

## Paternity and Partner Leave Policy

### Purpose and Context

This policy outlines the entitlement, eligibility and process for paternity and partner leave and pay following the birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption.

The University is committed to supporting all staff, including diverse families, partners, and intended parents, and will continue to update this policy in line with legislation and best practice.

### Scope

This policy applies to all members of staff, regardless of contract type or working pattern. Where staff experience barriers due to family or relationship structures not explicitly referenced, they are encouraged to discuss their circumstances confidentially with a member of the HR team.

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## 1. Eligibility

1.1 To qualify for paternity / partner leave, staff must:

- Have, or expect to have, responsibility for the child's upbringing.
- Be the second parent named on the birth certificate, a spouse or partner of the birth parent/adopter (regardless of gender), or an intended parent in a surrogacy arrangement.

Paternity / partner leave is a day-one right. There is no minimum service requirement for taking paternity / partner leave.

Eligibility for Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) and Contractual Paternity Pay (CPP) is dependent on statutory qualifying periods and average earnings thresholds.

## 2. Leave Entitlement

2.1 Staff may take up to two weeks' paternity / partner leave.

2.2 Leave can be taken:

- as one continuous two-week period, or
- as two separate one-week blocks.

2.3 Leave must be taken within 52 weeks of:

- the birth of the child,
- the child's placement for adoption, or
- the child's entry into Great Britain in overseas adoption situations.

2.4 Leave cannot commence before the birth or placement.

### **3. Order of Leave**

- 3.1 Paternity / partner leave may be taken before, after, or independently of Shared Parental Leave.

### **4. Multiple births or placements**

- 4.1 Only one period of paternity / partner leave is available, regardless of the number of children born or placed together.

### **5. Pay Entitlement**

#### **5.1 Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP)**

Staff are eligible for SPP if they meet the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions.

SPP is payable for up to two weeks at the statutory flat rate or 90% of average weekly earnings (whichever is lower).

#### **5.2 Contractual Paternity Pay (CPP)**

Staff with one year of continuous service by the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth may receive two weeks on full pay (inclusive of any SPP).

#### **5.3 Pensions**

Employer and employee pension contributions continue through paid paternity / partner leave.

### **6. Notification**

- 6.1 Staff are required to provide at least 28 days' notice for each period of leave they intend to take or in cases of adoption notify the University within 7 days of the adopter being notified by their adoption agency that they have been matched with a child (unless this is not reasonably practicable).
- 6.2 Dependent on individual circumstances staff should download form SC3 (Ordinary Statutory Paternity Pay and Leave: becoming a birth parent) or SC4 (Statutory Paternity Pay/Paternity Leave - becoming an adoptive parent/parental order parent) from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). This should be completed and returned to Human Resources at least 28 days in advance of taking paternity / partner leave.
- 6.3 Wherever possible a staff must give 28 days' notice if they want to change the date of their paternity / partner leave.

### **7. Terms and Conditions of Employment**

- 7.1 All terms and conditions of employment apply throughout the period of paternity / partner leave.

7.2 Staff on paternity / partner leave is entitled to receive their normal annual increment, in line with their contract of employment.

## **8. Annual Leave**

8.1 Staff will accrue their contractual annual leave entitlement during paternity / partner leave.

8.2 In line with legislation, a member of staff cannot take annual leave during paternity / partner leave.

## **9. Time Off for Appointments**

9.1 Members of staff are entitled to attend two pregnancy-related ('antenatal') or adoption appointments with their partners, if they are:

- the biological father
- the secondary adopter and have been matched with a child
- to be a parent through surrogacy and will be applying for a parental order

This entitlement applies regardless of length of service with the University.

9.2 It is expected that, normally, no more than half a day will be needed for an antenatal appointment. Members of staff can take a maximum of six-and-a-half hours' leave for each appointment; this includes the time needed to travel to the appointment, and any waiting time needed at the appointment.

9.3 Staff should notify their line manager as early as possible.

## **10. Additional Paternity / Partner Leave**

10.1 Staff may request up to 4 weeks' unpaid parental leave before or after paternity / partner leave (see Parental Leave Policy).

10.2 Additional leave relating to Shared Parental Leave is covered under the Shared Parental Leave Policy.

## **11. Returning to Work after Paternity Leave**

11.1 A member of staff returning to work after paternity / partner leave will return to the same job on the same terms and conditions, wherever possible. Where terms and conditions are proposed to be changed during paternity / partner leave, full consultation and agreement will take place.

11.2 If a member of staff returning to work after a period of paternity / partner leave wishes to do so on a flexible basis they should complete a formal flexible working request and submit this to their line manager for consideration. Their line manager should treat the request seriously and sympathetically. The line manager must consider each request on its merits and balance it against operational needs and requirements. See the Flexible Working Policy and Procedure for further details.

## **12. Exceptional Circumstances**

### **12.1 Miscarriage or neonatal loss**

Where a miscarriage occurs after the 24th week of pregnancy, or where a baby is born alive at any point but later dies, eligible staff remain entitled to paternity / partner leave.

### **12.2 Parental Bereavement Leave**

Staff may be eligible for Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay (see separate policy).

### **12.3 Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave (New Entitlement)**

Where the child's mother or primary adopter dies, eligible fathers/partners are entitled to:

- up to 52 weeks of unpaid bereaved partner's paternity leave,
- taken at any point within 52 weeks of birth, placement or entry to Great Britain (overseas adoption).

### **12.4 Disrupted Placements**

Where an adoption placement does not proceed (placement cancelled, child returns to agency, or the child dies), full paternity / partner leave and pay entitlements still apply to eligible staff.

## **13. Helpful Information**

- Miscarriage Association – <https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk>
- Tommy's (Stillbirth information) – <https://www.tommys.org>
- NHS Early Fatherhood Guidance – <https://www.nhs.uk>

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<b>REVISION HISTORY</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision description/Summary of changes</b>	<b>Author</b>
V1.1	July 2019	Revisions to terminology following advice from Stonewall regarding LGBT inclusion and transference to new template.	Senior HR Officer (EDI)
V1.2	July 2020	Points from Paternity Leave & Pay – Adoption policy added where relevant to combine both policies into one (Paternity Leave policy)	Senior HR Officer (EDI)
V1.3	October 2021	Updated with ACAS legislative guidance	HR Manager
V2.0	October 2022	Updated to reflect increase in paternity pay	Head of HR
V2.1	January 2023	Typographical correction	HR Manager
V3.0	March 2024	Formal review – updated to reflect legislative changes and change of policy name.	HR Manager
V4.0	April 2026	Formal Review – Updated to reflect legislative changes (Employment Rights Act 2025)	Head of HR