



Maternity Leave and Pay

Overview

The following outlines the University's Maternity Provisions and the requirements on both the University and the individual intending to take Maternity Leave.

Eligibility

All pregnant colleagues are eligible to take Maternity Leave regardless of length of service or contracted hours. The actual amount of Maternity Leave entitlement and Maternity Pay is based on statutory regulations and contractual conditions of service.

Maternity Leave

Maternity Leave can be for a period of up to 52 weeks. The first 26 weeks are defined as Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML). The second 26 are defined as Additional Maternity Leave (AML).

The 2 weeks from the actual date of childbirth is known as Compulsory Maternity Leave and individuals are not permitted to work during this period.

The right to return to work exists for all colleagues taking maternity leave. However the right to return varies slightly depending on exactly when an individual returns to work.

Colleagues who return to work before or at the end of their OML will return to the job they had prior to starting Maternity Leave. An individual returning during or at the end of the AML period has the right to return to a job, which might not necessarily be the one they had prior to their Maternity Leave.

Pay, Notification and Contact

Maternity Pay is a combination of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) or Maternity Allowance and if eligible, Occupational Maternity Pay. To qualify for Occupational Maternity Pay, colleagues should have at least 26 weeks continuous service with the University by the time of the 15th week prior to the expected week of childbirth (the Qualifying Week). A summary of Maternity Pay entitlement is as follows:

Length of Service at the Qualifying Week	Maternity Pay Entitlement
More than 26 weeks	39 weeks made up of 18 weeks Occupational Maternity Pay as follows: 4 weeks at full pay 2 weeks at 90% of average weekly earnings 12 weeks at half pay plus flat rate Statutory Maternity Pay (where the figure does not exceed full pay or 90% of average weekly earnings). Followed by 21 weeks of flat rate Statutory Maternity Pay.
Less than 26 weeks	Employees may be eligible for Maternity Allowance which can be claimed through Job Centre Plus

A colleague who earns less than the lower earnings level limit for National Insurance contributions is not entitled to receive SMP. They may however be eligible for Maternity Allowance which can be claimed through Job Centre Plus.

Payment of Occupational Maternity Pay is conditional on the individual returning to work for a period of at least 12 weeks following their Maternity Leave. Colleagues therefore have the option of deferring the employer element of Occupational Maternity Pay until the end of the 12 week period following their return. In that case the individual will receive Statutory Maternity Pay at 90% of their salary for 6 weeks followed by 33 weeks of Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance during the 39 week Maternity Pay Period.

In the event of a colleague who received Occupational Maternity Pay not returning from Maternity Leave for the required 12 weeks, they will be required to refund the employer element of Occupational Maternity Pay.

Notification of Maternity Leave

Pregnant colleagues are encouraged to inform their manager as soon as they are able that they are pregnant and intending to take Maternity Leave. Pregnant colleagues are entitled to time off with pay to attend ante-natal appointments, which could include classes.

Individuals must formally inform the University of when they want to start Maternity Leave no later than the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth, and must complete the [Maternity and Adoption Leave Notification Form](#). The date given can be changed by the individual provided she gives 28 days notice of the new date.

Maternity Leave will commence on the date stated on the [Maternity and Adoption Leave Notification Form](#) unless the birth occurs before the previously notified date, in which case the Maternity Leave and Pay Period will begin the day after the birth.

If ill, a colleague will normally be able to take sick leave until she starts Maternity Leave. If the illness is unrelated to her pregnancy, she can remain on sick leave right up to the date of the baby's birth, or until the date she has notified as the date she intends to begin her Maternity Leave. If the illness is pregnancy-related, the Maternity Leave period starts automatically on the first day of absence following the beginning of the fourth week before the expected week of childbirth.

All colleagues have a responsibility to complete the [Pregnant Workers Risk Assessment Form](#).

Contact during Maternity Leave

A colleague is encouraged to agree contact arrangements with their line manager. Contact is beneficial and will enable the manager to keep the individual informed of events, developments at work and will assist the transition back into the workplace. Managers will also be able respond to any concerns or queries they may have, for example return to work arrangements.

A colleague can agree with her manager to come to work for up to 10 'Keeping in Touch' days during her Maternity Leave, without bringing the Maternity Leave to an end. For this purpose 'work' includes any work done under the contract and could include training or other activities which keep them informed and updated on developments within their own area of work or the wider University. Full pay will be paid for KIT days worked at the end of your maternity leave.

Individuals on Maternity Leave are also encouraged to keep themselves updated with developments at the University by accessing the [University website](#).

Methods of Payment, Returning and Shared Parental Leave

Method of Payment during Maternity Leave

During Maternity Leave the payments that are due to colleagues will be made in exactly the same way as they receive their salary, i.e. monthly to an individual's bank / building society account. The pay statement will still be available to view on MyHR.

Returning from Maternity Leave

As part of their notification of Maternity Leave, colleagues should as far as possible give an intended date of return. Where this is provided no further notification is required. If the colleague wishes to amend the previously notified date or no previous notification was given, they must give their line manager at least 8 weeks' notice of the return date.

Our Coaching Transition Programme aims to support colleagues returning to work following an extended period of leave. Find out about how [coaching](#) could help you or contact [AskHR](#).

Postponement of Return due to Illness

Colleagues who are unable to return due to ill-health can postpone their return by submitting a Fit Note. This must be submitted prior to the previously notified return date or where no notification has been provided, prior to the end of the Maternity Leave period. In this case the provisions of the Sick Pay Scheme will apply from the notified date of return or the end of the maximum period of Maternity Leave.

Shared Parental Leave (SPL)

Shared Parental Leave gives parents the opportunity to share the caring responsibilities during the child's first year and allows mothers to share elements of their Adoption Leave with their partner, if eligible. Further details are to be found in the [Shared Parental Leave Provisions](#).

Pensions and Other Policies

Pensions

For those colleagues who are members of a pension scheme, pension contributions will be deducted each month in the normal manner during Maternity Pay Period. However periods of unpaid Maternity Leave may not count for pension benefits. For further information please follow the relevant link below:

[Local Government Pension Scheme](#) (LGPS)

[Teachers' Pension Scheme](#) (TPS)

[Universities Superannuation Scheme](#) (USS)

Salary Sacrifice

Maternity Leave will impact on your eligibility for or continued participation in a Salary Sacrifice Scheme. For further information staff should refer to the [Salary Sacrifice Guidance](#).

Annual Leave

Annual Leave will accrue during the full period of Maternity Leave and with agreement, may be taken immediately prior to or following Maternity Leave.

Additionally, following paid Maternity Leave a colleague may wish to take annual leave instead of unpaid Maternity Leave. In that situation the Maternity Leave Period will end when annual leave commences.

Annual leave should normally be taken in the year in which it accrues. However this is not always possible where there is a period of Maternity Leave.

If there is leave untaken for the year in which the Maternity Leave began this must be taken at the end of the Maternity Leave Period, immediately prior to returning to work. Leave accrued during the Maternity Leave period in the new holiday year will normally be taken at the end of the Maternity Leave period.

Colleague will also be credited for Bank Holidays and institutional Closure Days that fall during the Maternity Leave Period (pro-rata for part-time staff). These days must be taken at the end of the Maternity Leave period.

Other Information

Female colleagues who suffer a stillbirth after 24 weeks, or whose child dies shortly after birth are entitled to take maternity leave in the normal way.

This Policy was reviewed in July 2022