

**Date:** 06 July 2018

**Time:** 09:00

**Place:** Participant's office

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**Participant:** *Interpretation* is very important.

**Interviewer:** So yeah, if you can maybe...

**Participant:** Mmmhu

**Interviewer:** tell *me*... cause this interview is going to be totally *unstructured*.

**Participant:** Ok

**Interviewer:** I'm not gonna structure it in any way. I have a *few* questions that I...

**Participant:** Ok

**Interviewer:** have written down that I might find useful...

**Participant:** Ok

**Interviewer:** just to guide us, but the thing is I don't want to lead you in any way.

**Participant:** Ok

**Interviewer:** I want *you*... then you can tell me what your first impressions was...

**Participant:** Ok,

**Interviewer:** about this...

**Participant:** All right. Uhm... yeah so I read through it uhm and it yeah I did find a few things so I read it with a critical eye...

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** meaning exactly in line with... the purpose of your study.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Is that uhm to identify any difficulties with Benefits Policy and try and improve or remove these difficulties.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Uhhh... I, I wouldn't have use the word difficulties but anyway. It's as I said it's about reading it and being able to understand it *immediately*.

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** It must make sense for you. You mustn't go *searching* and wondering and making phone calls asking somebody...

**Interviewer:** That is exactly...the...

**Participant:** Oh what does this mean? So when I started reading 3.3 ehr the... I mean... I also have some queries...

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** for example: eeehr... when I say queries I'm looking at *in-depth* understanding of...

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** So the... university, the first thing they talk about is annual leave that's quite straight forward.

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** It says how many days you get as a staff member and it also quickly prompted me to go and check my own leave at that point.

**I omitted sensitive and irrelevant detail.**

**Participant:** Then I went to maternity leave and then I couldn't *understand* that erh... and I think... somewhere HR needs to... or maybe it's... *firstly* it says there that you're entitled to *4 months* maternity leave right? *But* in total you're only allowed 9 months. That means you're only allowed to have *two* kids. That's *my* understanding so if you are... if you're allowed 4 months for each pregnancy and you're allowed *a total... a maximum* of 9 months maternity leave at full COE...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** of the confinement. That means... it... converts to you're allowed two kids and then it refers you to *the* ehr *law*.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** And what is missing here is... it... the HR department should have the courtesy of *putting what* the law is. I don't... I actually... put there what *is* the law. Even if they use it as a *footnote* or *link* the person *directly* to the law or what law they're *referring* to.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** It's so *vague*, it says here...

**Interviewer:** Specify there?

**Participant:** *Yeah!* They need to give *more information*.

**Interviewer:** Act? Or, or... you want a link in there? Take you to? Mmm

**Participant:** And I will emphasise...ehr... their *duty* to do that.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** To, to say to them that *further* maternity leave will be allowed strictly as required by the law.

**Interviewer:** Mmmhu

**Participant:** In other words *that should be referenced*. That statement should be referenced to *exactly* what law they're talking about if possible create...

**Interviewer:** Then you can go and look it up yourself?

**Participant:** *a hyperlink*

**Interviewer:** yeah

**Participant:** or put a *footnote*. That was my big problem.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** The second... the other problem was it almost states here that you're... *allowed* two kids. They'll help you with two kids so for any more kids you have ehm... Then what happens? Do you know what I'm trying to say?

**Interviewer:** I hear what you're saying.

**Participant:** What *do* people do? *Then* whilst they're talking about 3.2... point... erh... 3.3.2 a... and comes... They only *bring* the, the mention of the men or fathers *later* on whereas it *should* be the *language* they use on the top should *immediately* include when they're talking about the mother... include the father... or the partner as well *not* make a separate note of it... at the bottom which is... ehrrrr... I'll tell you where it is (searching for said section). Ehr... where do they mention about the...

**Interviewer:** I think it's 3.3.2 c

**Participant:** 2 c Ok yeah. {...} no, no

(Pause, searching for the relevant section)

**Participant:** *Where* did I read it? Did you see it?

**Interviewer:** I know about it.

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** But *now* we *can't* find it anywhere.

**Participant:** Yeah, but I want to see... ehr... what {...} *immediately* for me I noticed that when in writing that out they should include the father or the partner. So it makes sense in your head. I'm looking now where...

**Interviewer:** Is it that...

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** 3.3.2 b if her spouse or permanent partner is also in SU's...

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** employ he or she... 3.3.2 b.

**Participant:** b. O.K. Yeah. O yeah. (Reading section aloud) If her spouse or permanent partner is *also* SU's he or she may use *any remaining* portion of maternity leave that is available. I, I didn't understand that. I don't even know what it *means*. What does *remaining portion* of maternity leave mean? Subject to the same conditions set out in 3.3.2... so... what might make sense is... should they allow six weeks which is one and a half months... of yeah they should... yeah... they, they should... shouldn't separate it the way they've done. I just, that's my opinion.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** And I couldn't understand what *remaining portion of maternity leave means*... ehr... (reading relevant section aloud) he or she may use remaining portion of maternity leave that is available subject to same conditions set out in... Therefore I say it should be a lot closer together.

**Interviewer:** It should be another bullet?

**Participant:** Yeah but closer with...

**Interviewer:** Urh...

**Participant:** Whilst they were stating that they need to combine the standing of the two.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Very clearly. Even if they do *headings* and say ehr, ehr the *mother* and then spouse or partner and then write that issue so it's *very* clear. Sticking it the way they do it here. We couldn't even find it.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ok? So urhm that was the one thing. And then the other thing... eeehrm (sigh) yeah... eerh I *think* it's the *last* bullet for 3.3.2 a... it says here (reading section out loud) for the *sake* of the smooth running of affairs after consultation with the employee concerned it is required that maternity leave may begin no more than one month before the expected confinement *date*. *But* it should also add a clause here *unless*... not *everybody* goes through... ehrm their pregnancy... health wise *the same way*. So... it *almost* sound... when I read this I thought: *Oh* so SU is more concerned about *their* smooth running of affairs rather than the, the... ehrm the wellness of, of the employee. Because it doesn't state there of course *unless for health reasons* the person needs to... ehrm... be off two or even three months before that with a doctor's note...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** so that would also add value. You know... ehr... the *language* that the... HR uses in things like this must be very *sensitive* to the *people*.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Cause its very *cold* the way they wrote this last bullet.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So erh... they need to add uhm that unless you know, for conditions that are for health reasons the threat of the mother *and* the baby's life...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** that can be negotiated.

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** And things like that. (Pause) Eeehm... see... then...the... one...two... third bullet for 3.3.2 are *again* I just to go back ehrrm... (Reading section out loud) As regards the terms of the preceding subparagraph employees also have the option of taking maternity leave in the form of unpaid leave and claim the maternity benefit from the Unemployment Insurance Fund instead. *Again, give* the person the *link*, take them *directly so that* they're able to read and *inform themselves what* is the Unemployment Insurance find. It's not something... it's only people that don't have *work* or are *unemployed* that would know a *little* bit about it. For *me* it's this is strange...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So how do we... e? HR's job is to try and give as much information to its staff as possible. That's... they're a *service* division.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So they're falling short here by *just* making reference *again to* that without giving proper links, proper reference...

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** and even... attaching... parts of it at the back... and say for quick reference this is the latest...

**Interviewer:** Addendum?

**Participant:** yes, for quick reference this is our most *updated law* or unemployment fund regulations and... that is very cold again.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Uhmmm ok... just want to see... (Silence, reading through document). Point 3.3.2 c what is missing here for *me* is that it's on the *assumption* that uhm... the person that's been on maternity leave that has expired...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ehrr, it's... the *choice* of them returning is *everything but for health reasons*. So ehr... its, it's without the assumption that something could have gone *wrong* with the person and for medical reasons. So there's *not a word* mentioned... can you... ? If you... read that carefully...

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** It says they offer the following options: taking annual leave, *or* taking unpaid leave but it's no mention about what *if* the person for *medical reasons again* with a doctor's note uhm... has *have* to be off. And giving those two options doesn't apply...

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** then what happens? So *again* there's lack of... erhm clarity. There's... it's very *assumed* that...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** that is the reason.

**Participant:** so... One's gotta cover all area aspects of reasons.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** (pause) Ok so I'm still reading the 3.3.2 d.

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** (Reading section aloud) they must give at least four weeks' notification before the commencement of that as soon as reasonably possible. That's... I think something like this... nobody knows a 100% unless u having a...

**Interviewer:** Laughing

**Participant:** booked creaser or have the baby induced.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ok... (Pause, reading) Uhm... I just find the, the *language use* in 3.3.3 d... They want *proof* issued whereas a note or a, a doctor's eerh, uhm... You know it *almost* feels very a... *lawful* using the word *proof*. Uhm must be accompanied by *proof* ... a pregnant woman coming to work every day is not *proof enough*? So they want *proof* by a medical doctor. It should be *more* ehr... ehr... uhm a *letter*... cause... you know what I mean?

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** How can a doctor ehr... so he would send... a *memo* or a *letter*... to say that he's a medical doctor if they haven't seen it yet she *is pregnant*. But what I'm saying is I don't like the word *proof*.

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** I'd rather replace it with ehm a, a, *note or a letter* from the medical doctor.

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh, mmmuh

**Participant:** Indicating a confinement date...

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** or closest, whichever.

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** Uhm, ok. (Pause, reading) employees who suffer a miscarriage during the last three month of pregnancy... So what happens to people that have... miscarriage... in the... f... fourth month? You know in the *last* three it stipulates... and give birth so it's making *specific* reference to three months. I wondered *why*? It was just I circled it and I thought *oh why*... why three months?

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** You know because people can miscarriage at *any* time.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ehr... and and why ehr... I didn't... *stillborn child in italics*? Maybe it's just emphasizing ehr... is it, is it {...} in a *hidden* way... talking about ehr... abortion here or making reference because the word *child* means for *me* when I read this it's as... ok it must be in a form of a *child* in other words...

**Interviewer:** Mmm, mmm

**Participant:** you know so that might be the *reference*. But there must be a little bit *more* uhm... (Pause). *Again* this point ehr, ehr it talks about six weeks ehr it *should* add there or ehr for a medical ehr *note* to say that, it because six weeks if it's a *bad* miscarriage ehr it could be not, not just a health issue in terms of... they *forgetting* that... *again it's so cold* for HR to say 3.3.2 e that ok if you lose a baby ehr you got six weeks to recover but some mothers... *psychologically* they uhm they... that's *worse*. Your... the wellness of the *mind* is actually *worse* than ehr actual uhm physically losing a child.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So this point... refers more to the ehr healing or the physicalness of *recovering* from *that* but not *the mental* wellness of the child.

**Interviewer:** Mmm, Mmm

**Participant:** So I would, what I would add there is that uhm yes unless a, a doctor or psychiatrist or a psychologist ehr *supports an extended leave to recov*... I actually didn't go through this too much but I think we can go through it as we talk.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** (reading out loud) Must perform their duties *well* (*giggling*) what does *well* mean? I mean how do you? You can't say things... they must perform their duties well that's nonsense. (Pause) Yeah the *language* again. You know? (Pause, reading) So uhm... yeah so the language must change *there* uhm (pause). This once off one year duration uhm (reading aloud) subject to the following, employee must be appointed permanently, must be for at least two *years*. Ambiguity as well so I question the word *duties well*.

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** Because it's very subjective. It, it *can* be very subjective cause if your line manager don't like you and, and says yeah but you're not doing your *duties well* that is *very* subjective it... *leaving it open* for ehr and I know *personally* that that is a source of *much heartache and conflict in the university at the moment*.

**I omitted sensitive and irrelevant content.**

**Participant:** So for me ehr... 3.3.4.a the second bullet it says here that during the preceding period of 3 to 5 years the staff member concerned has performed *satisfactorily* in the research field. What if it's your first time... research? Ehrm (Reading aloud) according to the requirements of the faculty concerned as approved by the Executive Committee of Senate. So that would be *my* question... is uhm yeah. What if it's a PHD that you're... embarking on? And you're not a... so this maybe is written for *an academic*. And what about... it's *excluding* support services *then* in that case. Uhm... and, and if you look at Stellenbosch University, it seems even these days more support staffs are also improving their *own* education in Masters and PhD's. (Pause) *Yeah* so there's *no clarity* there. (Reading aloud) Ok in exceptional cases and in addition to the normal grant *meant in* 3 point... mhm so you see the word *again* the *language* they say *meant in* 3.3.4 a. It says here the normal grant *meant in* so ehr... so you don't use words like *meant in*. Ok. (Pause) So over... ehr... reading... just the *language* that this is *written in* is *frightening*, ehr *really* it's *not* and it's so *easy* to write ehr policies on this if you do *bench marking*... and you... look at the other HR *fields*. The *language*, the *HR terms* that they *use* they don't use terms like *meant* and... so... straight away on *another level* this is not *HR Language*.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** (Pause, giggling) Uhm so it says here that uhm you (reading aloud) in addition to the normal grant... *meant in* 3.3.4 a above an additional special research opportunity of at least... of *at most* 30 days a year may be allowed for staff members who have performed *excellently* in the research field.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Again *excluding* people that *don't* do research. So... what... ehr else can erh... so *again* *excluding* support staff. (Reading aloud) The Senior Director must approve such additional grant after having examined the merits of the *particular* employee and upon recommendation by the

relevant departmental chair and dean and if the Senior Director... so *again language* written in an academic way only. (Mumbling softly whilst reading) So ehm 3.3.4 c *again* it's a sentence hanging in the air. What is *SU's best interest*? They need to spell it out. If it means interruption of work if it means they have to hire somebody they need to have *a little bit more information*.

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** (reading softly) sighing yeah erhm I think 3.3.5 Compassionate leave *it's very uncompassionate* to say that you are granted 3 working days a year. Ehr it's I think that's *very low*. I think ehm it should be after that... 3 working days *or* erh as *circumstances* ehr *allow*. Because some people have tragic incidences...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** coming in more than one cycle and can all be in one year and maybe nothing for another seven...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Years

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So how inconsiderate you are that they say only three day... three working days.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** They should *add* there every, every ehr... every circumstance... has to be... *examined* as its request. In other words, every individual should be treated uhm. I *understand* HR's point of view because ehm a lot of people have so many grannies and...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** they kill their grannies off... so often...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** and they're always taking leave, granny died. But they should *really* put a clause there for *genuine people*. They get left out *because* of that.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So I would say they need to add a clause to that three working days.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** (reading aloud) Another 14 working days during every cycle of three years. I don't understand that. So you can have three working days a year *and* (reading aloud) another *fourteen* working days *during* every cycle of three years. So...? In a three year period you can have fourteen days. So if you're allowed three working days a year, that's *nine* days for...

**Interviewer:** No

**Participant:** the cycle of three years. And then it says fourteen working days for every three year cycle. So it doesn't... it don't make sense to *me* how they come by *that*.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** If it's three working days a year, that's for three years which is a cycle it's *nine*. And *another* fourteen (pause). Oh it's *another* fourteen days during... so it's...n... *nine plus fourteen* then. Could be that, so... *I donno!* It... (Reading aloud) thus 23 working days' compassionate leave are available during *every* cycle of three years. Ok. All right.

**Interviewer:** So you would want that to be specified a bit? How they come up to the...

**Participant:** No I would...

**Interviewer:** fourteen days, or how would they come up to the twenty three days?

**Participant:** I would put the statement first.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** 23 working days' compassionate leave are available during a three year cycle.

**Interviewer:** Oh

**Participant:** *Then* you give the breakdown of how you come by the 23. Ok they got, for *me* I want to read that *first*.

**Interviewer:** And then the...? Oh, ok yeah.

**Participant:** And then, then I say Oh! Ok...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** so I'm allowed that... but *this* is how they break it down.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So *that* should come *before* the other one.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** (reading aloud) Employees cannot accumulate compassionate leave. Understood. (Mumbling softly whilst reading) *Of an employee's child*. That means... (pause) erh... sorry (reading aloud) the *birth* of an employee's child. So *who* gets the compassionate leave? *The employee?* So the boss... *I don't understand this*. (Pause) Who, *who* does the... first bullet refer to? I'm not sure. Because a *employee* ehr... Oh! So it could be if you're a *grandmother?* (Pause)

**Interviewer:** That is what I want to...hear... (giggling)

**Participant:** *No!*

**Interviewer:** that you are con...fused...

**Participant:** *I don't know! This is so...it says here you are allowed to take compassionate leave... if the birth of an employee's child (pause)*

**Interviewer:** The employee...

**Participant:** Employee? *Who is the employee?* Is it somebody that they work with?

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Or... urhm... so that if I (pause) So if I have somebody *working under me* then that is my em... that's the *employee*... so then *I can take compassionate leave?* *I don't know I...!*

**Interviewer:** I hear you. Many in- in- interpretations for this one.

**Participant:** Yeah, (reading aloud) illness of an employee's child, ok so ok. Illness of an employee's child, so that *means* that if my child is sick I can take leave. So if I... relate the same interpretation back going back to the first one...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** It *means* if I have *a child*, if I have... *give birth* to a child I'm allowed leave. *How* does that then tie in with the...

**Interviewer:** maternity...

**Participant:** maternity leave? If that is...

**Interviewer:** Maybe it's for the dad.

**Participant:** It *doesn't* say. But...

**Interviewer:** It must be more...

**Participant:** it's not clear

**Interviewer:** specified? It should be made *clear*.

**Participant:** I understand... but funny enough I unders... *immediately* I understand bullet two.

**Interviewer:** Yeah

**Participant:** It says that (reading aloud) in illness of an employee's child. If my child is sick... then if I use the same interpretation for the first one the birth of an employee's child, then it means I'm having the baby, then I'm allowed compassionate leave and how *different* is that from the maternity leave and where does the link come in? Do I still get an extra three *days* there?

**Interviewer:** I, yeah, yeah, I hear you.

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** I hear you.

**Participant:** (reading aloud) serious illness of an employee's spouse, ok I understand that and the (reading softly now) death of an employee's spouse, parent, parent-in law, and siblings or family member. I understand it's clear.

**Interviewer:** Is that point clear enough for you?

**Participant:** Ehr... it says that in the death of a.... but you know this is not *culture sensitive*... this *last* point because ehr it needs to be culture sensitive...

**I omitted sensitive and irrelevant content.**

**Participant:** So for *me* it's not culture sensitive

**Interviewer:** Ok.

**Participant:** Uhm but... e... whether it'll, weather that *matters* to the University I don't know. (Pause) So (reading aloud) SU *may* request reasonable proof of an incident before granting compassionate leave. Ehrm... sometimes the proof... erh so it... yeah e...errh... it's *language* again. So ehr may request. *They can also request after the fact.* I mean uhm... so... yeah, I like me...

**Interviewer:** And then you will only then apply afterwards?

**Participant:** Yeah... so...

**Interviewer:** So the word *before*...

**Participant:** *Language* yeah.

**Interviewer:** *there* should be... ehr looked at?

**Participant:** Yeah. So, so it just needs... unpacking a little bit in terms of uhm... it just needs unpacking it it's very *vague* in terms of what it means. Because most compassionate leave will happen and *then* the person will *apply* for it. So before *granting* it they may apply, that still can make sense. Uhm... you know like yeah and then they must also understand that uhmmm... if, if a spouse erh... if a spouse dies you have copy of your ehr death certificate but if family members die you... u can't then say ok wait I need to go and ask my cousin for a copy. *You know what I mean?*

**Interviewer:** I get what you're saying.

**Participant:** *How? I donno, I don't understand* that but I *suppose* the University *writes* this not to *abuse* the system.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So that it's covering itself by saying... so I'm looking at it...

**Interviewer:** Mmm, mmm

**Participant:** from their point of view as well. Some people *do abuse* the system...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Interviewer:** and so they're just putting a flag out there...

**Participant:** Mmm

**Interviewer:** that we can ask. Maybe if it happens too often and then...

**Participant:** Mmm

**Interviewer:** then I just say... or if ehr... person's character is one that needs questioning.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** They can refer to the policy document and say look... we said that we can request for that... so it's fine.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ehr... leave of absence. Ok. (Pause) Uhm so (reading aloud) continuation of work elsewhere. I was looking for leave of absence because it's something *new* that the university has *now* put onto the system. Yeah so recently the university seems... they opened up the system. If you go and log in you'll find there working from home, so it's something *new* that they...

**Interviewer:** Mmmuh

**Participant:** they added in. How does that tie in with *this* because...

**I omitted sensitive and irrelevant content.**

**Participant:** So... yeah what's missing for me here is working from home. So it's 3... ehr 3.3.7 Continuation of work elsewhere, no not that. So in the... 3.3.6 leave of absence. I'm looking for... uh...

**Interviewer:** Working from home?

**Participant:** work from home. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Inside the leave of absence?

**Participant:** Yes, yeah.

**Interviewer:** Ok.

**Participant:** So for me... and then if that...

**Interviewer:** So you don't think that the working from home would perhaps fall under continuation of work elsewhere?

**Participant:** Ehr *No*, bec...

**Interviewer:** No?

**Participant:** Or it *could* be but it doesn't s...

**Interviewer:** It's not... yeah.

**Participant:** If, if the words that they use on the system is "working from home" then they must state in it in the policy as per...

**Interviewer:** Per systems?

**Participant:** Per system.

**Interviewer:** You, you want the, the wording on the system...

**Participant:** To be the same so you can identify...

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** and...

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** not *misinterpret* what they mean.

**Interviewer:** All right

**Participant:** Because immediately I read this word. I read it as an academic doing work say at another spot for research or something. So I read it in a...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** academic context. Say if somebody's gathering data...

**Interviewer:** Mmm, mmm

**Participant:** or doing some research work, so they... that is continuation of work elsewhere.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** So that's how I read it. Oh! So then the question is: Do they then still fill in a leave of absence form? Because...for example what happens with somebody that's working on *this* campus but continuous working at Tygerberg campus? Their office is here and their phone line is here... and their station...

**Interviewer:** Mmm, Mmm

**Participant:** is here. How does that affect them? Then how come they don't fill in leave of absence? So it's ambiguous.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Unpaid Leave (Long pause) so I think... ehr *this* applies to people that were employed certain part of the year. Or does it apply to everybody? Unpaid leave?

**I omitted sensitive and irrelevant content.**

**Participant:** It says (reading aloud) employee earns no annual leave during a period of unpaid leave. (Long pause) ehr {...}

**Interviewer:** Ambiguous?

**Participant:** I don't know *what* it means...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** no annual leave...

**Interviewer:** I read it as when you're on, if you take *unpaid leave* then you won't be *accumulating* annual leave, but that is just...a given

**Participant:** I don't know I don't understand it. I... I.... I *really* don't understand it.

**Interviewer:** (pause) ok. Do you think this section 3.3.9 is... directly... it relates to leave?

**Participant:** Yeah it, it talks about leave, I tell you why and this is directly linked to leave of absence.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ehr which is on our *system*. Ehr because it's saying uhm so the... yeah it *is* linked to leave because it's saying that unless you're (reading aloud) on leave or absent for purpose of re... study or research opportunity...

**Interviewer:** You think it would tie in nicely with the lea... leave of absence? Instead...

**Participant:** Yeah, it is.

**Interviewer:** instead of standing here on its own?

**Participant:** Yeah, yeah. What it's doing here... it's talking more about the rules of where you *should* be...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** and *then* tying it with the leave. In other words it's saying that you are employed to work Monday to Friday at a (reading aloud) university premises at the workplace assigned to you... except if they're on leave or absent for purposes of a study or research opportunity.

**Interviewer:** You think it... it speaks to academics again?

**Participant:** *I don't know.* So I would add unless they're fill in a... ehr leave of absence working from wherever they are. So it's something *missing* here. So maybe it needs to be updated with the *new...* cause working from home is something *new* for HR...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** to my understanding, after the climate survey...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** and so on where they tapped in...

**Interviewer:** Mmm, mmm

**Participant:** should people be allowed to work... {...} so *this* needs to be updated to include ehr...

**Interviewer:** It again comes to your, your previous comment...

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** where you said that the system and the policy...

**Participant:** Yes

**Interviewer:** should be aligned.

**Participant:** *aligned*

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Yes. (Reading aloud) So if employees have to perform their duties at some location other than their normal workplace they must make adequate arrangements with their environmental head or dean or his or her delegate regarding their whereabouts. It *doesn't* say anything. So why can't they fill a... again why can't they just fill a leave of absence form working from home or working from wherever... they are? (Reading softly) Environment heads or deans may grant employees permission to attend officially recognized meetings or gatherings in the immediate vicinity of Stellenbosch {...} So I think it uhm... it *doesn't*, 3.3.9 doesn't speak about ehr, people don't just come to do work at the university. They also are affiliated to *many* other... ehr aspects or ehr...

**Interviewer:** Mmm, mmm

**Participant:** social impact, ehr affiliated to ehr interests groups, affiliated to other things, *other* than ehr that. So it *excludes* ehrm that aspect.

**I omitted sensitive an irrelevant content.**

**Participant:** Oh! Sick leave, *finally*. It seems to be... sick leave should have *come* in...

**Interviewer:** *earlier?*

**Participant:** *Earlier*, under leave then sick leave.

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** So it should be leave, sick leave. Maternity leave comes *much* later. Sick leave... medical {...} (pause) Why... do they uhm why do they say *can* submit? *Again* it... *can mean* you have a *choice*. (Reading aloud) Employees who *can* submit a medical certificate that SU finds acceptable are entitled to a maximum of eight months' sick leave. So... I... the *language* is *wrong* here. It should be a... when you write *policy* it *should* be a *more rule* related uhm policy in other words, it should say that you *have* to... so many days and... so it's a *have* to. So if you're off, I would word it differently. So if, a number of days ehr we got it back to front... Oh yeah... ehr (long pause) I would *rewrite* this whole section about sick leave. It's *not clear* and the *language* needs to be... looked at in terms of what *is* the rule and regulation about sick leave. Cause... *can't* say *can submit* you say... and staff members that are... It... isn't there some *rule* about if it's more than three days you are ill...

**Interviewer:** Mmm, yeah... they say... two, two days...

**Participant:** Where is that?

**Interviewer:** if you go into three days...

**Participant:** Two calendar...

**Interviewer:** you, you should ehr

**Participant:** So an (reading aloud) application for sick leave for more than two calendar days must be accompanied by an acceptable medical certificate that states the nature of the illness. Ok. So how many days we allowed?

**Interviewer:** *Two days without* a certificate.

**Participant:** No, no, so how many *days* in total for a cycle are you allowed?

**Interviewer:** Oh, it says...

**Participant:** Is it written?

**Interviewer:** here *eight*... no they don't specify the, the number of days they just...

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** say (reading aloud) a maximum of eight months' continuously or separate periods...

**Participant:** So they must work out more *specifically*, because people *don't* take leave *in months* they... must use *language in days, weeks and then months*.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** So... because ehr you know what I'm trying to say? And then how many days *is* that.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So I...I thought somewhere I saw you're allowed ehrs thirty working days ehrs per cycle or somewhere

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** *Somewhere there's another document that states that.*

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** But this whole sick leave, the whole points, 3.3.10 a, b, c, d *all* of it needs to be *reworked*. To be ehrs to be *simplified* and to be *put in order*. It's not... it's *all* over the place. First it must state how many *days, weeks and then* months. And then you must fall from that...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** what they mean... so I would change a lot of it.

**Interviewer:** Ok