

# Parental Leave

## UPR HR24 version 02.0

### Policies superseded by this document

This is the second version of this document, effective from 06 April 2026.

### Summary of significant changes to the previous version

Amendments have been made to clarify and to update in line with UK Legislation and HR System changes.

### Glossary

A glossary of approved University terminology can be found in [UPR GV08](#).

### Table of contents

1	Policy Statement .....	1
2	Entitlement .....	2
3	Procedure.....	2

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## 1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 This Policy sets out the circumstances where employees who have parental responsibilities may take unpaid time off work to look after their children who are under 18.
- 1.2 The University is committed to supporting a positive work-life balance for all our employees and recognise that time with children is important. If you are eligible (see para 2), you can take ordinary parental leave to care for your child – this may be to look after your child during school holidays, be with them when they are unwell, or enjoy more quality time with them.
- 1.3 Parental leave should not be confused with Shared Parental Leave for which the University has a separate policy

## 2 Entitlement

- 2.1 *From 06 April 2026 an employee who is the parent (named on the Birth Certificate) or who has acquired formal parental responsibility for a child who is under 18 years old, (i.e. is named on the Adoption Certificate, or has a Parental Order for surrogacy or a Legal Guardianship) is entitled to take unpaid Parental Leave. In situations where two parents are both employees of the University and have legal parental responsibility for the same child, both parents will be entitled to parental leave under this policy. The employee does not require qualifying service and can request Parental Leave under this policy from their first day of employment.*
- 2.2 A qualifying employee is entitled to 18 weeks unpaid leave for each child up to their 18th birthday.
- 2.3 Leave may be taken in blocks of 1 week (pro rata for staff working part time) and up to 4 weeks per year, per child. Whilst there is no statutory entitlement to do so, requests for leave of single days will be considered subject to approval of the Line Manager. *Note that where the child has a disability and the parent is entitled to Disability Living Allowance and/or a Personal Independence Payment for their child, then the employee is entitled to take parental leave in days or hours.*
- 2.4 Employees have the right to return from parental leave to their jobs, or if this is not possible, jobs of equivalent status, terms and conditions.
- 2.5 Employees who have taken parental leave will not be disadvantaged with regard to terms and conditions such as continuity of service, increments, promotion rights, notice of termination, redundancy selection or pension rights.
- 2.6 Pensionable service will be reduced by any unpaid leave taken. Depending on the pension scheme, there may be the option to buy back the lost service. Employees are advised to contact the Pensions Manager for advice on this without delay.
- 2.7 Employees will retain their annual leave entitlement according to grade and length of service.

## 3 Procedure

- 3.1 An employee wishing to apply for parental leave should write to their immediate line manager giving at least three weeks' notice (21 days).
- 3.2 The line manager will confirm the agreed time and dates in writing to the employee *and record the Unpaid parental leave in the HR System.*
- 3.3 A formal request for parental leave cannot be refused, but it may be postponed.

- 3.4 A formal request for parental leave can be postponed if the timing means ‘significant’ disruption to work. Leave can be postponed for up to 6 months after the requested date, *but the line manager must confirm in writing within 7 days of the original request* the reasons why the leave cannot be taken at the time requested, and to give other suitable dates when it could be taken. The amount of time being requested cannot be changed, provided it is no more than 4 weeks per child in one year.

*Note that there is no right of postponement when the leave is to be taken immediately following the birth of a child or immediately following its adoption, or where the postponement would mean that the leave was taken after the child’s 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday.*

Sharon Harrison-Barker  
Secretary and Registrar  
Signed: **6 April 2026**

**Alternative format**

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