



Parental Leave Scheme

HR&OD

We are committed to supporting working parents to balance work and family life in line with our [University Values](#). The University's Parental Leave Policy allows staff to take up unpaid leave to look after a child or make arrangements for a child's welfare. Staff may use it to spend more time with children and to gain a better balance between their work and family commitments.

The reasons for the leave need not be connected with the child's health e.g. settling a child into a new playgroup or nursery could be covered. (NB there is a separate right to take leave when there is an emergency involving a child or any other dependant – see [Dependents Leave](#)).

Eligibility

This policy is applicable to all staff regardless of their length of service, which goes beyond the statutory requirement of one years' service.

All members of staff will have the right to unpaid parental leave if they:

- are the parent (named on the birth certificate) of a child who is under 18 years old; or
- have acquired formal parental responsibility under the Children Act 1989 or the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 for a child who is under 18 years old.

Key Elements of the Scheme

- Members of staff will be entitled to a maximum of 18 weeks' parental leave to be taken up until the child's eighteenth birthday. In the case of multiple births (twins, triplets) eighteen weeks leave must be provided for each child. In the case of staff who work part-time, the leave will be in proportion to the time worked, for example someone who works 2 days a week will have the right to 18 of their working weeks (36 days in total).
- Members of staff who have adopted a child will be entitled to a total of amount of parental leave of eighteen weeks, as above, which lasts until the child's 18th birthday.
- The member of staff will remain employed while on parental leave but will not be paid; both they and the University will not be bound by any contractual terms except those relating to good faith and confidentiality.
- Where parental leave is taken for four weeks or less, staff will be entitled to return to their substantive role.
- The member of staff will retain the pension and seniority rights that were their entitlement before taking parental leave.

How can the leave be taken?

- As singular days or blocks of a week.
- More than 1 week at a time can be taken. The maximum period will be 4 weeks in any year.

How much notice is required?

- A minimum of 21 days.
- If a member of staff wants to take more than two weeks at a time, they must give the University notice of double the amount of time of the leave e.g. eight weeks notice for four weeks leave.
- A member of staff must give notice of the exact day on which parental leave will start except for partners who want to take leave straight after the baby is born or prospective adoptive parents who want to take leave straight after a child is placed with them for adoption. The dates of this leave cannot be postponed by the University if parents have given the employer notice 3 months before the week in which the birth or adoption is expected.

Can the University refuse or postpone parental leave?

- The University will reply to the request for leave within a time equal to the amount of leave requested. So, if a member of staff gives four weeks notice of two weeks leave the University will inform the member of staff within two weeks whether they can have the leave or whether it must be postponed.
- The University can postpone parental leave if the needs of the business or quality of service make this necessary; for example, if such leave could harm the continuation of the education of the students. Parental leave will not be postponed if it's being taken by the partner immediately after the birth or adoption of a child;
- The University cannot postpone parental leave for more than six months from the date on which the employee wanted to start parental leave.

Will the University require evidence?

The University will require reasonable evidence of the birth or adoption of a child on the first occasion that a member of staff requests parental leave for each child e.g. birth certificate.

Approval Process via Agresso Web Service

- All requests for Parental Leave must be submitted via Agresso Web Services. Staff will be required to complete and submit an online form, providing details of the requested start date of the leave and the number of days/weeks required (reasonable evidence will be required as outlined in the policy).
- Following submission of the online form, an automatic e-mail alert will be sent to the line manager who will consider the request, in line with the policy. Once the request has been considered in full, the line manager will approve or reject the request via Agresso Web Services. An automatic e-mail will be generated to the member of staff advising of the decision. It is recommended that where requests are rejected, the line manager discusses the reason(s) with the individual.

- Where evidence has been submitted (on the first occasion) e.g. birth or adoption certificate, this should be forwarded to HR Service Centre/local HR Team for retention on the individual's personal file.

All information received in relation to this policy will be stored and processed in line with applicable data protection legislation. To learn more about how we handle your data please review our [Privacy Notice](#).

Document title	Parental Leave Scheme
Document owner	Director of Human Resources
Professional Service Unit/Department	Human Resources and Development
Implementation/effective date	June 2009
Approval by and date	Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Date of last review and version number	March 2021 (V10)
Date of next review	March 2023
Title	Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Document Review

Version	Amendment	By	Date
V7	Rebranding applied	Head of HR Compliance, Policy & Data	24 May 2017
V8	Data Protection Legislation update	Head of HR Compliance, Policy & Data	31 May 2018
V9	Review	Head of HR Compliance, Policy & Data	February 2019
V10	Reviewed. Changes to eligibility criteria and how leave is taken	Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	March 2021