



LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

Unpaid Parental Leave Policy and Procedure

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POLICY STATEMENT

Purpose and Core Principles

The purpose of this policy is to set out employees' statutory rights in relation to parental leave and additional provisions offered by our University. The accompanying procedure provides clear guidance on the application of the policy and outlines both the administrative processes to be followed by employees wishing to request parental leave and our University's statutory duty to consider parental leave requests in accordance with a prescribed procedure.

This policy and accompanying procedure link particularly to our University's aim "to support a diverse community of talented and engaged colleagues who deliver our purpose and fulfil their potential".

Scope

This policy and procedure are applicable to all employees who meet the eligibility criteria detailed at 2 of the procedure.

Responsibility

Human Resources has responsibility for ensuring that this policy and procedure is adhered to and will provide advice and guidance to managers and employees on its application.

Review

This policy and procedure will be monitored and reviewed every three years and/or amended in light of legislative changes and organisational requirements as appropriate.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

1.1 Parental leave is the right to take unpaid time off work to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare.

2. Eligibility

2.1 To qualify for parental leave, an employee must meet the following criteria:

- Have or expect to have parental responsibility for the child (this includes adoptive parents and other carers who assume parental responsibility, e.g. special guardians)
- be making the request to care for a child who is under 18 years of age

2.2 The parents of the child do not need to be living with the child in order to qualify for parental leave.

2.3 Our University has the discretion to request that an employee provides documentary evidence of parental responsibility, for example, the child's birth certificate, papers confirming a child's adoption or the date of placement for adoption.

3. Leave Entitlement

3.1 An employee is entitled to take up to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave for each child.

3.2 Therefore if for example, an employee has taken 10 weeks parental leave with a previous employer, the employee will only be entitled to take a maximum of 8 weeks for the same child during employment with our University.

3.3 One week's parental leave is equal to the employee's contracted hours per week. For example, a week's leave for an employee who works Monday to Friday is equal to 5 days, whereas, for an employee who works Mondays and Tuesdays only, a week's leave is equal to 2 days.

3.4 If both parents are employed by our University, each parent is entitled to 18 weeks unpaid leave for each qualifying child.

3.5 An employee is entitled to take up to a maximum of 4 weeks parental leave in any 12 month period in respect of any individual child. Therefore an employee who has 2 children could take up to 8 weeks in any one year.

3.6 Parental leave may only be taken in blocks of one week, or multiples of a week, except where the child is disabled, in which case the leave can be taken as individual days.

4. Applying for Parental Leave

- 4.1 To apply for parental leave, employees should complete the parental leave request form (Appendix 1) and forward a copy to their Manager, giving at least 21 calendar days' notice of the requested leave.
- 4.2 An employee wishing to take parental leave immediately after the birth or adoption of a child, is required to give 21 calendar days' notice before the beginning of the expected week of childbirth and in the case of adoption, 21 calendar days' notice of the expected week of placement.
- 4.3 The Manager should discuss the application for leave with the employee and seek advice from HR Services if necessary. A request for parental leave cannot be refused, but may be postponed for a period of up to 6 months (4.6 below).
- 4.4 The Manager should sign the parental leave request form and forward it to HR Services.
- 4.5 HR Services will write out to the employee, no later than 7 days after the employee's original notice to take leave, confirming the dates of parental leave and any reasons for postponement (4.6 below).

4.6 Postponement of Parental Leave

- 4.6.1 Parental leave can be postponed for a period of up to 6 months, if the Manager considers that there are good business reasons to delay the employee's request.
- 4.6.2 Parental leave cannot be postponed when the employee gives notice to take it immediately after the child is born or is placed with the family for adoption, or where postponement would mean that the employee would no longer qualify for parental leave (i.e. postponing the leave until after the child's 18th birthday).
- 4.6.3 The Manager should meet with the employee as soon as possible to explain the reasons for the postponement and to discuss alternative dates when the parental leave can be taken.
- 4.6.4 These details should be noted on the parental leave request form and forwarded to HR Services.

5. Terms and Conditions of Employment during Parental Leave

- 5.1 Whilst on parental leave, an employee will retain continuity of employment unless it is terminated by the employer or employee.
- 5.2 An employee will continue to accrue contractual benefits, including annual leave for periods of parental leave up to and including 4 weeks.
- 5.3 For any period of parental leave, no pension contributions will be payable and this period of leave will not be included as pensionable service. It may be possible for an employee to make arrangements to pay back contributions, depending upon the rules of the occupational pension scheme. Further

information on the implications of parental leave on pension contributions is available from Pensions (pensions@leedsbeckett.ac.uk).

- 5.4 After taking parental leave, an employee will be entitled to return to the same job, provided that the leave was for a period of 4 weeks or less. If the leave was for a longer period, the employee is entitled to return to the same job, or, if that is not reasonably practicable, a similar job which has the same or better status, terms and conditions as the old job.

6. [Related Policies and Documentation](#)

Adoption Leave Policy
Maternity Leave Policy
Paternity/Partner Leave Policy
Flexible Working Principles
Shared Parental Leave Policy
Time Off for Public Duties and Special Leave Policy

Policy owner:	Human Resources
Sensitivity:	Public
Approved by:	University Executive Committee
Effective from:	6 April 2026
Next review date:	6 April 2029
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APPENDIX 1**UNPAID PARENTAL LEAVE APPLICATION FORM**

Please read our University Parental Leave Policy and Procedure before completing this form.

Your Details	
Surname	First Name
Employee Number	
Job Title	School/Service
Dates for Leave	
Please give below the dates of unpaid leave requested:	
This leave is requested in respect of: (Please give details of the child/children for whom you are seeking parental leave, including the child's date of birth):	
Dates of any previous parental leave taken, including with previous employers (or state none) :	
Declaration	
I confirm that my reason for requesting this leave is for primary purpose of caring for the above named child/children	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I have responsibility for the upbringing of the above named child/children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signature of Employee:	
Date:	
Authorisation by Manager	
If Parental Leave is postponed, please state the reasons for postponement and mutually agreed alternative dates:	
Name:	Signature:
Job Title:	
Date:	

Please forward the completed form to HR Services, HRServicesteam@leedsbeckett.ac.uk at least 21 days before the intended start date of the parental leave

(word version of form available on the [HR and Payroll forms webpage](#))