

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



Policy on the Release of Teachers to attend the University of Guyana

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING UNIT (PIMU)

APRIL, 2009

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TITLE: Policy on Granting Release to teachers to attend Classes at the University of Guyana (UG).

1:0 Introduction

In a deliberate attempt to eliminate any misconception and correct deficiencies in the **system** currently being used for the Release of teachers to attend classes at the University of Guyana, the Ministry of Education **must** constantly/periodically **evaluate** the **system** and make changes where necessary. In fact, the Ministry of Education **must** continue to exercise **control** of the system and also give **guidance and direction** to all stake holders based on policy review. Generally, teachers will be granted **Release** on a **part-time** basis.

1:1 Policy Guide

Teachers seeking admission to UG are required primarily to consult with their respective supervisors, Heads of Departments of Education (HODOEs) and other senior professionals in the Education Sector to ascertain whatever programmes are available and relevant to the teaching-learning situation in which they will function at the Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Post Secondary levels, upon successful completion of studies.

2:0 Approval of Release by Central Ministry

- Central Ministry must adumbrate policies as they relate to the **academic** and **professional growth** of teachers in public schools across the country.
- All applications for release to attend UG must be submitted through the School, Board of Governors through the Departments of Education to Central Ministry for approval.
- No teacher will be released to attend the University of Guyana unless approval is granted by the Chief Education Officer and the necessary Contract of Service entered into with the Ministry.

2:1

Contract

Every teacher to be granted Release is required to **sign a five (5) year Contract**, in addition to providing one (1) Guarantor, who must be in a regular Public Service employment with at least ten (10) years service prior to retirement AND/OR submit their Cooperative Republic of Guyana Passport to the Ministry of Home Affairs through the HRM-MoE for stamping by the competent authority.

- All original documents (Contracts etc) are to be kept at Central Ministry in the care of the Human Resource Department.
- Central Ministry **must** provide the Heads of Departments of Education with a copy of their teachers Contract.

2:2

Eligibility

- Eligibility criteria for the **Release** of teachers to attend classes at the University **must** focus on the immediate, medium and long term needs of the particular school and Region/Education District in terms of deficiencies in the subject areas to be taught. Additionally, if subject areas are **not** the main focus, then **seniority** shall be considered to be the **criteria** of attention. For all intent and purpose, the eligibility criteria do **not** accommodate the following:-

- Graduates of the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) who do not have two (2) consecutive years in the classroom after training.
- Temporary Qualified Masters/Mistress and Temporary Un-qualified Masters/Mistress
- Acting teachers, and
- Teachers who have less than ten (10) years service before retirement.

2:3

Quota System

- A Quota System for the **Release** of teachers as per school is always considered extremely important in an effort to give stability to the system of **Part-time Release** of teachers to attend classes at the University of Guyana. Additionally, adjustments have been made to that which exists in light of exigencies of the service. **The Quota for a school should not exceed at any time (except in the case of mandatory transfers) the numbers set down for each category of school:**

- Grade (A) Primary and Secondary Schools including Post Secondary Institutions (4) teachers/lecturers each.
- Grade (B) Primary and Secondary Schools/Institutions (3) teachers/lecturers each.
- Grade (C), Primary and Secondary Schools two (2) teachers each.
- Grades (D) and (E) Primary and Grade (D) Secondary Schools one (1) teacher each.
- Grade (A) Nursery Schools and Practical Instruction Centres (PICs) (3) teachers each.
- Grade (B) Nursery Schools and PICs (2) teachers each.
- Grade (C), (D) and (E) Nursery Schools (1) teacher each.

The School/Regional Education Departments may make requests for the employment of teachers to ensure classroom teaching of students is not affected

2:4

Secondment of teachers to attend UG

- As part of the **conditions** of service of a teacher is the issue of **Secondment** from one school to another to facilitate the teacher(s) involvement in an approved activity such as pursuing a certificate, diploma or degree programme at UG.

Towards this end, teachers from the outlying Regions who would have applied and **gained admission** to attend the University of Guyana would of necessity require secondment to facilitate their attendance.

- For the secondment to be actualized the teacher **must** complete the stipulated application Form and have it processed through the channel starting from his/her School, School Board, the Regional Education Department and then the Ministry of Education.
- The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) through the Ministry of Education will be asked to approve the secondment of teachers from Non-Board to Non-Board Schools and whereas, Board Schools concerned will authorize the secondment of their teachers from Board School to Board School with guidance from the School Boards Secretariat.
- **No more than two (2) teachers on secondment should be placed at any one school. Teachers on secondment to schools must not be counted in the schools individual quotas.**

- A teacher on secondment to a school **must** be timetabled to teach on those days and times the teacher is not attending classes at UG. The teacher's official letter of Release can give guidance regarding the availability of the teacher to teach.
- No teacher on secondment must be given full responsibility for a class/grade but should be supervised by a senior teacher of the school.
- Additionally, at the end of each term the Headteacher of the school to which a teacher is seconded **must** submit a written report to the teacher's substantive school on his/her **conduct and performance**.

2:5

Critical Subjects and Incentive Package

- The Ministry of Education regards the undermentioned as **critical disciplines** and would readily consider a waiver of the eligibility criteria to allow those teachers who do not satisfy the criteria but who are willing to pursue at UG any of the critical disciplines listed below.
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Sciences including Agricultural Science
 - Reading
 - Industrial Technology
 - Modern Language

3:0

Responsibility of Headteacher

- When a Headteacher recommends the **Release** of a teacher to attend classes at UG on a **part-time** basis it presupposes that the Headteacher has taken all the attendant issues into consideration in relation to the teacher's absence from the classroom. The Headteacher is therefore prepared to ensure that effective arrangements will be put in place so that the hours lost **in the classroom** due to the absence of the teacher is well **managed** in the interest of the pupils/students.

This expression of responsibility **must** be recorded on the teacher's **Release Application Form** at the appropriate location, to which the headteacher affix his/her signature.

- The Headteacher in a deliberate effort to ensure that instructional delivery is not hindered due to teacher(s) approved attendance at UG, can if need be, make request through the Department of Education or School Board for the recruitment of teacher(s) for the affected subject area(s).

4:0

Responsibility of Teacher-Expiration of Study Period

- When a teacher's approved study period at UG has expired and whereas, he/she has not completed his/her programme of study then he/she must apply in writing to the Chief Education Officer through his/her Headteacher, HODOE and Regional Executive Officer (REO) for the necessary extension of study time which is limited to one (1) academic year. In the case of a teacher serving in a Board School, the teacher's request must be made to the School Board through the Headteacher. When a teacher has exhausted all options available to him/her and has failed to complete his/her programme of studies, the Ministry can then cancel the Contract and call upon the teacher to pay in full the value of the Contract to date.
- A teacher on secondment having completed the approved study period at UG must return to the school from which he/she was appointed. Only in extreme cases will the teacher be granted a transfer from his/her substantive posting to another school based on the approval of the Headteachers, School Boards, REDOs, PEO of the Education Districts concerned. Any such transfer must be approved by the Chief Education Officer.

4:1

UG Classes Outside Regular School Hours

- A teacher who has gained admission to UG and whose classes are held outside the normal **contact hours** is required to inform the Chief Education Officer in writing immediately, of his/her admission and attendance. The letter to the Chief Education Officer **must** be accompanied by a copy of the teacher's UG admission letter, both of which **must** be **endorsed** by the headteacher, the School Board, Regional Education Officer, Principal Education Officer. Additionally, a certified copy of the teacher's time table must be submitted each Semester to the Chief Education.

4:2

Leave of Absence

The procedure for leave of absence from UG requires that a teacher applicant does the following :-

- seek approval from the CEO to temporarily withdraw from the approved programme of study for a specified period
- the application must reflect grounds/evidence in support of the leave being requested.
- The application must be sent through the channel.

Only once will the CEO grant approval for a teacher to seek leave of absence from UG.

4:3

Change of Programme

No teacher is **permitted to change** his/her programme of study without first seeking the **approval** of the Chief Education Officer. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action taken against the teacher concerned in keeping with the terms of the Contract.

4:4

Continuation of Release having been Transferred

A teacher who has been **Released** to attend classes at UG and is transferred from his/her present school to another school for whatever reason(s) must be allowed to continue attendance at UG.

4:5

Promotional Opportunity while attending UG

A Teacher released to attend classes at UG will not be considered eligible for promotion while attending UG.

5:0

Guidelines for Issuing Letters of Release:

5:1

Special Leave

Teacher(s) **must** apply for **Special Leave** if they have to attend UG orientation sessions for **Freshmen** or when they are required to write examinations on those days and times not covered by their **Letters of Release**. The relevant documented evidence must be attached to the application.

5:2 Invalid Release Periods

When classes are suspended or UG is closed for whatever reason(s) the Release periods are not valid. As such, teachers must be in school.

5:3 Application for Release

Teachers who have been successful in gaining admission to UG are expected to :-

5:3:1 obtain from the particular Faculty **temporary Timetables** within the **first week of Registration** and their substantive timetables within six (6) weeks of **Registration**.

5:3:2 take their timetables along with the application for Release to their respective head teachers who **must offer written comments**, affix their signature and the school stamp.

5:3:3 take the said documents to the School Board then HODOE for approval.

5:3:4 **appear in person at the Ministry of Education 21, Brickdam** where the teacher will present the timetable and completed application form to the officer appointed by the Chief Education Officer to coordinate the issuing of Part-time Release of teachers to attend classes at UG. **In the case of Regions 5,6 and 10 special days will be identified when a team from Central Ministry will be those Regions to process applications for Release and to issue letters of Release.**

5:3:5 **sign a five (5) year Contract with the necessary guarantee** before **Letter of Release** is issued. No teacher is allowed to enter into a Contract with the Ministry without written approval of Release.

5:3:6 if changes occur in their timetables the affected teacher(s) must repeat steps 5:3:1, 5:3:2 and 5:3:4. **Application for Release must be made each Semester.**

6:0 Teachers Attending UG without Official Release

- Teachers who attend class at UG without Release are in breach of their contractual obligations and persistent unauthorized absences from work shall result in salary deductions, low ACR grade, charges, hearings and penalties.
- Heads of schools are required to take note and maintain accurate record of teacher(s) absences which are in breach of this Policy.

6:1 Monitoring by Central Ministry, Department of Education

- The Ministry of Education will ensure that there is an effective system of monitoring teachers' attendance at UG. The monitoring process will include written reports by headteachers to their HODOEs on the conduct and performance of teachers officially released and those attending UG without official Release. HODOEs are required to submit timely reports to Central Ministry with appropriate recommendation(s), if any.

7:0 Breaches and Penalties

- Any teacher found tampering with his/her UG timetable or his/her official Letter of Release shall have his/her Release cancelled permanently and appropriate disciplinary action taken.
- Any teacher caught cheating at UG shall be disciplined by the TSC or the relevant School Board upon receipt of an official report/notification from UG of such an act.
UG will be notified about the fact that the Ministry will expect a notification whenever such breaches take place on Campus involving teachers.
- HODOEs and HMs shall be held accountable should they fail to address breaches of the Policy by teachers.
- A teacher who fails to report for duty at his/her school after classes at UG and whereas, he/she was expected to so do, would have in fact committed a breach of his/her contractual obligations. As such, the teacher shall be disciplined in accordance with existing **rules** and **regulations**, which shall include withdrawal of the letter of Release to attend UG.

8:0

Scholarship to Study at UG

Teachers who are awarded scholarship by any Agency/Organisation are required to pursue the following :-

- inform in writing their headteacher, School Board and Head of Department of Education of the Award.
- provide documented evidence of the scholarship award along with other pertinent details.
- apply through the channel for Release to facilitate honouring the scholarship award.

9:0

General

- Teachers can also pursue Courses offered via Distance Mode.
- A Circular has been issued by the Chief Education Officer in light of this policy on the release of teachers to attend classes at UG. The said Circular indicates the possible sanctions for any breach of the policy by teachers.

10:0

Implementation

- Reference is made to the opening paragraph which states that the system of Releasing teachers on a part-time basis to attend classes at UG shall be centrally controlled and that the system **must be periodically** reviewed so as to correct deficiencies promptly.

- This updated policy shall be **implemented** at the start of the academic year 2009/2010.

Ministry of Education
June, 2009

APPENDIX "A"

- (a) All Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees in Education from the University of Guyana, the University of the West Indies and other accredited institutions of learning will be considered by the Ministry of Education for teaching purposes.
- (b) Teachers will be granted Release to pursue studies in the undermentioned disciplines at the University of Guyana.

- (1) Agricultural Science
- (2) Biology
- (3) Chemistry
- (4) Physics
- (5) English
- (6) Fine/Visual Arts
- (7) Geography
- (8) History
- (9) Home Economics
- (10) Industrial Arts/Technology
- (11) Spanish/Portuguese
- (12) Computer Science