheme Principles**

All applications for voluntary severance will be considered by a Panel comprising of members of the University’s Executive Team (UET) using the following principles:

1. The post vacated will not be replaced.
2. The total cost of the severance package must normally be recouped within one year of the date of leaving.
3. Where staff hold two contracts with the University, they will not normally be allowed to take voluntary severance unless they leave both contracts.
4. The application facilitates efficiency and/or performance improvements, cultural change or restructuring of a work area, including reinvestment in staff with particular skills and experience.
5. All those applying for voluntary severance should take any previously booked annual leave as planned before their leave date. Where it is not possible for a VS leaver to take all their accrued leave before their leaving date, a payment will be made in lieu of this leave. If the annual leave taken is in excess of the accrued annual leave entitlement, the excess amount will be deducted from the final salary payment.
6. Anyone approved to leave on voluntary severance will not be permitted to return to work at the University in any capacity for a period of three years following their departure.

Whilst consultation with the relevant Dean regarding any applications for their School is not a formal part of the process, UET may consult the relevant Dean to inform their decisions where necessary.

**Voluntary Severance Payment**

The Voluntary Severance payment for all staff will be based on nine months’ gross salary. This will include any payment in lieu of notice not worked (PILON). The nine months’ voluntary severance payment would therefore comprise of two elements:

1. **The PILON payment** (This payment will be subject to normal tax and NI deductions and is based on the individual’s contractual notice.)

AND

1. **The remaining payment** after PILON. (This payment will be tax free up to £30,000, any amount over £30,000 will be subject to normal tax and NI deductions.)

All those offered voluntary severance will be required to sign a settlement agreement and further details of this process will be provided to relevant staff at the point at which any offers are made.

**How to Apply**

If you wish to apply for voluntary severance, please click on the link below where you will find an application to complete online:

<https://url.tees.ac.uk/url/10657>

Please note if you are not in one of the staff groups to whom this scheme applies, you will not be able to access the application process from the link above.

Any applications made at this stage can be withdrawn at any point up to the individual signing the settlement agreement.

**Latest Leaving Date**

It is intended that wherever possible the leaving date applicable for those leaving on voluntary severance will be **Thursday 31 July 2025**. However, in exceptional circumstances, UET reserve the right to approve an application based on a later leaving date to support University operations.

**Voluntary Severance Scheme Timeline**

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| Voluntary Severance Scheme Opens | 17 June 2025 |
| Deadline for VS applications | 6 July 2025 midnight |
| UET Panel meet to consider the applications | 7 July 2025 |
| VS Outcomes communicated to all applicants | 10 July 2025 |
| Deadline for relevant staff to confirm acceptance of the offer. | 18 July 2025 |
| Deadline for return of Settlement Agreements | 31 July 2025 |
| Latest leaving date for VS leavers unless an alternative later date has been approved. | 31 July 2025 |

**If you have any queries regarding the scheme, please contact** [**hroperations@tees.ac.uk**](mailto:hroperations@tees.ac.uk) **.**

**Alternatively, you may wish to raise your query with your union representative.**