



# ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN

## Shared Parental Leave Policy/Procedure

<b>Approved by</b>	The Executive		
<b>Date approved</b>	September 2018	<b>Status</b>	Approved
<b>Policy owner</b>	Head of HR and Operations Support	<b>Impact assessed</b>	Yes
<b>Version</b>	1	<b>Date of next review</b>	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 shared parental leave and pay, including enhancements the University provides for eligible employees. It outlines the steps employees and managers should follow and ensures there is a consistent and fair approach in line with legislative requirements and commitment to best practice.

Flowcharts (see appendices 2, 3 and 4) are attached to help employees assess their eligibility and explain the process. Shared parental leave checklists have also been created for both managers (see appendix 5) and employees (see appendix 6) which should be used alongside this policy/procedure, to guide discussions and considerations before, during and after a period of shared parental leave. A collated list of frequently asked questions can also be found in appendix 1.

## 3.0 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used within this policy.

<b>Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC)</b>	The week, beginning with midnight between Saturday and Sunday, in which it is expected that childbirth will occur.
<b>Qualifying Week</b>	The 15 <sup>th</sup> week before the EWC.
<b>Matching Week</b>	The week in which notification of matching was given by an approved UK adoption agency, or in the case of adoption from overseas, the week in which notification of approval to adopt was received from the relevant UK authority.
<b>Curtailment</b>	Where an eligible mother/primary adopter brings their maternity/adoption leave to an end early.
<b>Shared Parental Leave (SPL)</b>	A maximum of 50 weeks' leave which can be shared between an eligible employee and their partner.

<b>Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)</b>	A maximum of 37 weeks' pay which can be shared between an eligible employee and their partner.
<b>Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SShPP)</b>	A statutory payment made by the University to eligible employees for up to 37 weeks, paid at the statutory rate set by the Government in the relevant tax year.  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave/pay">https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave/pay</a>
<b>Occupational Shared Parental Pay (OShPP)</b>	An enhanced payment made by the University to eligible employees for up to 24 weeks. This is paid on top of SShPP entitlement.
<b>Keeping in Touch (KIT) Days</b>	Days that can be used whilst on maternity or adoption leave for any activity which would ordinarily be classed as work under the contract of employment.
<b>Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) Days</b>	Days that can be used whilst on shared parental leave for any activity which would ordinarily be classed as work under the contract of employment.
<b>Mother/Primary Adopter</b>	The person who is eligible for maternity leave or is eligible and has elected to take adoption leave (either to care for an adopted child or baby placed with them through a surrogacy parental order)
<b>Partner</b>	The person with whom the mother/primary adopter decides to share parental leave and pay with. This person will have joint responsibility for the care of the child and can be the child's biological father, the mother/primary adopter's spouse, civil partner or a person who lives with the mother/primary adopter and child in an enduring family relationship (including same-sex relationships). This person cannot, for example, be the child's grandparent or another relative.
<b>Continuity of Employment Test</b>	Where an individual has worked for the same employer continuously for at least 26 weeks at the end of the 15 <sup>th</sup> week before the child's expected due date/matching and is still working for the employer at the start of each leave period.

<b>Employment and Earnings Test</b>	<p>Where an individual must have worked for at least 26 weeks in the 66 weeks leading up to the baby's due date/matching date and have an average of at least the maternity allowance threshold of £30 a week or more in any 13 of the 66 weeks.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance/eligibility">https://www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance/eligibility</a></p>
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## 4.0 ELIGIBILITY

### 4.1 Shared Parental Leave (SPL)

SPL can only be used by two people:

- the mother/primary adopter; **and**
- the father of the child (in the case of birth); or the spouse, civil partner or partner of the child's mother/primary adopter.

An employee and their partner seeking to take SPL must satisfy each of the following criteria:

- the mother/primary adopter of the child must be/have been entitled to statutory maternity/adoption leave in respect of the child, or where they are not entitled to statutory maternity/adoption leave, be entitled to statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance in respect of the child, and must comply with the relevant maternity/adoption leave or pay curtailment requirements (or have returned to work before the end of their statutory maternity/adoption leave);
- both the employee and their identified partner must share the main responsibility for the care of the child at the time of the birth/placement for adoption;
- the employee must pass the 'continuity of employment test' – refer to section 3.0;
- the employee's partner must meet the 'employment and earnings test' – refer to section 3.0;
- the employee must correctly notify the University of their entitlement and provide evidence as required.

### 4.2 Occupational Shared Parental Pay (OShPP)

An employee is eligible for OShPP provided they:

- meet the eligibility criteria for SPL;
- are an employee of the University during the qualifying/matching week; **and**
- return to work for a minimum period of 3 months after the end of their final period of SPL.

Prior to commencing SPL, the employee will be asked to sign a declaration agreeing that in the event they do not return to work for the minimum period, they will undertake to reimburse the University for the full amount of OShPP which they received. Any form of leave taken immediately after SPL does not count e.g. sickness absence, annual leave, unpaid leave etc.

### **4.3 Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SShPP)**

To qualify for SShPP, an employee must:

- be entitled to, and be on statutory SPL, i.e. they must have 26 weeks continuous service at the qualifying/matching week; **and**
- have earned above the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions in the 8 weeks prior to the qualifying/matching week.

### **4.4 Employees with less than 26 weeks' continuous service**

Employees with less than 26 weeks' continuous service at the qualifying/matching week are not entitled to statutory SPL and so will not qualify for SShPP.

## **5.0 ENTITLEMENT**

### **5.1 Shared Parental Leave**

Eligible employees may be entitled to take up to a maximum of 50 weeks SPL during the child's first year of birth/placement. The number of weeks available is dependent on how much of the mother/primary adopter's maternity/adoption leave entitlement (up to 52 weeks) is taken. If the mother/primary adopter choose not to take their full entitlement of maternity/adoption leave then they and/or their partner may opt-to take any remaining weeks as SPL. The first 2 weeks of maternity/adoption leave are compulsory and therefore cannot be shared.

The child's secondary carer should consider using their paternity/supporting partner leave before taking SPL. Once SPL has commenced an individual will lose any untaken paternity/supporting partner leave entitlement. SPL entitlement is additional to an individual's paternity/supporting partner leave entitlement.

SPL can commence as follows:

- the mother/primary adopter can take SPL after they have taken the compulsory 2 (or 4 in the case of a factory worker) weeks of maternity/adoption leave immediately following the birth of the child;
- the partner can take SPL immediately following the birth/placement of the child, but may first choose to exhaust any paternity/supporting partner leave entitlements.

Where a mother/primary adopter gives notice to curtail their maternity/adoption entitlement then the mother/adopter's partner can take

leave while the mother/adopter is still using their maternity/adoption entitlements.

SPL must be taken in blocks of at least one week. Employees can request to take SPL:

- in one continuous block (in which case the University is required to accept the request as long as the employee meets the eligibility and notice requirements); **or**
- as a number of discontinuous blocks of leave (in which case the employee needs the agreement of the University). A maximum of three requests for leave per pregnancy/adoption can be made by each parent.

SPL must end no later than one year after the birth/placement of the child. Any SPL not taken by the child's first birthday or first anniversary of their placement for adoption will be lost.

An employee is not entitled to extra SPL or ShPP if they are expecting more than one child through a single pregnancy or placement.

## **5.2 Shared Parental Pay (ShPP)**

### **Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SShPP)**

A total of 39 weeks' statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity/adoption allowance is available to the mother/primary adopter. As there is a compulsory maternity/adoption leave period of 2 weeks, this means that a mother/primary adopter who ends their maternity/adoption leave at the earliest opportunity could share up to 37 weeks' SShPP, if eligible, with their partner. The number of actual SShPP weeks available will depend on the amount by which the mother/primary adopter reduces their maternity/adoption pay/allowance period.

SShPP is paid at the weekly flat rate set by the government or 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, whichever is the lower. It is up to the parents to agree who is paid the SShPP and how it is apportioned between them.

**SShPP Breakdown:**

Weeks 1-37 are paid at SShPP rate

(<https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay>)

Weeks 38-50 are unpaid

i.e. the first 37 weeks are paid at statutory pay followed by 13 weeks unpaid.

Reminder: prior to SShPP commencing the mother/primary adopter will be required to take 2 compulsory weeks of maternity/adoption pay

**Occupational Shared Parental Pay (OShPP)**

Eligible employees can benefit from up to 24 weeks of OShPP. For those eligible employees, the University will enhance SShPP by topping up SShPP to full pay for the first 11 weeks of SPL and topping up the lower rate of SShPP to half pay for the next 13 weeks.

Where both parents work for the university, and where eligible, they will be entitled to a combined total of 24 weeks OShPP.

**OShPP breakdown:**

Weeks 1-11 will be enhanced to full pay

Weeks 12-24 will be enhanced to half pay

Weeks 25-37 are paid at SShPP rate

(<https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay>)

Weeks 39-52 are unpaid

i.e. the first 11 weeks are paid at full pay, followed by 13 weeks half pay, followed by 13 weeks statutory pay followed by 13 weeks unpaid.

Reminder: prior to OShPP commencing the mother/primary adopter will be required to take 2 compulsory weeks of maternity/adoption pay

## **6.0 NOTIFICATION**

Before beginning the formal process of applying for SPL, it is recommended that employees should contact their HR Business Partner/Adviser who will talk them through the policy and notification steps:

Step 1: the mother/primary adopter curtails (i.e. shortens) their maternity/adoption leave

Step 2: both parents declare their intention and entitlement to share leave

Step 3: the parent(s) taking the leave book(s) their time off

It is recommended that employees make their manager aware of their intentions as early as possible, in particular where they are looking to take discontinuous periods of leave.

### **6.1 Step 1: Curtailment of maternity/adoption leave & pay (*form 1*)**

Before either parent can take SPL, the mother/primary adopter must shorten their existing leave/pay entitlements. This is referred to as curtailment. If the mother/primary adopter is a University employee, curtailment will also bring to an end their entitlement to enhanced occupational maternity/adoption pay, if eligible.

To curtail their maternity/adoption leave/pay, and opt-in to SPL, the mother/primary adopter must either return to work or curtail their maternity/adoption leave/pay at a specified date in the future by completing a [Maternity/Adoption Leave Curtailment Notice Form](#). The employee should notify their manager and send the completed form to the HR department.

In both circumstances, the mother/primary adopter must give at least 8 weeks' written notice of the date on which they intend to bring their maternity/adoption leave and pay to an end.

### **6.2 Cancelling of a Curtailment Notice (*form 1A*)**

Should the mother/primary adopter change their mind, they may only cancel the curtailment notice if:

- it was given before the birth/placement, and is cancelled within 6 weeks of the birth/placement (in which case the mother/primary adopter may serve a second notice at a later date); or
- it is discovered that either parent is not entitled to SPL, for example, because they no longer have responsibility for the care of the child (in which case the mother/primary adopter has no right to serve a second notice); or
- their partner passes away.

In order to cancel the curtailment notice the mother/primary adopter must not have returned to work. To cancel the curtailment notice, the mother/primary

adopter must complete a [Maternity/Adoption Leave Curtailment Cancellation Notice](#). The employee should notify their manager and send the completed form to the HR department.

### **6.3 Step 2: Employee's Notice of Entitlement and Intention (*form 2*)**

In order to apply for SPL, the employee, whether the mother/primary adopter or the partner, must provide the University with a non-binding notice of entitlement and intention by completing and returning a [Notice of Entitlement & Intention Form \(Mother/Primary Adopter\)](#) or a [Notice of Entitlement & Intention Form \(Partner\)](#). The employee should notify their manager and send the completed form to the HR department no later than 8 weeks before the start date of the first period of SPL to be taken by the employee.

Within 14 days of receiving a notice of entitlement and intention form the University can request from the employee:

- a copy of the child's birth certificate (or, if the child has not been born, a copy of the birth certificate within 14 days of the birth - if the birth certificate has yet to be issued after this period, a signed declaration stating the date and location of the child's birth will suffice);
- in cases of adoption, documentary evidence from the adoption agency of the date on which the adoption agency expects the child to be placed for adoption with the adopter, the name and address of the adoption agency, and the date on which the adopter was notified of having been matched for adoption with the child; **and**
- the name and address of the other parent's employer (or a declaration that the other parent has no employer).

The employee has 14 days from the date of the request to provide the University with the required information.

Where an employee is the Mother/Primary Adopter they should submit **forms 1 and 2** together (i.e. curtailing maternity/adoption leave/pay and applying for SPL).

Employees must let the University know if their entitlements change at any point. Failure to do so may be treated as a disciplinary matter under the University's [Disciplinary Policy](#).

### **6.4 Varying/Cancelling a Notice of Entitlement & Intention (*form 2A*)**

The employee can vary or cancel their proposed SPL dates following the submission of a notice of entitlement and intention form (**form 2**) by completing the [Variation of Notice of Entitlement & Intention Form](#).

Any indication of leave intended to be taken that the employee provides in a variation of notice of entitlement and intention is non-binding until they provide a period of leave notice (**form 3**) in relation to that period of leave. There is no limit on the number of variations of notice of entitlement and intention that the employee can make.

## **6.5 Step 3: Employees Period of Leave Booking Notice (*form 3*)**

In order to take a period of SPL, the employee must complete a [Period of Leave Booking Notice Form](#) setting out the start and end dates of each period of SPL requested in that notice. Employees have the right to submit a total of up to 3 booking notices. The request can be for a continuous period of leave or discontinuous periods of leave.

Employees can book their leave at the same time as submitting **forms 1 and 2** (i.e. curtailing maternity/adoption leave/pay and applying for SPL). Alternatively, booking notices can be submitted at a later date, provided they are received by the Manager and HR department at least 8 weeks in advance of the first period of SPL. However, the earlier the University is aware of an employee's intentions, the more likely it may be to accommodate the parents wishes, particularly where they wish to take periods of discontinuous leave.

### **Continuous Period of SPL**

If an employee submits a [Period of Leave Booking Notice Form](#) requesting one continuous period of leave, they will be entitled to take that period of leave as long as they meet the eligibility and notice requirements set out above.

### **Discontinuous Periods of SPL**

If an employee submits a [Period of Leave Booking Notice Form](#), where they are requesting discontinuous periods of leave, the University, in the 2 weeks beginning with the date the period of leave notice was given, can:

- consent to the pattern of leave requested;
- propose an alternative pattern of leave; **or**
- refuse the pattern of leave requested.

If the pattern of leave can be accommodated by the University, the employee will receive written confirmation of the leave start and end dates within 2 weeks of the booking notice having been received.

If the University cannot accommodate the requested pattern of discontinuous leave the manager will meet with the employee to discuss the leave request and explore whether an alternative arrangement can be agreed that would meet the needs of both the employee and their partner and the University. This meeting will take place within 2 weeks of the booking notice having been received and will be attended by a member of the HR department, who will confirm the outcome of the meeting to the employee in writing.

If the original discontinuous leave request cannot be accommodated, the employee can opt to:

- withdraw the request at any time within the 2 week discussion period – in which case the booking notice will be discounted (i.e. will not count as one of the 3 permitted booking notices); **or**

- take the total number of weeks' leave requested as one continuous block of leave. The leave will automatically start on the same date as the first period of leave originally requested – unless the employee specifically requests a new, later start date and does so within 5 days of the end of the 2 week discussion period.

The new start date must provide the University with at least 8 weeks' notice of the leave.

The continuous period of leave will replace the discontinuous booking notice and so count as one of the 3 permitted booking notices.

### **6.6 Varying/Canceling a Period of Leave Booking Notice (*form 3A*)**

An employee may vary or cancel a booked period of SPL, provided they have sufficient booking notices remaining and give at least 8 weeks' written notice before any new period of leave is due to commence.

Variation or cancellation of a period of leave booking notice will normally count as a booking notice (so using up one of the 3 booking notices permitted) except where:

- the baby is born early;
- the University requests a change, to which the employee agrees;
- an employee withdraws a request for a discontinuous period of leave within 2 weeks of making the request.

It is recommended that whenever an employee is considering a change to their booked leave, they should contact the HR department who will confirm the options open to the employee and the applicable timescales and effect on the booking notices.

In order to vary the start date and/or duration of a booked period of SPL, or cancel it entirely, the employee must complete a [Variation of Period of Leave Booking Notice Form](#). The employee should notify their manager and send the completed form to the HR department.

### **7.0 SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE IN TOUCH (SPLIT) DAYS**

The University is entitled to make reasonable contact with an employee whilst they are on SPL, to keep them up to date with developments at work.

Additionally, an employee can work up to 20 days during SPL without bringing it to an end. These are called 'SPL in touch' (or SPLIT) days. These days are in addition to the 10 KIT days already available to those on maternity or adoption/surrogacy leave. Unused KIT entitlement cannot be carried forward into a period of SPL.

SPLIT days must be at the agreement of both the employee and their manager University. It is important to note that the employee is not obliged to work any KIT or SPLIT days nor is the University obliged to provide or agree to

them.

Employees wishing to work SPLIT days should complete a [SPLIT Claim Form](#) and submit this to their manager for approval in advance of carrying out the work.

## **8.0 RETURNING TO WORK AFTER SPL**

The [SPL Planning Checklist for Managers](#) (*Appendix 5*) and [SPL Planning Checklist for Employees](#) (*Appendix 6*) highlights the key considerations to be taken into account when an employee returns to work following a period of SPL.

An employee's rights on returning to work from SPL depend on the total period of maternity, adoption/surrogacy, paternity/supporting partner, and SPL that has been taken.

An employee is entitled to return to work, normally to the same job, after SPL. However, in exceptional cases where it is not feasible to return to the original role for reasons other than redundancy, the employee will be offered a suitable alternative role, at the same grade.

If an employee wishes to return to work on alternative working arrangements, i.e. reduced hours or on a different working pattern, a flexible working application should be submitted. There is no statutory right for an employee to change the terms and conditions of their employment following leave. There is however the right to request a flexible working pattern and the University has a duty to consider this request. Further information can be found in the University's [Flexible Working Scheme](#).

Employees may also wish to familiarise themselves with the University's other family friendly leave policies/procedures such as [Parental Leave](#) and [Time off for Dependents](#).

If an employee is unable to return to work due to sickness or injury, this will be treated as sickness absence in line with the [University's Sickness Absence Policy](#).

## **9.0 BREASTFEEDING**

An employee may wish to continue to breastfeed or express breast milk after they have returned to work, including during any KIT or SPLIT days. If so, a Health and Safety Risk Assessment for New and Expectant Mothers will be completed by the HR department and any issues raised will be addressed accordingly. Facilities such as a private room and access to a refrigerator for the employee to store expressed milk can be provided.

Managers should consider any short break from work reasonably and objectively against the likely impact it might have on the business and should be careful not to discriminate against breastfeeding employees. Refusal to allow a woman to express milk or to adjust her working conditions to enable her to continue to breastfeed, may amount to unlawful sex discrimination

under the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful for women to be treated less favourably in regards to their need to breastfeed/express.

Any concerns by an employee or manager should be raised immediately with the HR department.

### **10.0 RESIGNATION WHILST ON SPL**

If an employee does not intend to return to work following SPL they should discuss the matter with their manager as early as possible. If an employee decides not to return, they should give notice of resignation in accordance with the terms of their employment contract.

The amount of SPL left to take when the employee gives their resignation notice must be at least equal to their contractual notice period, otherwise the University may require the employee to return to work for the remainder of their notice period.

The employee's decision to resign does not affect their right to ShPP. However, if an employee receives OShPP and does not return to work for a minimum period of 3 months after SPL the enhancement will be subject to repayment. The payroll department will calculate the amount of OShPP to be repaid and notify the employee as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for repayment. Any form of leave taken immediately after SPL does not count e.g. sickness absence, annual leave, unpaid leave etc.

### **11.0 FRAUDULENT CLAIMS**

The University can, where there is a suspicion that fraudulent information may have been provided or where the University has been informed by the HMRC that a fraudulent claim was made, investigate the matter further in accordance with the usual investigation and disciplinary procedures.

### **12.0 ALTERNATIVE FORMAT**

This document can be provided in alternative formats on request by emailing [HRInbox@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:HRInbox@rgu.ac.uk) or by phoning 01224 262625.

### **13.0 CHANGE CONTROL RECORD**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Approval date:</b>	<b>Amendment made:</b>	<b>Approved by:</b>

## SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE FAQs

### **1. When can I decide to take SPL?**

You can choose to take SPL at any time before the child's first birthday or before the first anniversary of the placement for adoption.

### **2. How much notice do I have to give the University to begin SPL?**

Where eligible for SPL, you will be required to give a minimum of 8 weeks' notice prior to SPL being taken. Earlier conversations with your manager are encouraged as this will facilitate planning and any required back fill to your role. You should follow the notification process set out in section 6.0.

### **3. How is my contract of employment affected?**

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.

### **4. What happens to my annual leave?**

While you are on SPL, your contractual holiday entitlement continues to accrue. Annual leave cannot be taken during a period of SPL. After the period of SPL, arrangements should be made to take any annual leave which has been accrued following their return to work, unless it is not a full day.

### **5. What happens with public holidays?**

All public holidays that fall in the period of SPL will be accrued as normal. Accrued holidays will be dealt with as per the provisions for annual leave detailed above.

### **6. How does SPL affect increments?**

Incremental salary increases will not be affected by SPL and, where appropriate, you will be entitled to receive your normal annual increment on your salary scale.

### **7. Can same-sex couples take SPL?**

Yes. You can take SPL with your spouse, civil partner or partner. Partner is defined as someone (whether of a different gender or the same) who lives with you in an enduring family relationship (but who is not your child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew).

## **8. Can both parents take SPL at the same time?**

Yes, where eligible, both parents can be absent from work on SPL at the same time.

## **9. What happens if both the mother/primary adopter and the partner work for the University and want to take a period of SPL?**

Both employees will be entitled to take SPL provided that they meet the eligibility and notice requirements. Where both parents are employed by the University the entitlement to OShPP is shared across both parents and not applied individually.

## **10. If an employee takes SPL with their partner, who is responsible for paying the employee's partner?**

If an employee takes SPL with their partner, it is the employer of the partner who is responsible for paying the partner.

An employee does not have a right to transfer entitlement to enhanced pay to their partner. For example, if a mother/primary adopter works for an organisation that pays enhanced contractual pay to employees on SPL and they take SPL with their partner, who works for another organisation that does not enhance ShPP, the mother/primary adopter will be paid by their employer in accordance with its policy, but the partner will not receive enhanced pay for any period of SPL that they take. If the partner is entitled to statutory shared parental pay for any period of SPL (e.g. if the shared entitlement to statutory pay is not being used up by the mother/primary adopter), this will be paid by their employer, i.e. the partner's employer.

## **11. How will leave/pay affect my pension?**

During any period of paid SPL your full pension membership will continue. Your normal pension contributions will be based on the actual pay you receive during this period and the University will continue to pay normal contributions based on your notional full pay.

### **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)**

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

## **Scottish Teachers Superannuation Scheme (STSS)**

During any period of unpaid SPL, your 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.

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

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.

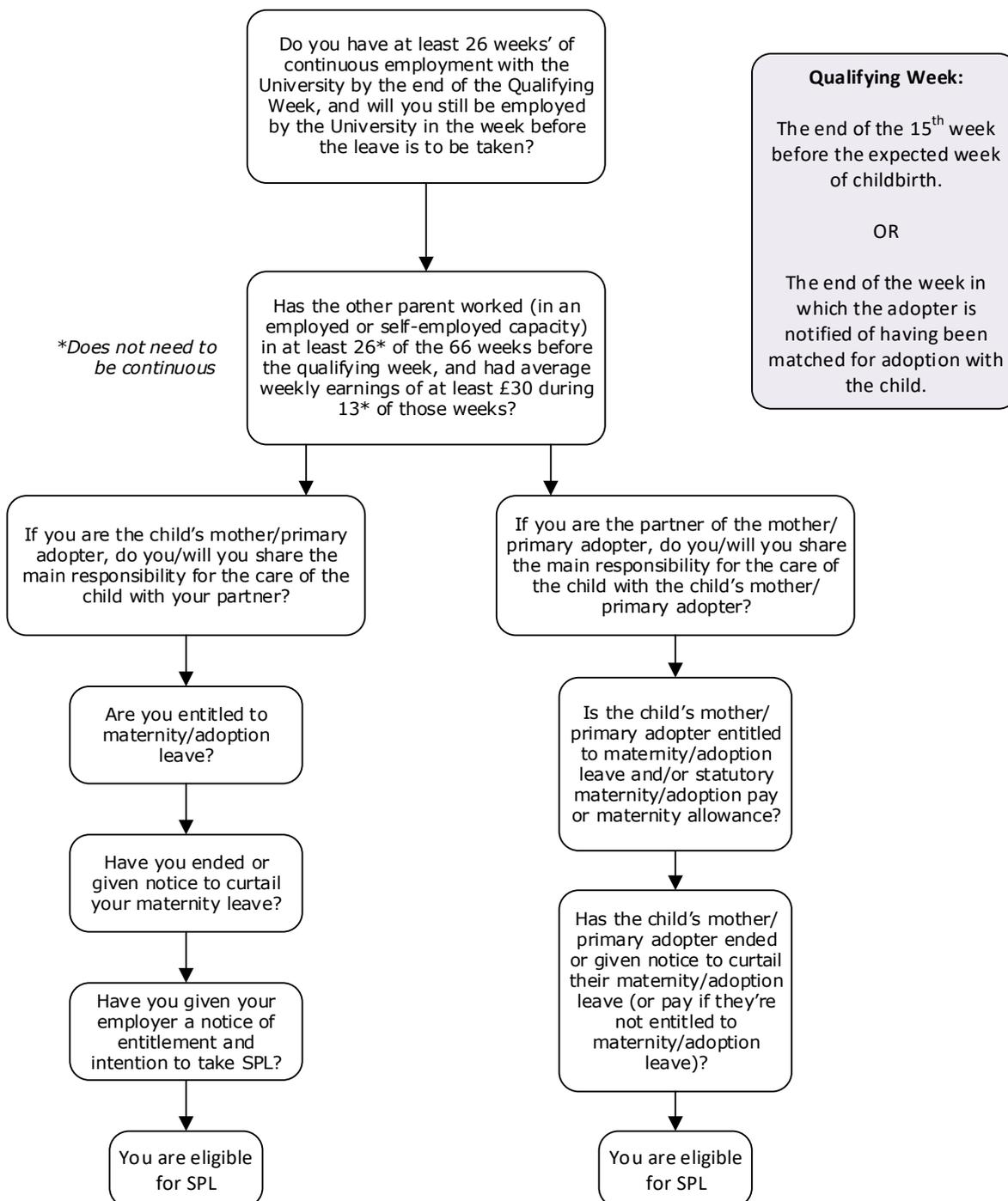
[Kings Camps](#) is a holiday childcare provider (OFSTED-registered) which operate from RGU:SPORT on the University campus during the Easter, Summer and October holidays. University Employees can book in advance to spread the cost and currently receive a discount.

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

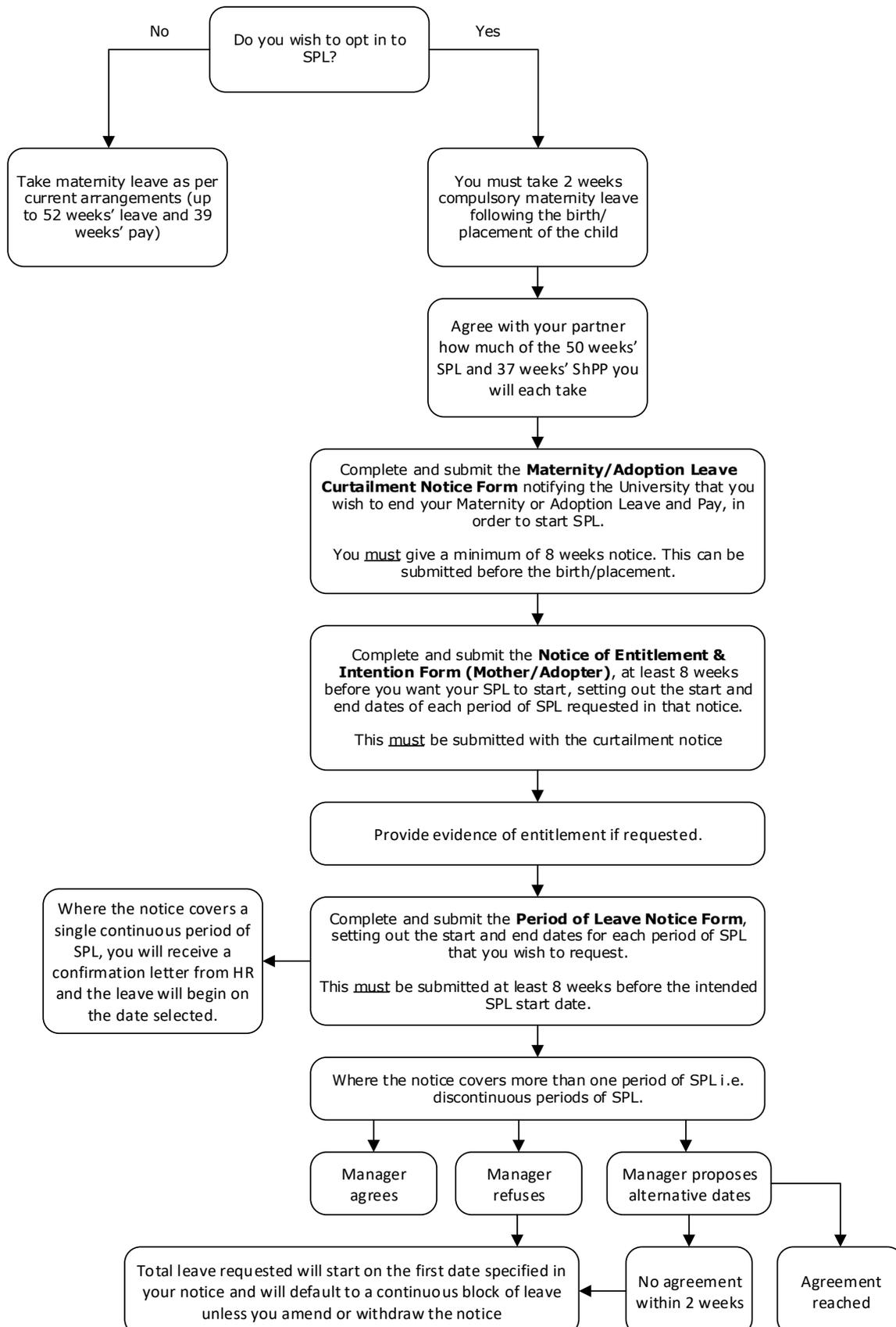
#### **University Support Helpline**

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.

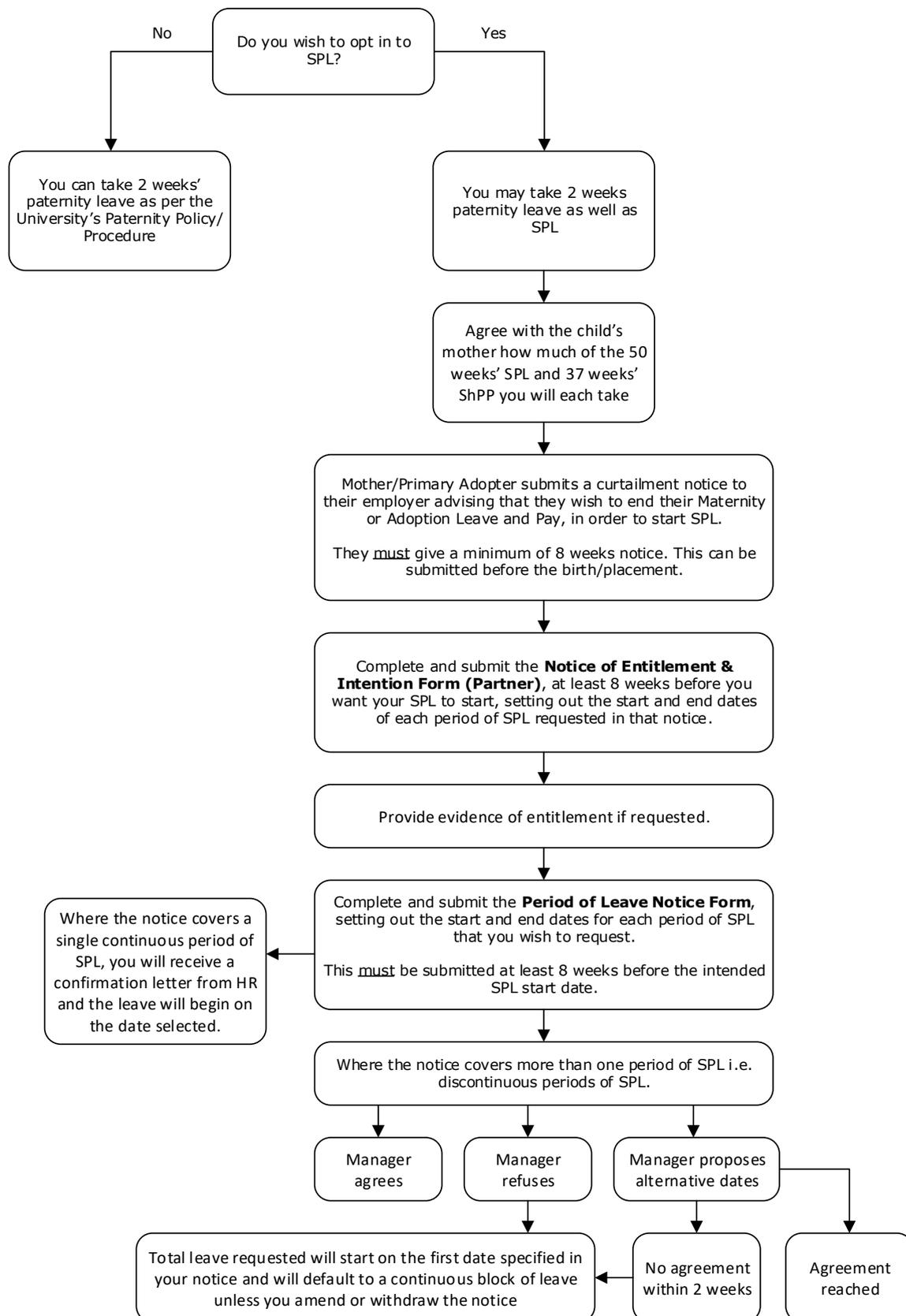
### Assessing eligibility for SPL



## SPL Process for Mother/Primary Adopter



## SPL Process for Partner



 <b>ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN</b>	<b>Shared Parental Leave: Planning Checklist for Managers</b>
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The following guidance should be read in conjunction with the University's Shared Parental Leave Policy and Procedure.

It is beneficial to both the employee and their manager to start planning for leave as early as possible. The following checklist is provided to assist the manager to plan for the period of leave.

For RGU Shared Parental Leave Guidance please visit:  
<https://you.rgu.ac.uk/org/hr/SitePages/HR%20Policies.aspx>

#### **BEFORE LEAVE:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Ensure the employee is aware of, able to access and reads the University's <a href="#">Shared Parental Leave Policy/Procedure</a> , as this is likely to confirm the answers to a number of questions they may have. It will also enable you to identify your responsibilities, as a manager, in supporting the process.	
Ensure the employee understands their entitlements during the period of leave.	
In the case of the Mother/Primary Adopter, ensure that they have completed their <a href="#">Maternity/Adoption Leave Curtailment Notice Form (form 1)</a> and submitted this to the HR department. The employee must give a minimum of 8 weeks' notice before any intended period of SPL. This can be submitted prior to the birth/placement of their child.	
In the case of the Mother/Primary Adopted, ensure that they have completed their <a href="#">Notice of Entitlement and Intention Form – Mother/Primary Adopter Form (form 2)</a> and submitted this to the HR department. This should be submitted along with their Maternity/Adoption Leave Curtailment Notice Form.  In the case of the Partner, ensure that they have completed their <a href="#">Notice of Entitlement and Intention Form – Partner</a> and submitted this to the HR department.	
Where requested, ensure that the employee provides evidence of their entitlement to SPL.	
Ensure the employee completes their <a href="#">Period of Leave Notice Form (form 3)</a> and submits this to the HR department. This must be submitted at least 8 weeks before the intended SPL start date.	
Where the period of leave notice covers more than one period of leave i.e. discontinuous periods of SPL, as the manager you will have 14 calendar days to review the leave request and either agree, refuse or propose alternative dates. HR should be consulted in reaching a decision.	

Once a decision has been made you should discuss this with your employee, HR will then follow up by confirming this in writing to the employee.	
Discuss with the employee how they wish to use their annual leave prior to and after the leave period.	
With the employee, discuss and agree plans for leave arrangements e.g. cover for their workload during their period of leave.	
With the employee, discuss and agree a communication plan for contact during the leave period, including SPLIT (Shared Parental Leave In Touch) days, noting that these days are optional. With the exception of SPLIT days, staff members who are on shared parental leave are not allowed to work. This expectation should be communicated to the employee.  SPLIT days should be recorded using the <a href="#">SPLIT Days Form</a> .	

#### **DURING LEAVE:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Maintain contact with the employee, as agreed with them prior to period of shared parental leave.	
Remember that the employee's contract of employment continues during the period of shared parental leave. It is important that the employee continues to receive any formal communications as well as the more informal, i.e. regarding social activities, etc.	
Finalise arrangements for any agreed SPLIT days and arrange payment for these through the Payroll department.	
Should the employee's formal Employee Performance Review (EPR) meeting fall whilst they are on maternity leave, they can if they wish be reviewed remotely.  Alternatively the timing of the meeting can be adjusted, with the intention of holding it as close to the end of the review cycle as possible. Objectives set on the employees return should be realistic and appropriate and take into account their period of leave.	
Create an appropriate re-induction programme for the employee.	
Consider office arrangements for the employees return.	
Consider flexible working applications (if applicable).	
With the employee, consider and identify any potential training requirements for their return whilst also considering any additional support that the employee may need upon their return.	

**RETURNING FROM LEAVE:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Ensure breastfeeding arrangements and risk assessments are in place (if applicable, contact HR when required).	
Administer an appropriate re-induction programme.	
Ensure the employee receives appropriate updates on new or amended systems of work, and any new members of staff and/or staff departures.	
With the employee, discuss and agree EPR objectives (if applicable).	
Arrange regular meetings with the employee to discuss how their return is going and ensuring any reasonable identified support is put in place.	
Review flexible working arrangements (if appropriate) and any other family friendly policies that may be applicable.	

 <b>ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN</b>	<b>Shared Parental Leave: Planning Checklist for Employees</b>
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The following guidance should be read in conjunction with the University's [Shared Parental Leave Policy/Procedure](#).

It is beneficial to both the employee and their manager to start planning for leave as early as possible. The following checklist is provided to assist the employee to plan for their period of leave.

For RGU Shared Parental Leave (SPL) Guidance please visit:  
<https://you.rgu.ac.uk/org/hr/SitePages/HR%20Policies.aspx>

#### **BEFORE LEAVE:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed</b>
<p>Read the University's <a href="#">Shared Parental Leave Policy/Procedure</a>, as this provides an overview of the whole process, the provisions you may be entitled to and what will be required from both you and your manager at different stages of the process.</p> <p>Should you have any questions after reading the policy, please contact the HR department.</p>	
<p>At least 8 weeks before your intended start of shared parental leave, you must inform your manager of your intention to take shared parental leave and supply the HR department with the following completed forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(Form 1)</b> <a href="#">Maternity/Adoption Leave Curtailment Notice Form</a> (to be completed by a Mother/Primary Adopter, unless they have already returned to work from maternity/adoption leave)</li> <li>• <b>(Form 2)</b> <a href="#">Notice of Entitlement &amp; Intention Form – Mother/Primary Adopter</a> OR <a href="#">Notice of Entitlement &amp; Intention Form - Partner</a></li> <li>• <b>(Form 3)</b> <a href="#">Period of Leave Notice Form</a></li> </ul> <p>Earlier conversations with your manager are encouraged as this will facilitate planning and any required back fill to your role.</p>	
<p>Where requested, within 14 calendar days of submitting your shared parental leave notice, provide evidence of your entitlement to shared parental leave to the HR department.</p>	
<p>With your manager, discuss and agree plans for your period of leave(s), including required handovers.</p>	
<p>With your manager, discuss and agree contact during the leave period, including SPLIT (Shared Parental Leave keep In Touch days), these days are optional.</p>	

Discuss with your manager how you wish to use your annual leave leading up to and/or following your leave period(s).	
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**DURING SPL:**

Action	Completed
Maintain the agreed contact with your manager and if utilised, ensure that SPLIT days (20 maximum) are used as agreed.  Having regular contact with your manager maintains your relationship and facilitates the use of SPLIT days for work related activities.	
With your manager, discuss and agree plans for your return to work, i.e. breastfeeding arrangements and risk assessments (if applicable), re-induction and workload.	
If you are considering flexible working arrangements following your period of leave, you must ensure you allow adequate time to discuss this with your manager and submit the formal application prior to your return.  Employees should refer to the University's <a href="#">Flexible Working Scheme</a> for full details and information on how to submit a flexible working request.	

**RETURNING FROM SPL:**

Action	Completed
Ensure breastfeeding arrangements and risk assessments are in place (if applicable, contact HR when required).	
Complete an appropriate re-induction programme. This may include training where required.	
With your manager, discuss and agree EPR objectives (if applicable).	
Raise any concerns as soon as possible with your Manager and/or your HR Business Partner/Adviser.	