EXAMPLE LETTER FOR EMPLOYEE TAKING A CAREER BREAK

Dear <Name>

Further to your written application requesting a career break, I have pleasure in confirming that Birkbeck is prepared to grant your request subject to your agreement to the following terms:

i. The career break will commence on <date> and will end on <date>.

ii. You will benefit from a continued contractual relationship by being retained as an employee of Birkbeck, with the right to maintain unbroken service and a job (or redundancy if a job is unavailable) at the end of the career break.

iii. During the career break all remuneration will cease including employer and employee pension contributions.

iv. During your career break period, employer’s pension contributions will be frozen. However, you may elect to pay yours and the employer’s pension contribution to maintain continuity of service.

v. Holidays will continue to accrue during the career break but you must agree to take the accrued holiday days either at the beginning or end of the absence period and may not elect otherwise.

vi. Death in Service benefits if applicable before the leave period, will continue throughout the career break but the College’s insurers must be informed if you intend to visit high risk countries and/or participate in any dangerous sports or activities (as defined by the insurers) during your absence.

vii. It should be noted that all other benefits will be discontinued for the duration of the absence.

viii. You must supply full details of contact addresses and telephone numbers in order to enable the College to remain in contact, in case of emergencies that may occur during the career break.

ix. (You may not work for any other employer during your absence without prior written authorisation from the Human Resources team).

x. You will be provided with a mentor with whom you are encouraged to maintain regular contact. This will be <Name>.

xi. You must provide a minimum of four weeks’ notice of confirmation of your intended return date and you must return on the date originally agreed as terminating the career break. Failure to return by the due date may be potentially considered to be gross misconduct and,
subject to an investigation, may lead to your dismissal from the College in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.

xii. Upon return, if your previous job is not available, every effort will be made to provide a suitable alternative opportunity including redeployment where appropriate and acceptable.

xiii. Upon a successful return, length of service and all terms and conditions will be reinstated.

xiv. Upon return, the same salary (plus any cost of living increases), will apply as at the start of the career break, irrespective of any salary increases, which may have occurred during your absence. Your salary will not be reviewed until the next review cycle following your return.

You are required to print and sign two copies of this letter as confirmation that you agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement and return one copy (preferably electronically).

I hope that you will find the time spent on your career break a worthwhile and rewarding experience and, on behalf of the College, wish you all the best during your period of absence. We look forward to your safe return to work. During your period of absence your line manager will endeavour to make sure that you are kept up-to-date with the College matters of interest to you.

Yours Sincerely,

<Name>

For and on behalf of Birkbeck
cc Line Manager

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Employee’s Acceptance:

I have read, understood and agree to be bound by the terms of this letter for the period of my career break from Birkbeck. I understand that my failure to return on the agreed date will be classed as unauthorised absence, which constitutes a gross misconduct offence, which may lead to my summary dismissal from the College’s employment in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.

Signed:

Print name:

Date: