



Ordinary Parental Leave Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Ordinary Parental Leave is a statutory right to take time off work on an unpaid basis to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare.
- 1.2 This Policy is aims to support parents in balancing their work and family commitments.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy is applicable to all eligible members of staff. In order to be eligible:
 - Employees must have worked at the University continuously for a period of 12 months by the time they want to take the leave.
 - Both parents whether they are the natural or adoptive parents, parents under a surrogacy arrangement who have secured legal parental responsibility, or any member of staff who has legal parental responsibility for a child, such as a guardian, can qualify for Ordinary Parental Leave. They must either be named on the child's birth certificate or they must have, or expect to have, parental responsibility for the child.
- 2.2.1 The University may ask the member of staff to produce evidence of parenthood or parental responsibility. This could be in the form of, for example, a full birth certificate, adoption papers or a document certifying that the child has been awarded disability living allowance.
- 2.3 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and the University may amend it at any time.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of managers to review requests for Ordinary Parental Leave, communicate with members of staff appropriately and ensure that appropriate cover is in place where their staff take leave under this Policy.

It is the responsibility of members of staff to apply for Ordinary Parental Leave in accordance with this Policy, provide information as requested to confirm eligibility and work with their manager to ensure a handover of duties and effective communication in relation to the leave.

4 Provisions

- 4.1 Each parent can take 18 weeks unpaid Ordinary Parental Leave for each child during the first 18 years of the child's life. The leave should be used only for the purpose of caring for a child. This means that both parents can take 18 weeks leave for each child.
- 4.2 One week's parental leave is equal to the individual's contracted hours per week. This means that a week's leave for a member of staff who works Monday to Friday is equal to five days, while for an member of staff who works Mondays and Tuesdays only, a week's leave is equal to two days.
- 4.3 Ordinary Parental Leave will normally be taken in a minimum block of a week with a maximum of 4 weeks being taken in any one calendar year. However, requests for longer or shorter periods will be considered and the University will be as flexible as possible whilst ensuring that work is adequately covered during any period of absence. If the child has been awarded disability living allowance, leave may be taken as single days.
- 4.4 Requests may be postponed by a period of up to 6 months in cases where the University cannot cope with the loss of a particular individual, except for in cases where the leave has been requested immediately after childbirth or immediately after placement for adoption. However, this will only be invoked in exceptional circumstances where no other alternatives can be found.
- 4.5 In exceptional circumstances the University may grant parental leave over and above the 18 weeks statutory entitlement and this will be agreed on a case by case basis.

5 Conditions during Parental Leave

- 5.1 During Ordinary Parental leave:
 - Normal terms and conditions of employment will apply (except for pay) and the member of staff will continue to accrue annual leave.
 - The member of staff and the University will continue to pay pension contributions.

- At the end of the leave, the member of staff will be entitled to return to the same job, provided that the leave was for a period of four weeks or less (and did not follow on immediately from a period of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave).

6 Application

- 6.1 Wherever possible 21 calendar days' notice must be given to request Ordinary Parental Leave; however, the University accepts that this may not always be possible and will not unreasonably withhold leave that is requested with less than 21 calendar days' notice.
- 6.2 All applications must be submitted using form PARL1 to the individual's manager.
- 6.3 The manager will normally meet with the member of staff to discuss their request and confirm their decision within 10 working days.
- 6.4 If the leave is granted, the manager will confirm of the period of unpaid leave in writing and notify HR Services to ensure that payment is correct.
- 6.5 If the request is postponed (or in exceptional circumstances cases where more than four weeks leave is requested, rejected), the manager will confirm this decision and the reasons for it in writing.

7 Appeals

- 7.1 This policy provides the member of staff with the right to appeal the decision of the manager within 10 working days of it being notified to them. The grounds of appeal should be put in writing to the appropriate Faculty/PSS Head of Human Resources (HR).
- 7.2 A representative from the HR team (not previously involved with the application) will review the application. They may request further information or evidence, and may wish to meet with the member of staff or the manager. The member of staff may be accompanied by either their Trade Union representative or a work place colleague at any meeting they are invited to attend.
- 7.3 The HR representative will review whether the manager was justified in refusing or postponing the request.
- 7.4 The HR representative will notify the member of staff the outcome of the appeal in writing within 20 working days of being asked to review the application. Their decision will be final.

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