



Parental Leave Policy
Human Resources Department

Document History

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(An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and has been approved.)

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The University is committed to providing a supportive environment to enable staff to integrate their working life with family responsibilities.
- 1.2 The Parental Leave Policy outlines the statutory entitlements to unpaid leave which may be available to members of staff who have, or expect to have, parental responsibilities.
- 1.3 Parental leave is offered in addition to other family friendly policies available within the University, such as maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave, special leave and flexible working arrangements; these policies are available [here](#).

2.0 Parental Leave Defined

- 2.1 Parents have a statutory right to unpaid time off work to look after their child, up to their 18th birthday, known as Parental Leave.
- 2.2 The reasons for the leave need not be connected with the child's health. Reasons may include to;
 - spend more time with them
 - look after them during school holidays
 - care for them when they're off school sick
 - go to school open days or events with them
 - settle them into new childcare arrangements
 - visit grandparents with them
- 2.3 Parents have a separate entitlement for each child.

3.0 Eligibility

- 3.1 Parental Leave is available to members of staff who have parental responsibility for a child. The parents of a child do not need to be living with the child in order to qualify for parental leave, but must be named on the child's birth or adoption certificate or they have or expect to have parental responsibility. Parental leave is not normally available to foster parents, unless they have secured parental responsibility through the courts. Further information on parental responsibility is available [here](#).
- 3.2 Parental leave is available to all staff irrespective of length of service, but individuals must also be employed at the University as members of staff to be eligible.

The child who is the subject of Parental Leave must be under the age of 18.

4.0 Entitlement/Provisions

- 4.1 Members of staff are entitled to 18 weeks' leave for each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday.
- 4.2 The right to parental leave is awarded per child. Consequently, in cases of multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.), leave can be taken separately and a member of staff is entitled to a separate eighteen week entitlement for each child.
- 4.3 A total of four weeks per year may be taken in respect of each child subject to the eighteen week maximum.
- 4.4 Leave should be taken in blocks of one week in accordance with statutory provisions, unless the applicable line manager agrees otherwise. This means that, ordinarily, where only one days leave is taken, this will count as one full week.
- 4.5 For parents of children who qualify for Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments, leave may be taken as single days. Applications for additional Parental Leave for parents of disabled children may be considered depending on the circumstances of an individual case. The University may ask for supporting evidence of DLA / PIP eligibility.
- 4.6 One week equates to the number of days a member of staff normally works in a week. For example if a member of staff works three days in a week, 'one week' of parental leave equals three days. If any employee works irregular weeks the number of days in a 'week' is the total number of days worked in the year divided by fifty two.
- 4.7 The leave can start once the child is born or placed for adoption.
- 4.8 Where more than one parent is employed by The University, both will be entitled to 18 weeks parental leave, per child.

5.0 Leave Carried over from a Previous Job

- 5.1 Parental Leave applies to each child, not to the parents' employment. For example, if a member of staff takes four weeks at their previous employer, they are still entitled to the remaining twelve weeks parental leave, as long as they remain eligible.

6.0 Approving Parental Leave

- 6.1 The timing of parental leave will be subject to the approval of the applicable line manager taking into account individual circumstances and the needs of the department/service. The line manager will not unreasonably withhold approval. The period of any postponement will be discussed with the member of staff and new dates of Parental Leave must be agreed. Any postponement cannot exceed a period of six months after the date that the member of staff originally wished to take the leave. Additionally, leave cannot be postponed if it means a member of staff would no longer qualify for parental leave e.g. postponing it until after the child's eighteenth birthday.
- 6.2 Parental Leave that is to be taken at the time of the birth of a child or on the placement of an adopted child cannot be refused by the Head of Department.

7.0 Procedure for Taking Parental Leave

- 7.1 To take parental leave straight after the birth or adoption of a child, the member of staff should give notice to their line manager and confirm their request for parental leave in writing by using the form Parental Leave - Record of Leave Form and provide at least twenty one days' notice before the beginning of the expected week of child birth, placement or other circumstance. In cases where this may not be possible, they should give notice as soon as possible. For example, if a child is born prematurely or where less than twenty one days' notice is given that a child is to be placed for adoption. This notice requirement does not apply to parents of disabled children.
- 7.2 The line manager should normally respond to the request for Parental Leave within seven days to confirm whether the member of staff can have the leave, or whether it must be postponed to a suitable alternative time due to business needs. If leave is to be postponed the line manager must explain in writing why the leave should be postponed and suggest a new date within six months of the requested date and cannot change the amount of leave being requested. The line manager may initially require evidence of the child's age e.g. Birth Certificate, but this should not be necessary each time leave is requested.
- 7.3 In all cases, a maximum of four weeks' Parental Leave in a year (from child's date of birth or date of child placement) can be taken in respect of any individual child.
- 7.4 A year starts on the date of birth or adoption, or if employment commences after the birth or adoption.

8.0 Contractual Status During and After the Leave Period

- 8.1 During the period of Parental Leave, the member of staff is entitled to the benefit of all those contractual terms that would have been enjoyed had they not been absent, with the exception of remuneration which shall be as outlined in this policy.
- 8.2 During the Parental Leave period, a member of staff may elect to maintain their pension contributions and if so the University will maintain the employer's contribution. If a member of staff elects not to maintain their pension contribution, their pensionable service will be adjusted to reflect the period of nil contribution during the period of Parental Leave. Staff members should note that if contributions are not maintained during a period of unpaid parental leave the life assurance and ill health cover which is available to pension scheme members will cease. Staff can contact the pensions team by emailing pensions@liverpool.ac.uk to request details of the premium which can be paid to the pension scheme to maintain the cover during a period in which no contributions are paid, or should they require any further clarification or guidance.
- 8.3 Annual leave will continue to accrue throughout the period of Parental Leave.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

APPLICATION FOR PARENTAL LEAVE

Employee Details:

Full Name	
Department	
Staff Number	

Children's Details:

	Full Name	Date of Birth
Child 1		DD MM YYYY
Child 2		DD MM YYYY
Child 3		DD MM YYYY

If you are receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments for any of the children previously listed, and you are applying to take individual days of leave instead of Weekly Blocks, please state their name(s):

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Do you wish your pension contribution to be continued during the period of leave? (Tick)

YES	
NO	

IMPORTANT NOTE: Where the staff member elects to maintain their individual pension contributions, the University will maintain the employer's contributions also. Where the staff member elects not to maintain their pension contribution, their pensionable service will be adjusted to reflect the period of nil contribution during the period of Parental Leave. Staff members should note that if contributions are not maintained during a period of unpaid parental leave the life assurance and ill health cover which is available to pension scheme members will cease. Staff members can contact the pensions team by emailing pensions@liverpool.ac.uk should they require further clarification or guidance.

Employee's Signature:	
Date:	

You are entitled to a maximum of 4 weeks of leave per year for each child, to a maximum of 18 weeks in total up to each child's 18th birthday. Use the table below to complete your leave application request(s):

Child 1 Name	Date of Birth DD MM YYYY	Current Age	Leave Start Date DD MM YYYY	Leave End Date DD MM YYYY	# Wks Due	# Wks Used to date	# Wks Applied for	# Wks Remaining	Manager Approval
									Y N
									Y N
									Y N
									Y N
Child 2 Name	Date of Birth DD MM YYYY	Current Age	Leave Start Date DD MM YYYY	Leave End Date DD MM YYYY	# Wks Due	# Wks Used to date	# Wks Applied for	# Wks Remaining	Manager Approval
									Y N
									Y N
									Y N
									Y N
Child 3 Name	Date of Birth DD MM YYYY	Current Age	Leave Start Date DD MM YYYY	Leave End Date DD MM YYYY	# Wks Due	# Wks Used to date	# Wks Applied for	# Wks Remaining	Manager Approval
									Y N
									Y N
									Y N
									Y N

Manager Approval

Leave Approved by Line Manager:

Name	
Signature	
Date	

Line Manager Checklist

1. Ensure that the periods of leave are requested in blocks or multiples of one week.
2. Parents of disabled children may take leave in single or multiple days.
3. The amount of leave must not exceed four weeks in any one year, and eighteen weeks in total.
4. Return the original of the completed form to the Human Resources Department.
5. Pass a copy of the completed form to the member of staff.

Human Resources Checklist

1. Payroll Section to record details of leave on HR system
2. Action adjustment to pay in accordance with member's wishes in respect of pension contributions.