



Unpaid Parental Leave Policy

Introduction

We recognise that many colleagues have family responsibilities, which can arise at different stages of life. Unpaid Parental Leave provides eligible parents with the opportunity to take time away from work to care for and support their child.

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1. Eligibility

The right is not dependent on a qualifying length of service. To qualify for Unpaid Parental Leave you must be named on one of the following:

- the child’s birth certificate
- the child’s adoption certificate
- a parental order, for surrogacy
- a legal guardianship

You can take unpaid parental leave as soon as the child is born or placed for adoption.



2. Entitlement

- You are entitled to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave for **each child** under the age of 18. If you have more than one child, you are entitled to 18 weeks' leave for each child.
- You cannot take off more than 4 weeks during a 12-month period, and it should normally be taken in blocks of a week or multiples of a week. If you are the parent of a disabled child and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, you can take parental leave in blocks of days or hours.
- Part-time colleagues will be allocated leave on a pro-rata basis.

3. Notice Requirements

You should discuss your leave request with your manager, providing at least 21 days' notice and confirming the dates you would like your leave to begin and end. Once this has been agreed you should submit your request via HR Connect for approval. The People Team will then action your request.

4. Conditions

- 4.1. The timing of unpaid parental leave is subject to operational requirements. However, the University is committed to supporting colleagues in balancing their work and family responsibilities and will make every effort to approve leave when it is requested. In exceptional circumstances, where operational needs prevent leave from being taken at the requested time, the University may postpone the leave for up to 6 months. Requests for unpaid parental leave immediately following the birth of a child or the placement of a child for adoption will not be postponed.
- 4.2. During unpaid parental leave you remain employed and terms such as contractual notice and redundancy still apply.
- 4.3. You will continue to accrue annual leave during unpaid parental leave.
- 4.4. At the end of unpaid parental leave, you are guaranteed the right to return to the same job as before, or, if that is not practicable, a suitable alternative which has the same or better terms and conditions. Where leave is taken for a period of 4 weeks or less, you are entitled to return to the same job.
- 4.5. Unpaid parental leave is an individual right and cannot be transferred between parents.



5. Other Relevant Policies

- Adoption Policy
- Paternity Policy
- Shared Parental Leave Policy
- Unpaid Parental Leave Policy
- Flexible Working Policy

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