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**How to arrange cover for family leave**

Family leave can include maternity leave, adoption leave or shared parental leave. Start planning to arrange cover as soon as you know that your team member will be taking family leave. Involve the staff member taking the leave in plans and discussions regarding cover, and even any recruitment and selection activities if they wish to do so. .

Establish first of all if the work can be covered internally. This could include; providing ‘acting up’ responsibilities to other members of staff, temporary redistribution of duties, or pausing some work until the staff member returns from leave. Consider skills sets and the impact on workloads of any work redistribution. Taking on additional activities can be a valuable learning opportunity for staff seeking development.t

Also consider:

* Secondments. Secondments are internal moves where a member of staff transfers to another role for a specified period. They can be beneficial to both the individual and the University as it transfers skills and knowledge across the organisation. Secondments are recruited in the same way as other job opportunities. For more information on successful secondments, see the Staff Learning and Development pages on StaffNet.
* Recruiting on a fixed term contract basis for the duration of the leave period. For more information on recruiting staff, see the HR pages on StaffNet. When determining the length of the contract, remember that the member of staff can give eight weeks’ notice to return to work during their leave period. There will be processes to go through at the end of a fixed term contract – HR will provide advice as necessary.

It is possible to advertise a role as open to fixed term applicants and secondees at the same time.

It is good practice to ensure a time for a reasonable handover at the beginning and end of the family leave period, wherever possible. Ensure that a formal induction and training programme is established for a new or seconded member of staff.