

Recommendations for Academic (Study) Leave and Warwick Academic Returners Fellowships (WARF) Applications: Teaching and Learning Focused

Academic leave is intended for colleagues to work on substantial projects, sufficiently large that the work cannot be completed alongside usual work commitments. Applicants need to be able to demonstrate that the proposed work warrants academic leave rather than a temporary reallocation of some duties. All staff on level FP7 and above regardless of contract are eligible to apply for academic leave.¹ Colleagues may also apply to the Warwick Academic Returners Fellowship (WARF) scheme.

This document focuses on recommendations for colleagues applying for teaching and learning focused academic leave or the WARF scheme. Nevertheless, some advice may be relevant to academic leave and WARF applications more generally. Note that any academic colleague can apply for a teaching and learning focused academic leave, such periods of leave are not exclusively relevant for colleagues on teaching focused contracts.²

Below, a number of areas of potential focus for teaching focused applications are suggested. The individual suggestions for areas of work may not be sufficiently substantial to warrant academic leave unless put forward as part of a set of proposed works. Applicants are advised to consider how their proposed projects fit with the university strategic directions/themes/priorities such as those highlighted in the University of Warwick Education Strategy.³ There are currently four such themes in the education strategy and we organise suggestions according to these themes initially.

Note that proposed work should directly benefit the applicant's department / faculty / the university as well as the applicant. Applicants should also consider potential benefits for applicants' external, national and international, networks. Applications may be comparative in nature.

¹ FP7 is associated with a Senior Teaching Fellow / Assistant Professor at the University of Warwick.


² Entitlement to academic leave is accrued at the rate of one term for every six terms taught. For teaching focused colleagues the accrual date started in September 2018. This means that anyone on a teaching focused contract at STF and above who was employed in September 2018 will have accumulated 9 terms of service in September 2021 and is therefore eligible to apply for one term of academic leave.

³ <https://warwick.ac.uk/about/strategy/education/detail/strategicdirections/>

Education Strategy Theme	Work Suggestions
Disciplinary Excellence	Programme substantial design/redesign Module substantial design/redesign Textbook writing Teaching resources creation Pedagogy research
Interdisciplinarity	Programme design/redesign Module design/redesign
Internationalisation	Programme design/redesign Development of resources to support recruitment
Student Research	Development of resources to foster research led teaching

Further Key Themes	Work Suggestions
Student Engagement	<p>Development of engagement strategies as cohorts change in size and nature</p> <p>Development of student engagement resources</p> <p>Development of resources to foster student wellbeing</p>
Education for Sustainable Development	<p>Creation of resources to support sustainability in the curriculum</p>
Enterprise	<p>Work with communities and regional organisations</p> <p>Work with employers and alumni on careers resources</p> <p>Work with cultural organisations</p>
Innovation	<p>Development of resources to support online; blended; hybrid and hyflex learning⁴</p> <p>Development of online; blended; hybrid and hyflex programmes</p>
Equality; Diversity and Inclusivity	<p>Decolonisation of the curriculum</p> <p>Attainment gap research and strategies</p> <p>Development of outreach resources</p> <p>Development of resources to support widening participation</p> <p>Development of resources to meet Athena SWAN challenges</p> <p>Development of accessible resources</p>

⁴ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/building-a-taxonomy-for-digital-learning.pdf>



The application forms for academic leave and WARF ask applicants to complete a short statement outlining the objectives of the academic leave and detailing publications or other outputs. At the end of the academic leave or WARF period applicants will need to complete a short report summarising whether the objectives claimed were met.

Note that the ability to apply for academic leave or WARF does not mean that it will be granted as there are limits on the numbers of colleagues who may be absent at any one time. However, applicants should expect to receive feedback on when they might expect to get academic leave or WARF and whether they need to modify any of their objectives.

WIHEA Teaching Reward and Recognition Learning Circle

August 2022