



ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN

Parental Leave Policy/Procedure

Approved by	The Executive		
Date approved	September 2018	Status	Approved
Policy owner	Head of HR and Operations Support	Impact assessed	Yes
Version	1	Date of next review	November 2023

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The University aims to support all employees in achieving a healthy work/life balance, recognising that many employees will have family responsibilities that will require them to be absent from work from time to time. As such the University has built on its statutory obligations and developed a number of flexible family friendly policies which are available to all staff irrespective of their gender or sexual orientation. Employees can access these policies [here](#).

For further advice and information on this policy or any of the University's other family friendly policies, please contact the HR department.

2.0 PURPOSE & SCOPE

This policy sets out the rights of employees to request **planned time off** for the purpose of looking after their child and or to make arrangements for their welfare. It outlines the process employees and managers should follow and ensures a consistent and fair approach in line with legislative requirements and commitment to best practice.

The University also has a [Time Off for Dependents Policy/Procedure](#) which can be used in the event of an unforeseen or emergency situation.

Foster carers who do not have parental responsibility are not entitled to take parental leave but may be able to access other forms of leave. Please refer to the [Foster Care Policy/Procedure](#) for more information.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, employees must have completed one year's continuous service and must either be named on the child's birth certificate, named on the child's adoption certificate, or have legal parental responsibility for the child. If an employee doesn't live with the child, they still have the right to parental leave if they have retained formal parental responsibility for the child.

The right to take parental leave extends to the parents of an adopted child/children and can start once the child is born or placed for adoption with the employee or as soon as the employee has completed one year's continuous service, whichever is later.

Parental leave applies to each child, not to an individual's job, so any leave taken with previous employers for that child will count towards an employee's total entitlement of 18 weeks for each child.

4.0 ENTITLEMENT

Employees are entitled to take up to a total of 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave at any time for each child up to their 18th birthday, this is the same in the case of a disabled child. Where the child is adopted, an employee can

take the leave any time in the 18 years after the child is first placed for adoption or up until the child's 18th birthday, whichever is the sooner.

Parental leave may be taken in blocks of 1 week, subject to a maximum of 4 weeks' leave (per child) being granted per calendar year, with part of a week counting as 1 week.

Employees who are parents of a disabled child may take their leave in multiples of 1 day. A disabled child is defined as a child for whom the parent is in receipt of disability living allowance in respect of the child.

5.0 NOTIFICATION

In order that appropriate arrangements can be made, employees are asked to apply in writing by submitting a [Parental Leave Request Form](#) (appendix 2) to their manager providing as much notice as possible, with the minimum notice detailed below.

Employees must give at least 21 calendar days' notice of the period of leave they wish to take except for those wishing to take less than a working week's leave to spend time with a disabled child, in which case they must give at least 7 calendar days' notice.

Employees wishing to take parental leave immediately after the birth or adoption of a child must give 21 days' notice before the beginning of the expected week of childbirth (EWC) and in the case of adoption, 21 days' notice of the expected week of placement.

When applying, employees may be asked to attach evidence that they are entitled to parental leave for that child. This may be; the child's birth certificate; papers confirming the child's adoption or the date of placement; the award of disability living allowance for the child; or proof of the expected week of childbirth.

6.0 APPROVAL PROCESS

Upon receipt of the Parental Leave Request Form the manager will discuss the dates with the employee and seek advice from the HR Department if necessary.

If the leave is approved, the manager will sign the approval section, adding comments as appropriate, and forward on to the HR Department along with evidence of the employees' entitlement.

Where the work of the School or Department would be particularly disrupted if the leave were to be taken at the time requested, the manager will discuss alternative dates with the employee.

Following this discussion, the manager will confirm the reasons for any postponement and new dates of leave to the employee, no later than 7 days after the employee originally gave notice to take leave.

The period of leave may be postponed for up to 6 months from when it was originally due to start. However, parental leave cannot be postponed when an employee gives 21 days' notice to take leave immediately after a child is born or placed with a family for adoption.

The manager will then forward the original parental leave request form to the HR Department along with evidence of the employee's entitlement and details of the revised arrangements for leave.

On receipt the HR Department will write to the employee confirming the parental leave dates and will advise the payroll section accordingly.

The HR Department may make enquiries with an employee's previous employer(s) as to how much parental leave they have already taken prior to their employment with the University.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE FORMAT

This document can be provided in alternative formats on request by emailing HRInbox@rgu.ac.uk or by phoning 01224 262625.

8.0 CHANGE CONTROL RECORD

No.	Approval date:	Amendment made:	Approved by:

Parental Leave FAQs

1. How does this affect my contract of employment?

The contract of employment continues throughout the period of leave unless either party expressly ends it. The period of leave therefore counts towards the period of continuous service for the purposes of entitlement to statutory employment rights.

All terms and conditions of employment remain in force during an employee's period of time off except for those terms relating to pay where time off is given as unpaid leave.

Employees are entitled to continue to receive all non-cash benefits applicable to them during authorised periods of time off for emergencies granted under this policy, such as childcare vouchers.

2. What happens to my annual leave?

Annual leave will continue to be accrued at your normal contractual rate. Annual leave cannot be taken during a period of parental leave.

3. What if I am sick during my parental leave?

If you become sick during parental leave this will be handled under the Universities [Sickness Absence Policy](#).

Employees should follow the University's absence notification process.

4. How will leave/pay affect my pension?

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

During any period of unpaid leave, your membership will cease to continue for that period unless the employee has the right to return to work, in which case an employee can choose to make up pension contributions to cover the unpaid period. If an employee does this within 30 days of returning to work (or within 30 days of leaving, if they do not return to work) the costs of making up contributions will be split 1/3rd payable by the employee, and 2/3rds payable by the university. An employee may still elect to make up the pension after the 30 day period has expired, but the costs will fall fully to the employee. The cost of paying back is based on the last rate of pay received just prior to the period of unpaid leave (excluding any increase in pay due to working a keep in touch day). An employee can discuss this directly with an LGPS Advisor at 01224 264264 or e-mail at pensions@nespf.org.uk.

Scottish Teachers Superannuation Scheme (STSS)

During any period of unpaid Leave, an employee's membership will cease to continue for that period. Under the current rules of the scheme members are not able to buy back the lost pension during any period of unpaid leave.

5. What other Family Friendly support does the University offer?

The University is committed to helping working parents and carers, and offers a variety of family friendly benefits and flexible arrangements. Policies and procedures within the suite of [family friendly](#) include: maternity leave and pay, paternity/supporting partner leave and pay, adoption/surrogacy leave and pay, shared parental leave and pay, parental leave, fertility treatment leave and pay, foster care leave and pay and time off for dependents. In addition the University offers:

Childcare facilities

The Treehouse Early Care Centre is a purpose build facility based on the University Campus. It provides high quality care and education for children aged 3 months to 5 years during Monday to Friday, 7.30am – 6pm.

Employees may be eligible to salary sacrifice part of their salary for the full cost of their childcare place, saving between 30% and 42% depending on the tax rate. Employees are advised to submit applications to their preferred nursery provider(s) as early as possible as places are normally reserved very quickly.

Kings Camps is a holiday childcare provider (OFSTED-registered) which operate from RGU:SPORT on the University campus during the Easter, Summer and October holidays. University Employees can book in advance to spread the cost and currently receive a discount.

Further information and contact details can be found at [Supporting Working Parents](#).

Employees will also find information here on childcare support including the [Governments Tax Free Childcare scheme](#).

Flexible Working

The University's flexible working policy can help achieve a better work-life balance, and enable employees to develop a work pattern that suits their family commitments. For more information please refer to the University's [Flexible Working Scheme](#).

University Support Helpline

The University recognises that employees may need confidential independent help, information, and guidance. For that reason a 24 hour confidential support [employee helpline](#) is available to employees and their family members to access. Professionals are available to answer queries on a wide

range of practical and more sensitive issues and the service offers: life support, legal information, bereavement assistance, medical information, a wellbeing portal and online CBT. **Maternity, paternity and adoption leave**

The University is committed to supporting staff who maintain responsibilities as a carer alongside their job. All our policies to support parents and carers aim to be inclusive, and the University provides generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave, as well as shared parental leave. For more information or to review these policies please refer to the [HR Web Pages](#).

 ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN	Parental Leave Request Form
--	------------------------------------

Please refer to the University's [Parental Leave Policy/Procedure](#) before completing this form.

Employee Name:	
School/Department:	
Job Title:	

SECTION A: Details of parental leave to be completed by employee		
Start Date:	End Date:	No. of weeks/days requested:

SECTION B: Declaration to be completed by employee (please select the following to confirm your request)	
I am named on the child's birth/adoption certificate, or I have/expect to have legal responsibility for the child	<input type="checkbox"/>
The child is below the age at which the right to parental leave ceases	<input type="checkbox"/>
The time off work will be to care for the child or to make arrangements for the child's welfare	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware that this period of parental leave will be unpaid and that appropriate adjustments will be made to my salary to reflect this	<input type="checkbox"/>
I attach a copy of evidence that I am entitled to take parental leave for this child (examples can be found in the Parental Leave Policy/Procedure)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware that the University may contact my previous employer(s) to establish how much parental leave has been taken prior to my employment with the University	<input type="checkbox"/>
The required notice has been provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that the information provided in this form is accurate.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Employee signature:	
Date:	

SECTION C: Approval to be completed by Manager

I confirm that the above application has been discussed with the employee and I am happy to approve the period of unpaid parental leave. I confirm I will arrange for the period of leave to be recorded as **authorised unpaid leave**.

Manager signature:	
Date:	

Please return this form to the HR department at HRInbox@rgu.ac.uk and Payroll@rgu.ac.uk