

# BRITISH LIBRARY BENEFITS

Our benefits make a significant addition to the overall package we offer our people. You may find some surprises. For instance, our people only have to contribute, tax-free, 3.5% of their salary into their pension fund, while the Library pays, on their behalf, the equivalent of some 20% or more. And it doesn't stop there. From holiday to product discounts, financial support to family friendly policies, it's a great package.

xBelow is a summary of the principal benefits our people receive, (although keep in mind that benefits do vary slightly from role to role, and this document is a guide, not a set of terms and conditions). You can find out more detail on these benefits – and more – throughout this PDF. In addition, you can read all about our WellBeing Programme and Flexible Working policies on the respective pages of this website.

## Benefits on entry can include:

- At least 22 days' annual leave and 10.5 public and privilege holidays
- Flexible working hours
- A choice of defined benefit pension scheme (requiring employee contributions of 3.5% of salary) or stakeholder money purchase scheme (with optional employee contributions)
- Subsidised staff restaurant
- Access to the collections
- Free exhibitions on the St Pancras, London site
- Discount in the BL Bookshop
- Free membership of our Lifestyle scheme which provides a wide range of offers and discounts on holidays, high street stores, leisure outlets and much more.

## Financial support

At the British Library we believe in supporting our staff at every stage of their working lives including retirement. Our people are entitled to the following benefits:

- British Library pension
- Sick leave and pay
- Financial support towards childcare
- Financial support towards study costs
- Interest-free season ticket loan
- Help towards the cost of eye tests, spectacles and contact lenses
- Relocation expenses



## The British Library pension:

Ironically, the final benefit our people receive from the Library is probably the first one they take into consideration when they join us. It's certainly the most valuable and one of the most important.

### The pension scheme

Although we are outside the mainstream civil service, we have arranged for our staff to have access to the renowned Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme. From the moment anyone joins us as a permanent member of staff, or has been on a contract with us for over 11 months, they will automatically qualify for the scheme.

Any new joiners are placed on the Principal Civil Service Novus Pension Scheme. Their pension account will be credited every year, with an amount of annual pension calculated as a proportion of their pensionable earnings during that year. Then, every April, the balance on every individual's pension account at 31st March is increased in line with price inflation (RPI). The scheme also allows our people to give up part of their pension for a tax-free lump sum. In addition, it provides for payments to be made to a nominated beneficiary in the event of the policy holder's death.

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme requires only a modest input from the individual employee (3.5% of salary, on which the employee will receive tax relief). The Library meanwhile, offers a very generous input – worth, on average, around 22% of salary.

### Alternative pension arrangements

Within three months of joining, our people can notify us of their choice of pension type. It is possible to opt-out of the Civil Service Pension Scheme completely and have no pension provision or a Partnership Pension account.

In a Partnership Pension the British Library pays contributions towards the employee's pension, which are based on the employee's age. For example, we would pay the equivalent of 3% of salary for staff aged under 21, 8% for staff aged between 31 and 35 and 12.5% for staff who are aged 46 or more.

Employees don't need to put in anything to get our contribution! They can choose whether they want to make contributions to the scheme or just rely on what we pay. If they decide to put money in, we will pay extra to match their contributions – up to an additional 3%. Employees can use the resulting 'pot' to buy a pension when they retire.

A Partnership Pension is also available to temporary and casual staff, and to staff on fixed-term contracts of up to 11 months.

### More information

For more information on Civil Service Pension Scheme options and voluntary pension benefits, please refer to the Civil Service Pensions website at [www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk](http://www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk)

## Financial support towards childcare

At the British Library we are keen to give support to working parents and we provide the following childcare benefits.

### Childcare vouchers

Those who have completed one year's service at the British Library can benefit from a maximum of £30 per week in vouchers to contribute to the cost of registered child minders or nurseries.

### The Bookworms Nursery for Boston Spa staff

Our people in Boston Spa are entitled to a 10% staff concession if they want to register their children with the Bookworms on-site nursery.

### School holiday playschemes

During all school holidays, play facilities are available to all our employees' children. The facilities are based on-site at Boston Spa and off-site in London. The playschemes are designed to promote the health and fitness of our people's children. They provide a fun environment that's carefully supervised by qualified play leaders, trained staff and sports coaches. All members of staff can benefit from these playschemes at a reduced cost.

**Boston Spa** – The playscheme operates during all school holidays for children aged 4 to 12 years. The scheme costs £9 per day for the first child with subsequent children charged at £7 per day including lunch. Half day costs are £5.50 with lunch or £4.50 without for the first child, and £4.50 with lunch and £3.50 without for subsequent children.

**London** – The Library has a number of concessionary places on the Westminster Holiday Playscheme for staff based in London. The scheme charges £12.50 per day.

## Other Financial Benefits

### Sick leave and pay

Those who experience ill health during their employment at the Library are entitled to their full salary for the first six months of certified sick absence, followed by six months on half pay. Should anyone be unfortunate enough to suffer longer absence, further support is available including an immediate pension on enhanced terms for those who need to retire for medical reasons.

### Financial support towards study costs

We offer financial support for staff to develop skills through the Library's Career Development and Personal Development schemes.

### Career development

For those studying towards professional or specialist qualifications that are relevant to their role in the Library, sponsorship for study costs and paid study leave may be available.

### Personal development

We may provide support of up to £500 per year for our people to study in their own time, even if that study isn't directly related to their role.

### Interest-free season ticket loan

Our people can apply for an interest-free season ticket loan in order to buy a quarterly, half-yearly or annual travel season ticket – which normally brings a significant discount – for travel between home and the office. The Library deposits the whole sum into the employee's bank account. Loan payments are deducted every month from our people's salary to pay for the loan. No interest is charged.

### Help towards the cost of eye tests, spectacles and contact lenses

All of our people who use VDUs (including computer monitors, microfiches or microfilm readers) continuously for an hour or more a day can ask the Library to pay for an eye test up to a maximum of £20. If the result of the test confirms a need for spectacles or contact lenses which is linked to the use of such VDUs, employees can claim an allowance of up to £70 towards the price of spectacles or contact lenses.

### Relocation expenses

Relocation expenses of up to £8,000 may be offered upon appointment for those who need to change accommodation to take up a role in the Library. This may apply to staff who are required to permanently transfer from London to Boston Spa or vice-versa, as well as to new starters.

## Work/life balance

The British Library is committed to helping its staff maintain a healthy and sensible work/life balance. As well as the flexible working options we provide (which have their own page on this website), we also offer generous holiday entitlement and family flexible policies. (We also have an extensive WellBeing programme, to help promote our people's health, happiness and confidence. Again, you can find out more about this on the WellBeing section of this site.)

## Holiday entitlement

In the Library we generally talk about annual leave rather than holidays. Our employees on Grades E, D and C are entitled to 22 days' annual leave during their first year with us. After their first year, their annual leave entitlement will rise to 25 days' a year. Staff at Grade B and above receive 25 days' annual leave immediately. They are entitled to 30 days' annual leave, regardless of grade, once they have completed 10 years of service.

In addition to annual leave, all our people benefit from the eight bank and public holidays. On top of this, all our people also receive two and a half days' 'privilege' leave. This includes half a day for Maundy Thursday, a day for the Queen's birthday and an extra day at Christmas. The date of the Christmas privilege day is decided annually, but the other 1.5 days may be taken, with line management approval, at any time during the annual leave year.

## Family friendly benefits

The Library offers a number of family friendly benefits to help support working parents. These include:

- Maternity leave and pay
- Paternity leave and pay
- Parental leave
- Nursing leave

## Maternity leave and pay

Our people are entitled to 26 weeks of Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) if they have completed 26 weeks of service with us 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth. The 26 weeks of OMP is equivalent to 26 weeks of the employee's normal salary.

Those who have completed 26 weeks continuous service with us are also entitled to additional, unpaid maternity leave for a further 26 weeks following their ordinary maternity leave.

## Paternity leave and pay

Our people are entitled to two weeks' paternity leave with full pay if they have completed 26 weeks of service at the Library 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth.

To be eligible for Paternity pay, our people must:

- Have or expect to have responsibility for the child's upbringing
- Be the biological father of the child or the mother's husband or partner.

## Parental leave

Those who have small children (up to the age of 5) are entitled to 13 weeks' unpaid parental leave once they have completed one year's service with the Library. Time off is calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time employees. Any of our people who have a disabled child can use their parental leave entitlement until their child's 18th birthday.

## Nursing leave

Our people can request nursing leave for the short-term care at home of a close relative or dependent. This is at their manager's discretion. Each employee may be allowed up to five days' leave per occasion to attend to caring responsibilities. (These days will be paid through a combination of unpaid special leave and nursing leave with pay on a 50/50 basis.)

## Other benefits

As a member of staff at the British Library, your other benefits will include:

- Free admission to national museums and galleries
- Access to collection items, reading rooms and the British Library Shop discounts
- Sports and social clubs
- Staff restaurant
- Free parking
- Shower cabins
- Meditation rooms
- Free admission to national museums and galleries

### Free admission to national museums and galleries

By showing their British Library staff pass, all our people are entitled to free admission at the following national museums and galleries:

- British Museum
- Imperial War Museum
- Museum of London
- National Army Museum
- National Gallery
- National Portrait Gallery
- Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
- Natural History Museum
- Victoria & Albert Museum
- Science Museum
- Tate Gallery
- National Maritime Museum
- Public Record Office
- Royal Air Force Museum
- Sir John Soane's Museum
- National Library of Scotland
- National Galleries of Scotland
- National Museums of Scotland
- Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh
- National Library of Wales
- National Museums & Galleries of Wales
- National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside
- Royal Armouries Museum (sites in Leeds and Fort Nelson only)
- Ulster Folk & Transport Museum
- Ulster Museum
- Wallace Collection

### Access to collection items, reading rooms and the British Library Shop discounts

Our mission is to help people advance knowledge to enrich lives. So we make it a priority to ensure our own people have ample opportunity to be so enriched. How? By entitling them to free access to all collections and facilities in the Reading Rooms. We also give all our employees a discount of 33% on all British Library publications and 25% on non-British Library Shop publications at St Pancras. Staff at other locations can make an order from the shop either by phone or email, and receive their delivery by internal mail.

## Sports and Social Clubs

The British Library Sports and Social Clubs provide enjoyable recreational activities for members. Once an employee has joined, he or she is entitled to use any of the facilities of the Sports and Social Clubs and the Civil Service Sports Council. Every employee can also take advantage of discounts for holidays, loans, tourist attractions, theatres and shops.

The Sports and Social Clubs also offer a range of health and fitness activities run by qualified instructors. It's easy for our people to start a new club if their hobby or sport is not represented. They just need to find five other members to propose the start of a new 'section' which could qualify for a financial subsidy, or help with buying equipment. The Sports and Social Clubs receive an annual grant from the Civil Service Sports Council (based on membership) to subsidise events. Membership costs £2.75 per month, which is automatically deducted from employees' salary.

### Boston Spa

At Boston Spa, there is a clubroom with bar, lounge area, large screen television, snooker, pool and table-tennis tables, darts and dominoes etc. The bar is open every lunchtime and from time-to-time evening events are organised (e.g. discos, race nights, BBQs) and all members can bring along guests. Everyone using the facilities must be a member and must be keyed out. The clubroom can only be used during official breaks and is a non-smoking area. The Sports and Social Club also organises a Christmas party and occasional outings.

Other current activities include:

- Aerobics and keep fit
- Badminton
- Cricket
- Drama and pantomime
- Fishing
- Five-a-side football
- Gardening
- Golf
- Music
- Running
- Snooker and pool
- Yoga

The club also has a number of English Heritage and National Trust cards that allow free entry to sites. Forthcoming events are announced on the main club notice-board. There are other club notice-boards around the site.

### London

In St Pancras there are two recreation rooms with two pool and table-tennis tables, table football and dartboards. Current activities include:

- Badminton
- Cricket
- Pool
- Running
- Table football
- Table-tennis
- Tai-Chi
- Theatre (at least twice a year, tickets for top West End shows are offered on a highly subsidised basis, excellent seats at a good deal less than half price)
- Yoga

Forthcoming events are announced via email, the intranet and notice-boards.

For more on the Civil Service Sports Council's facilities and activities, visit their websites:

National: [www.cssc.co.uk](http://www.cssc.co.uk)

London: [www.cssc-london.co.uk](http://www.cssc-london.co.uk)

## **Staff restaurant**

The staff restaurants receive a substantial subsidy from the Library and offer a varied menu of hot and cold food and drinks throughout the day. Take-away options for food and drinks are also available and there are vending machines for hot drinks throughout the St Pancras and Boston Spa buildings.

## **Free parking**

All Library staff may make use of designated areas for car/motorcycle parking.

Parking spots are available on a first come first-served basis.

There are also cycle racks available at all of the Library's sites.

## **Shower cabins**

Shower rooms are open to all staff and are located at St Pancras on the Lower Ground Floor behind the Staff Entrance – and in Building 1 in Boston Spa.

## **Meditation rooms**

The 'Quiet Rooms' in St Pancras and Boston Spa can be used for individual prayer, to meditate or simply to get peace of mind away from the buzz of the workplace.