

1. Policy Statement

At NHSBT, there are times where the use of secondments and fixed term contracts are necessary and appropriate. We recognise the value of secondments in increasing your knowledge, abilities and skills through broadening your experience, while providing us with a more flexible and responsive workforce. Our commitment to *inclusion* across race, gender, age, religion, identity, and experience drives us forward every day.

This policy applies to all employees recruited on a Fixed Term contract (including Apprentices) and those who may be seconded internally, to the wider NHS or to an external organisation. In addition, there may be times when employees from other organisations are seconded to us.

Managers are encouraged to think broadly and creatively and be open to considering how to support employees wishing to take up a temporary post on a secondment. Any application must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

2. The Process

Should a manager identify a short term, non-permanent need, they will need to consider how best this can be achieved including:

- Offering a temporary change in duties or increase in responsibilities to support an individual's Personal Development Plan where they have a specific knowledge or development requirement
- Creation of a short-term role to back fill another secondment
- Creation of a role to support a specified project
- Consideration of whether the internal recruitment process failed to find an appropriate candidate
- Consideration of whether it has been established that there are not an appropriate number of existing employees with the skills required

Manager

Subject to the above considerations, should you establish a temporary vacancy does exist for such a role, the post will need to be advertised. To start this process, gain the relevant authorisation and then complete a [Recruitment Request](#). On receipt, Recruitment will contact you to arrange a commissioning meeting.

Employee

Should you wish to apply for a temporary vacancy, you **should speak with your manager as they need to support your application**. You may consider an application if you believe that the advertised opportunity will provide you with the skills and experience identified in your Personal Development Plan. If you are a substantive employee, and you apply for a temporary position, this will normally be treated as a secondment to the department where the vacancy exists.

Agreement to any Secondment will be discretionary, applied fairly and equitably, and subject to:

- operational requirements
- the role
- its relevance to NHSBT
- its value to your career path within NHSBT and the wider NHS
- the NHSBT recruitment and selection process and/or external recruitment processes (if applicable)
- your ability to undertake a specific task or project
- the ability to backfill a post during your absence

SECONDMENT

Secondments will have a fixed time limit of up to 24 months, with the exception of Clinical Research roles where secondment timescales are aligned to the duration of funding for the research carried out. There may be a very few, and exceptional, circumstances where the secondment may need to have an extension beyond the 24 months, to complete a piece of work for example. In these circumstances, the decision to extend must be supported by the relevant Operational Assistant Director and the People and Culture Partner. Your substantive post will remain open for your right to return during the 24-month period, although it should be acknowledged by both parties that some duties and tasks may have changed in line with operational requirements and should there be any formal organisational changes, you have the right to consultation on this

Before any secondment can start, there will be a meeting with the host manager, your current manager before the secondment (seconding manager) and yourself to ensure all variations are considered and confirmed.

NB. The seconding manager and host manager may be the same person.

Both managers should note that it is important for both of you to maintain regular contact on how the secondment is progressing to ensure that the needs of both departments are fully met. Equally, the employee should also ensure that they maintain appropriate contact, which should be agreed, with the seconding manager.

Prior to the end of the secondment, there will be a review with the host manager; your current manager before your secondment (seconding manager) and yourself to consider whether:

- the specific task or project has been completed
- the substantive post holder has returned or is about to return to their post
- an extension to the secondment is required
- the post has become permanent, and you may wish to apply for the position
- you will return to your substantive or alternative post

The outcome of discussions at the outset of the secondment and prior to your return and agreed actions will be confirmed to you in writing.

If your secondment is extended beyond 24 months, you would expect to return to a role at your original Band, performing similar duties within a similar location(s). However, we cannot guarantee that you will return to the post held immediately prior to your secondment. Any discussions or decisions around extending secondments beyond 24 months should be documented in a detailed outcome letter to all involved parties, outlining the rationale, timeline for the extension and the expectation in terms of returning to previous or similar roles.

To ensure that you continue to be paid appropriately for whichever role you will be carrying out, the seconding manager must complete any necessary contractual changes (See Employee Changes in People First).

Your secondment may be ended by either party before the agreed date with 4 weeks' notice in writing, outlining the reason for terminating the agreement. This may be:

- by the host manager if there is no longer a requirement for the post or if the substantive post holder returns early
- Should you choose to return to your substantive post, firstly you should discuss this with the seconding manager to enable them to facilitate your return
- The seconding manager requires you to return to your substantive post, with valid and justifiable reasons.

Managers should note that anyone on secondment should continue to be considered as part of your establishment.

External Secondments

If you have been successful at interview with an external body, your manager will discuss the proposals and funding arrangements with their Director and, where necessary, with the external body prior to any secondment agreement. You will remain on our payroll. Seconding managers are responsible for ensuring that the details of the secondment are discussed and confirmed in writing with the secondee.

Secondments in to NHSBT

For the same reasons outlined above, it is possible that employees from other organisations may join us for a short period of time. Such arrangements require an agreement of funding between the seconding organisation and NHSBT as hosts. Should you have any enquiry from an external organisation or an application from someone who works for a different organisation, contact HR Direct.

Redundancy and Secondments

Should your substantive role be affected by organisational change during or immediately after your secondment, you will be fully informed of the process under the Organisational Change Policy.

Back filling to cover Secondments

When back filling a person who has gone on a secondment, your manager must consider:

- How easy/difficult it will be to attract a replacement
- When the secondee is likely to return
- What position will they return to

In some cases, for example, where it may be difficult to attract a replacement or to ensure a consistent level of service or relationship, a manager may wish to do so on a permanent basis. Should your manager decide to do this, they must provide you, the substantive post holder with a clear rationale, and explain what may happen to you on your return from your secondment, including redundancy in a 'worst case scenario'. Should your manager make this decision they need to understand that, you remain their substantive employee; a role would need to be provided on your return (see above); or they would need to make a case for redundancy should the need arise.

FIXED TERM

If you are an existing NHSBT employee, always speak to your manager first before applying for such posts, to ensure you receive their support. Fixed term appointments of existing employees will be regarded as secondments. If your manager is unable to agree to a secondment and you choose to resign from your permanent post to take up a fixed term appointment, your vacated post may have to be back filled for operational reasons. In these circumstances you do not retain the right to return to that post and at the end of the fixed term contract, your continuing employment could be at risk. It is important to note that as you have voluntarily placed your employment at risk you may not qualify for contractual redundancy payments."

Renewal of a Fixed Term Contract

Should your manager wish to extend your fixed term contract they will consider:

- a short extension, with a new end date

- whether the role should be considered as a permanent requirement, and therefore the post will be advertised internally or externally as deemed appropriate

Where the need for your post remains after the end date of your original contract of employment, but your post is not available on a permanent basis, then your fixed term contract may be extended.

End of a Fixed Term Contract

Your fixed term contract will automatically end on the agreed date specified in your contract. Any extension must be agreed and confirmed in writing stating the new agreed date before your contract expires.

However, at the end of the fixed term period or if the work ends before the agreed date, your manager will meet with you and:

- in the case of early termination provide an explanation
- terminate your contract
- provide you with the appropriate notice

Redundancy and fixed term contracts

If you have 2 or more years' service, and your position should come to an end before the expiry date of your contract or where organisation change occurs which brings the Fixed Term Contract to an end prematurely, redundancy payments may apply. You would be consulted with as appropriate under the Organisational Change Policy. Any criteria for selection for redundancy will be applied equally to permanent and fixed term employees.

Confidentiality

All conversations, be it informal or formal, meetings, witness statements, investigations etc, must be kept confidential by all parties involved. We appreciate that this can sometimes be difficult when working in a small team or close environment; however, so that the issue raised can be brought to a swift conclusion and everyone feels able to move on, confidentiality must be maintained. Any breaches in confidentiality will be taken seriously.

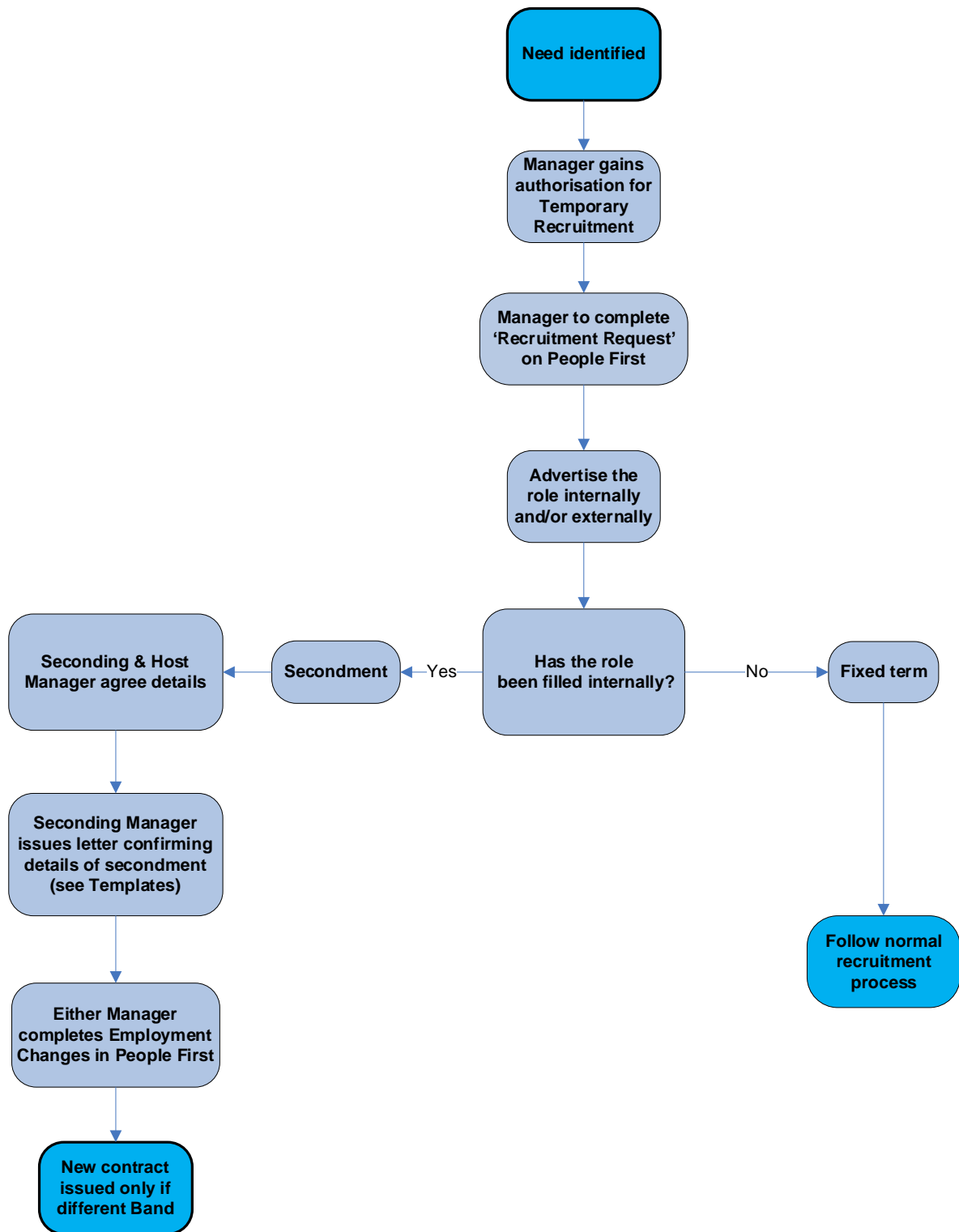
Templates and Knowledge

There are a series of checklists and template letters to support you with these processes. See People First/HR/Secondments and Fixed term. These provide more detailed guidance for you to ensure that you do not miss anything. Additional information can also be found in People First/Search Knowledge (FAQ's).

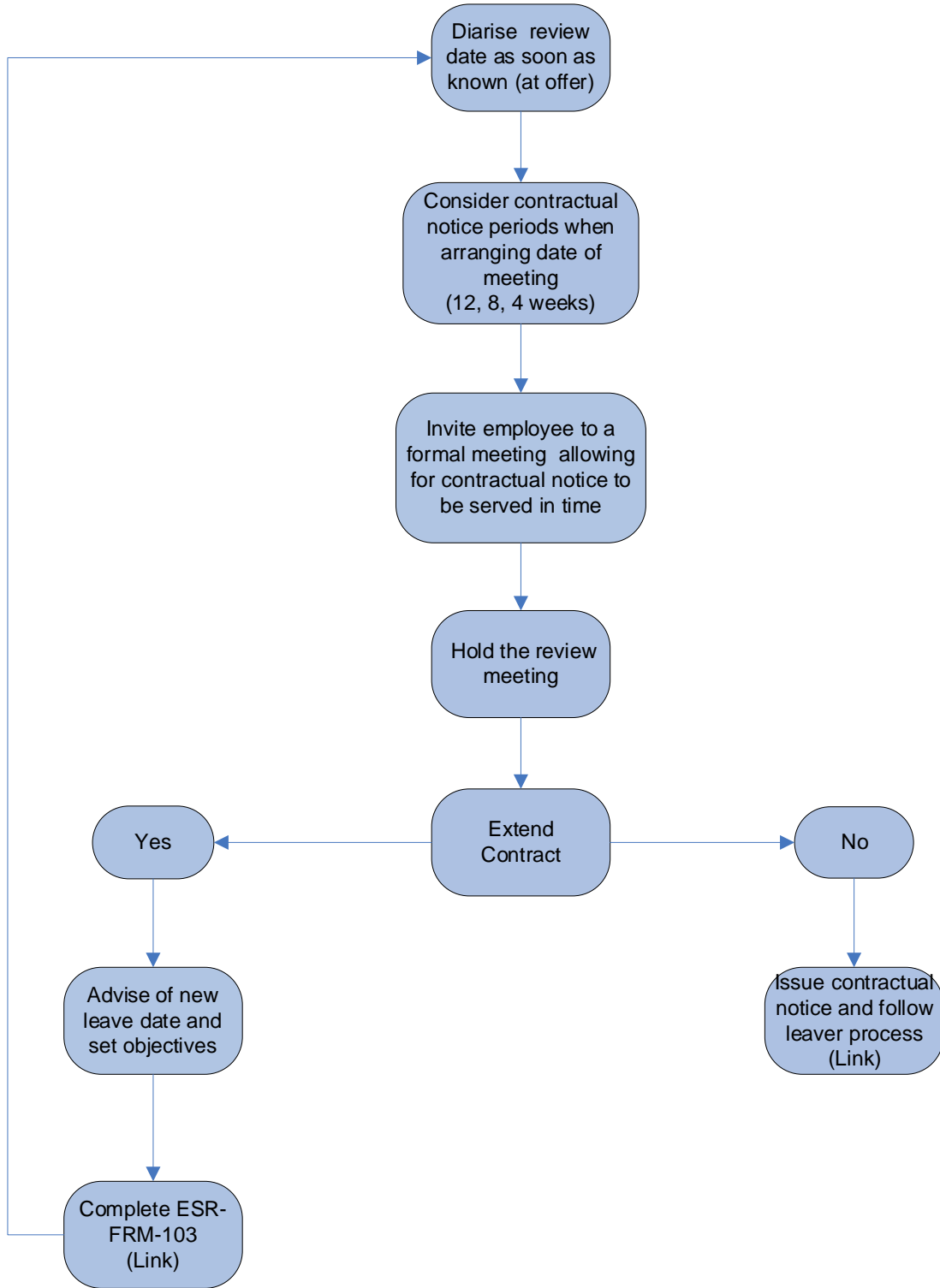
Keeping an eye on process

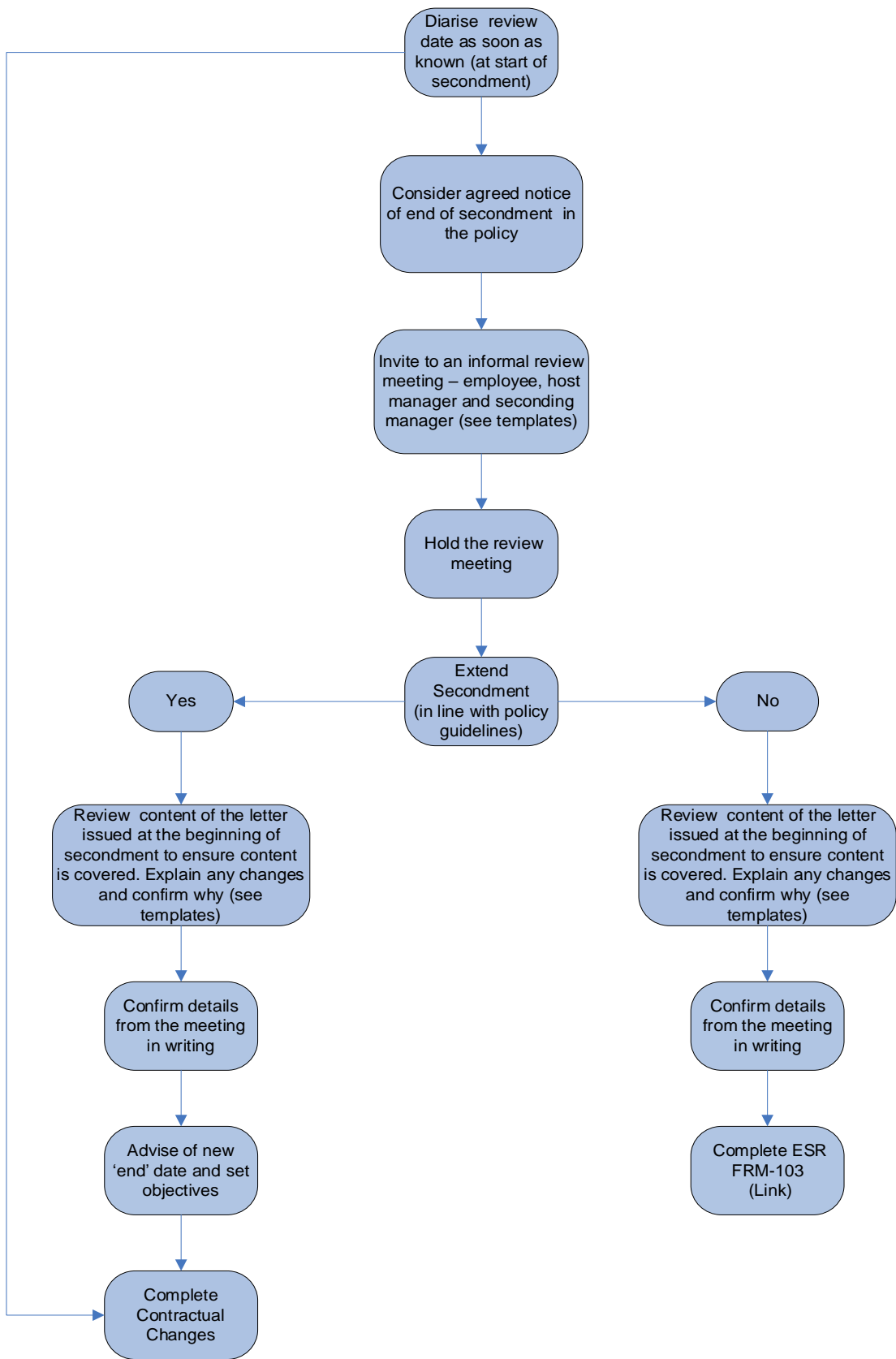
With both Secondments and Fixed term posts, you quickly get used to the people being there. However, you must not forget that these roles are not permanent, and that it is always important to follow process. It is therefore recommended, in line with the templates, that you diarise key dates such as reviews, to ensure that you stay within agreed timescales, and as a minimum a quarterly review meeting.

3. Flowcharts



End of Fixed Term; End of Secondment





4. Policy Approval and Review

Policy version	UCD/People/Secondment & Fixed Term/011v2.0
Title	Secondment & Fixed Term Policy
Approved by SPC	21 st October 2021
EIA completed	22 nd December 2021
Counter Fraud check	18 th November 2021
This document replaces	UCD/People/Secondment & Fixed Term/011v1.3
Effective Release Date	October 2021
Review Date	May 2023
Author	Daryl Hall
Filepath	G/HR/HR/Everyone/Policies
Distribution	Available on People First