



Family Leave and Benefits Policy

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Version	19
Effective date	April 2025
Review date	April 2028

Please note, this policy will remain in place until it is superseded by an updated version or withdrawn from circulation.

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy details some of the special circumstances under which employees of the University are entitled to take leave. Some of the requirements and benefits of the University's schemes may vary from the statutory requirements and benefits but will be no less favourable. Each is explained in detail below, but employees may wish to discuss their entitlement with the People Services Team via ServiceNow. While this policy is to be followed by all employees of the University, it does not form part of an employee's contract of employment.
- 1.2 This policy has been agreed with the campus trade unions. Any future changes will be made in consultation with the trade unions, in advance, with the exception of 'housekeeping' changes which may be required, for example where names have changed, or legislation requires minor changes.

2. Inclusivity statement

- 2.1 The University of Hull is committed to creating a diverse and strong community of talented and motivated individuals where everyone feels respected and supported throughout each stage of their lives. This policy refers to all employees who have/are giving birth and all couples regardless of gender.
- 2.2 As outlined in our Social Justice and Inclusion Strategy, we expect and support all members of the University to embrace our collective and personal responsibility to work together in fostering a diverse and inclusive community where everyone feels welcome, safe and empowered. All members of our University community are expected to treat everyone with dignity and respect. As a community we want everyone to feel welcomed and valued, it is the responsibility of all employees, students and visitors to adhere to our University values.
- 2.3 In addition to the entitlements set out below, the University offers a wide range of wellbeing support and encourages all employees to be aware and access this support via the Staff Portal.

3. Maternity leave

Eligibility and entitlements

- 3.1 Maternity leave applies to all pregnant employees. The provisions apply whether or not a live birth occurs for any pregnancy lasting at least 24 weeks, or where a baby is born alive at any point in the pregnancy.
- 3.2 All pregnant employees regardless of length of service are entitled to:

- Paid time off to attend for antenatal care but may be required to produce evidence of appointments. Employees should discuss any requirements with their line manager, giving as much notice as possible. Such time off will not be unreasonably refused.
- **Statutory 'ordinary' maternity leave**
26 weeks' leave during which time all terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and 'other' University days at Christmas if the period of statutory 'ordinary' maternity leave falls over these periods)). Employees who wish to return to work during this period have a statutory right to return to their original job.
- **Statutory 'additional' maternity leave**
26 weeks' leave during which time all terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and 'other' University days at Christmas if the period of statutory 'additional' maternity leave falls over these periods)). Employees who wish to take 'additional' maternity leave do not have a statutory right to return to their original job. Where it is not possible to return to their original job, they have a right to return to a job that is similar and on the same pay band.
- During the first 39 weeks of leave, employees may be entitled to receive statutory maternity pay (SMP), depending on their length of service, and income. This should be discussed with the People Services Team via ServiceNow who will give details of eligibility and amounts payable.

3.3 Pregnant employees who have been continuously employed by the University for a minimum period of 26 weeks at the end of the qualifying week¹, and who are expecting to return to work are entitled to:

- Paid time off to attend for antenatal care as above.
- **'Occupational' maternity leave²**
Option 1 - 18 weeks' leave on full pay ('occupational' maternity pay (OMP)) plus up to 52 weeks unpaid leave.
-OR-
Option 2 - 8 weeks' leave on full pay (OMP) and 16 weeks on half pay (half OMP), plus up to 52 weeks' unpaid leave.
During this period, all terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and 'other' University days at Christmas if the period of 'ordinary' maternity leave falls over these periods)).
- During the first 39 weeks of leave, employees may be entitled to receive statutory maternity pay (SMP), depending on their length of service, and income. This should be discussed with the People Services Team via ServiceNow who will give details of eligibility and amounts payable.

¹ The qualifying week is 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth.

² 'Occupational' maternity pay is conditional upon employees returning to work for at least 3 months after their period of leave.

- 3.4 If eligible, SMP will be subsumed by full salary, paid in addition to half salary and paid during unpaid 'occupational' maternity leave where appropriate. No combination of payments will exceed full pay. For example, if eligible, an employee who chooses to take a year (52 weeks) off, selecting 'occupational' maternity leave of 8 weeks on full pay, followed by 16 weeks on half pay would receive the following:
- 8 weeks' full pay (SMP subsumed)
 - 16 weeks' half pay plus SMP
 - 15 weeks' SMP
 - 13 weeks' unpaid leave

Maternity leave and pay for part-year employees

- 3.5 Entitlements for part-year employees are the same as above, however during periods of stand down, only SMP would continue to be paid. 'Occupational' maternity leave would stop during periods of stand down, and resume as appropriate, at the end of the stand down period. For example, if eligible, an employee who is due to be stood down for 8 weeks from 14 July, and who chooses to take a year (52 weeks) off, selecting 'occupational' maternity leave of 18 weeks on full pay, from 1 July would receive the following:
- 2 weeks' full pay (SMP subsumed)
 - 8 weeks' SMP while stood down
 - 8 weeks' full pay (SMP subsumed)
 - 21 weeks' SMP
 - 13 weeks' unpaid leave

Notification of intention to take maternity leave

- 3.6 To qualify for statutory maternity leave, notification of pregnancy, supported by a medical certificate (MAT B1), and date the employee wishes maternity leave to begin, should be submitted to People Services at least 28 days before the start of leave using a Maternity Leave Application Form. People Services will respond to this request as soon as possible and certainly within 28 days.
- 3.7 However, in order to assist the University to discharge its responsibilities towards the health and safety of the pregnant employee and their unborn child, it is advisable that notification should be made at an early stage in the pregnancy.

Health and safety risk assessments

- 3.8 As part of their workplace risk assessments, managers are required to have considered the potential risks to an unborn child or new or expectant parent. If notified that an employee is

pregnant, breastfeeding or has given birth within the last 6 months, managers must check their workplace risk assessment to see if any new risks have arisen and continue to monitor and manage risks as they arise. In certain circumstances, for health and safety reasons it may be necessary to temporarily move a new or expectant parent or change the work that they carry out. Specific advice about risk assessments should be sought from the Health and Safety Directorate.

Start of leave entitlement

- 3.9 Leave can start any time from the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth.
- 3.10 Leave will be triggered automatically by law if:
- The employee gives birth.
 - The employee is absent wholly or partly because of a pregnancy-related illness or childbirth after the beginning of the 4th week before the expected week of childbirth.

Keeping in touch

- 3.11 The University may need to contact the employee on maternity leave, but any contact would only occur where necessary and reasonable, for example to keep them advised of departmental changes, or to discuss the return to work. The employee is encouraged to keep in touch with their department and the University while they are on leave. They may use the Staff Portal to keep up to date with the University, if they have access to it, but if not, they may wish to contact their line manager or the People Services Team to have any relevant information forwarded to them.
- 3.12 There may be occasions during a period of maternity leave where it would be beneficial for an employee to attend for work or training. This could be used to attend team meetings, conferences or training events for example. A maximum of 10 of these 'keeping in touch' days will be possible during a period of maternity leave without bringing maternity leave or pay to an end. Such days would only occur where both the employee and the University agree, and an employee should feel under no obligation at all if they do not wish to work during their leave. Keeping in touch days may not take place during the first 2 weeks immediately after the birth of the baby. Any day or part of a day would count as one of the 10 allowable keeping in touch days. Any period of work would be paid using the normal hourly or daily rate minus any 'occupational' or statutory maternity pay received for that day.

Notice of return to work

- 3.13 No notice is required to return to work at the end of the agreed periods of 'occupational' maternity leave, statutory 'ordinary' maternity leave or statutory 'additional' maternity leave.

- 3.14 At least 8 weeks' notice in writing on a return-to-work form is required if an employee wishes to return before the agreed end date of 'occupational' maternity leave, statutory 'ordinary' maternity leave, or statutory 'additional' maternity leave. If this notice is not given, the employee's return may be postponed in order for the full notice to be given (or until the agreed leave would ordinarily have ended).

Return to work

- 3.15 Return to work cannot take place within 2 weeks of the birth.
- 3.16 Wherever possible, employees will normally return to the job in which they were employed under the original contract of employment and on terms and conditions no less favourable than those which would have been applicable to them if they had not been absent.
- 3.17 If during the maternity leave period the employee's position becomes redundant, the employee will be offered suitable alternative employment if it is available. No employee will be selected for redundancy because they are pregnant, on maternity leave or has taken maternity leave.
- 3.18 All accrued annual leave, including public holidays and University 'other' days at Christmas, regardless of the holiday year accrued in, may be added immediately to the end of the maternity leave period, but only that holiday accrued during the current holiday year can be taken once the employee has returned to work.
- 3.19 All of our employees have the right to request flexible working from day one of employment. We encourage open discussion and employees who think they may benefit from flexible working are encouraged to speak to their line manager to talk informally about the options that may be available. To make a formal request for flexible working, please refer to the Flexible Working Policy.
- 3.20 Those who are breastfeeding may wish to discuss options to feed their baby and/or express and store milk on their return to work. They should discuss this privately with their manager. A risk assessment may be undertaken, and the manager should ensure the individual is given rest breaks and provided with suitable accommodation and storage facilities. Our campus is feeding friendly, and our café spaces provide a relaxed and comfortable space for feeding a child. We also have a dedicated feeding room with storage facilities for any parent wanting to express milk during the day.

Non return to work

- 3.21 Any absence in excess of the periods stated above, supported by a medical certificate will be dealt with under the arrangements for sickness absence.

- 3.22 If an individual decides not to return to work as planned, they should give notice of this in writing to People Services, stating a date of resignation.
- 3.23 Any employee who fails to keep to their return to work without explanation or notice of resignation, will receive a request in writing for information about their return to work, requiring a response within 21 days. Investigation and possible disciplinary action will follow as necessary.
- 3.24 The University will reclaim the non-statutory element of maternity pay if an employee who has taken 'occupational' maternity leave resigns or fails to return to work at the agreed time, for a period of at least 3 months.

4. Right to attend antenatal appointments

Eligibility and entitlements

- 4.1 All parents, including intended parents in a surrogacy situation and a pregnant person's partner, have the statutory right to unpaid time off to accompany the pregnant person up to two antenatal appointments.
- 4.2 This right takes effect from the first day of employment.

Notification of intention to take time off

- 4.3 As soon as practicable, employees should contact their line manager about the need to take time off work, giving dates and times.

5. Paternity leave

- 5.1 Paternity leave is a period of 1 or 2 weeks usually taken around the time of the birth or adoption or shortly after.

Eligibility and entitlements

- 5.2 Paternity leave applies to all employees, who:
- Have secondary caring responsibilities, are the birth parent's spouse/partner, or are the spouse/partner of an individual who adopts.
 - Have or expect to have responsibility for the child's upbringing.
 - Continue in employment with the University up to the date the baby is born, or child placed with the adopter.

- 5.3 Employees who have been continuously employed by the University for 26 weeks at the end of the qualifying week³, or continuously employed for 26 weeks by the week in which the adopter is notified of being matched with a child, are entitled to 1 week's leave on full pay plus 1 week's leave at statutory paternity pay (SPP) for each pregnancy or adoption, regardless of whether more than one child is born or adopted. People Services can give details of current rates and eligibility.
- 5.4 Paternity leave can be taken in either 1- or 2 -week blocks at any time within 52 weeks of the birth or adoption.
- 5.5 All terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and 'other' University days at Christmas if the period of paternity leave falls over these periods)).
- 5.6 All of our employees have the right to request flexible working from day one of employment. We encourage open discussion and employees who think they may benefit from flexible working are encouraged to speak to their line manager to talk informally about the options that may be available. To make a formal request for flexible working, please refer to the Flexible Working Policy.

Notification of intention to take paternity leave

- 5.7 Paternity leave requests should be submitted via Workday as soon as possible and no later than 28 days before the start of leave, unless there is good reason for the delay. The University recognises that when an adoption is taking place, adoption leave may need to begin with short notice therefore the start date of leave can be subsequently altered, giving as much notice as is reasonably practicable and 28 days' notice wherever possible. People Services will respond to requests as soon as possible and certainly within 28 days.

Bereaved partners paternity leave and pay

- 5.8 In the sad situation where a child's mother, or the person with who the child is placed or expected to be placed for adoption, dies in childbirth or within 12 months of the child's birth (or placement for adoption), the bereaved father, or partner of the deceased has a statutory right to bereaved partners paternity leave from day one for up to 52 weeks with the rights to paternity pay remaining as outlined in this policy. This leave must be taken in one continuous block. Where the bereavement occurs less than 14 days before the end of the 12-month period, staff may take up to 14 days bereaved partners paternity leave. This will include a provision for keeping in touch days and a right to enhanced redundancy protection (aligned to the provisions set out in this policy for other statutory leave benefits such as maternity, adoption and shared parental leave).

³ The qualifying week is 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth.

Notification to take bereaved partners paternity leave

5.9 Applications for bereaved partners paternity leave should be made, as soon as possible. Where leave begins within 8 weeks of the bereavement, staff are expected to give notice orally and on a short timescale. Within the 8-week period, staff must confirm in writing how much leave they plan to take and their intended return date. Where staff wish to take this leave more than 8 weeks after the bereavement, they must give at least 1 week's written notice. Staff may vary or cancel leave and amend their intended return date, subject to 28 days' notice, wherever possible.

6. Adoption leave

Eligibility and entitlements

6.1 Adoption leave is a day one right that applies to:

- One member of a couple who adopt jointly (the couple may choose which partner takes adoption leave (the other member of the couple may be entitled to other parental leave and pay options)).
- The employee must be newly⁴ matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency and have worked continuously for the University for at least 26 weeks by the week in which they are notified of being matched with a child for adoption.
- These rules apply to those who adopt from the UK only. Employees adopting from abroad may be eligible for adoption leave and pay, but the detailed operation of the scheme will be different, and you should contact the People Services Team via ServiceNow for advice.

6.2 All adoptive parents regardless of length of service are entitled to:

- Attend all mandatory appointments in relation to adoption either through paid leave or agile working practices. Appointments include but are not limited to adoption training, assessment meetings, medical appointments, adoption and matching panels, introductions and placements. Employees should discuss their requirements with their line manager giving as much notice as possible. All requirements will be assessed on an individual basis, and such requests will not be unreasonably refused. Evidence of appointments may be requested. Employees and managers are encouraged to work in a flexible, supportive and problem-solving way that enables employees to attend the mandatory appointments, whilst still meeting the objectives of their role.
- **Statutory 'ordinary' adoption leave**
26 weeks' leave during which time all terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and 'other' University days at Christmas if the period of 'ordinary' adoption leave falls over these periods)). This period is the same irrespective of whether more than one child is placed for adoption as part of the same arrangement.

⁴ Not available where a stepparent is adopting a partner's children for example.

- **Statutory ‘additional’ adoption leave**

26 weeks’ leave during which time all terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and ‘other’ University days at Christmas if the period of ‘additional’ adoption leave falls over these periods)).

- During the first 39-week period, employees may be entitled to receive statutory adoption pay (SAP), depending on their length of service and income. This should be discussed with the People Services Team via ServiceNow.

6.3 Employees who have been continuously employed by the University for a minimum period of 40 weeks by the week in which a child is matched for adoption, and who are expecting to return to work are entitled to:

- Paid time off for the purpose of having contact with the child or for any other purpose connected with the adoption as above.

- **‘Occupational’ adoption leave**

Option 1 - 18 weeks’ leave on full pay (‘occupational’ adoption pay (OAP)) plus up to 52 weeks unpaid leave.

-OR-

Option 2 - 8 weeks’ leave on full pay (OAP) and 16 weeks on half pay (half OAP), plus up to 52 weeks’ unpaid leave.

During this period, all terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and ‘other’ University days at Christmas if the period of ‘occupational’ adoption leave falls over these periods)).

- During the first 39 weeks of leave, employees may be entitled to receive statutory adoption pay (SAP), depending on their income. This should be discussed with the People Services Team via ServiceNow who will give details of eligibility and amounts payable.

6.4 If eligible, SAP will be subsumed by full salary, paid in addition to half salary and paid during unpaid ‘occupational’ adoption leave where appropriate. No combination of payments will exceed full pay. For example, if eligible, an employee who chooses to take a year (52 weeks) off, selecting ‘occupational’ adoption leave of 8 weeks on full pay, followed by 16 weeks on half pay, would receive the following:

- 8 weeks’ full pay (SAP subsumed)
- 16 weeks’ half pay plus SAP
- 15 weeks’ SAP
- 13 weeks’ unpaid leave

Notification of intention to take adoption leave

- 6.5 Applications should be made in writing on an Adoption Leave Application Form, to People Services, within 7 days of notification of their matching, stating the date of the intended absence. The University recognises that when an adoption is taking place, adoption leave may need to begin with short notice therefore the start date of leave can be subsequently altered, giving as much notice as is reasonably practicable and 28 days' notice wherever possible. People Services will respond to this request as soon as possible but certainly within 28 days.
- 6.6 The dates of the absence must be agreed in advance with the line manager, to ensure they will not cause undue disruption in the workplace.
- 6.7 Evidence must be provided such as adoption papers or a matching certificate.

Start of leave entitlement

- 6.8 Leave must start either from the date of the child's placement, or from a fixed date which can be up to 14 days before the expected date of placement.

Keeping in touch

- 6.9 The University may need to contact an employee on adoption leave, but any contact would only occur where necessary and reasonable, for example to keep them advised of departmental changes, or to discuss the return to work. The employee is encouraged to keep in touch with their department and the University while they are on leave. They may use the Staff Portal to keep up to date with the University, if they have access to it, but if not, they may wish to contact their line manager or the People Services Team to have any relevant information forwarded to them, including jobs bulletins.
- 6.10 There may be occasions during a period of adoption leave where it would be beneficial for an employee to attend for work or training. This could be used for example to attend team meetings, conferences, training events etc. A maximum of 10 of these 'keeping in touch' days will be possible during a period of adoption leave without bringing adoption leave or pay to an end. Such days would only occur where both the employee and the University agree, and an employee should feel under no obligation at all if they do not wish to work during their leave. Any day or part of a day would count as one of the 10 allowable keeping in touch days. Any period of work will be paid using the employee's normal hourly or daily rate minus any 'occupational' or statutory adoption pay received for that day.

Notice of return to work

- 6.11 No notice is required to return to work at the end of the agreed periods of either 'occupational' adoption leave, statutory 'ordinary' adoption leave, or statutory 'additional' adoption leave.

- 6.12 At least 8 weeks' notice in writing on a return-to-work form is required if an employee wishes to return before the agreed end date of either, 'occupational' adoption leave, statutory 'ordinary' adoption leave or statutory 'additional' adoption leave. If this is not given, the employee's return may be postponed in order for the full notice to be given (or until the agreed leave would ordinarily have ended).

Return to work

- 6.13 Wherever possible, employees will normally return to the job in which they were employed under the original contract of employment and on terms and conditions not less favourable than those which would have been applicable to them if they had not been absent.
- 6.14 If the child's placement ends during the adoption leave period, or notification is received that the placement will not take place, the adopter will be able to continue statutory adoption leave and statutory adoption pay for up to 8 weeks after the end of the placement, or after notification that the placement will not take place is received.
- 6.15 If during the adoption leave period the employee's position becomes redundant, they will be offered suitable alternative employment if it is available. No employee will be selected for redundancy because they are on adoption leave or have taken adoption leave.
- 6.16 All accrued annual leave, including public holidays and University 'other' days at Christmas, regardless of the holiday year accrued in, may be added immediately to the end of the adoption leave period, but only that holiday accrued during the current holiday year can be taken once the employee has returned to work.
- 6.17 All of our employees have the right to request flexible working from day one of employment. We encourage open discussion and employees who think they may benefit from flexible working are encouraged to speak to their line manager to talk informally about the options that may be available. To make a formal request for flexible working, please refer to the Flexible Working Policy.

Non return to work

- 6.18 If an individual chooses not to return to work, they should state this in writing to People Services giving a date of resignation.
- 6.19 Any employee, who does not return to work on the date expected and then fails to respond within 21 days to any written request for information about their return to work, will face investigation and possible disciplinary action.

- 6.20 The University will reclaim the non-statutory element of adoption pay if an employee who has taken ‘occupational’ adoption leave resigns or fails to return to work at the agreed time, for a period of at least 3 months.

7. Shared parental leave

- 7.1 Shared parental leave enables eligible parents to share the care of their child during the first year of birth or adoption. This could mean that the birth parent or adopter shares some of the leave with their partner, perhaps returning to work for part of the time and then resuming leave at a later date. Parents can decide to be off work at the same time, and/or take it in turns to have periods of leave to look after the child.

Eligibility and entitlements

- 7.2 To qualify for shared parental leave an employee must satisfy the following criteria:
- The birth parent must be/have been entitled to statutory maternity/adoption leave or statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance and must have ended or given notice to reduce maternity/adoption entitlements.
 - The employee must still be working for the University at the start of each period of shared parental leave.
 - The employee must have been employed at the University for a minimum of 26 weeks at the end of the 15th week before the child’s expected due date/matching date.
 - The employee’s partner must meet the ‘employment and earnings test’ requiring them in the 66 weeks leading up to the child’s expected due date/matching date to have worked for at least 26 weeks and earned an average of at least £30 a week in any 13 of those weeks.
- 7.3 Eligible employees may be entitled to take up to 50 weeks’ shared parental leave during the child’s first year in their family. The number of weeks available is calculated using the birth parent’s/adopter’s entitlement to maternity/adoption leave, which allows them to take up to 52 weeks’ leave. If they reduce their maternity/adoption leave entitlement, they and/or their partner may opt-in to the shared parental leave system and take any remaining weeks as shared parental leave.
- 7.4 A birth parent/adopter may reduce their entitlement to maternity/adoption leave by returning to work before the full entitlement of 52 weeks has been taken, or they may give notice to curtail their leave at a specified future date.
- 7.5 If the birth parent/adopter is not entitled to maternity/adoption leave but is entitled to statutory maternity pay (SMP), statutory adoption pay (SAP) or maternity allowance (MA), they must reduce their entitlement to less than the 39 weeks. If they do this, their partner may be entitled to up to 50 weeks’ shared parental leave. This is calculated by deducting from 52 the number of weeks of SMP, SAP or MA taken by the birth parent/adopter.

- 7.6 Shared parental leave can commence as follows:
- The birth parent can take shared parental leave after they have taken the legally required 2 weeks of maternity leave immediately following the birth of the child.
 - The adopter can take shared parental leave after taking at least 2 weeks of adoption leave.
 - The partner/spouse can take shared parental leave immediately following the birth/placement of the child.
- 7.7 Where a birth parent/adopter gives notice to curtail their maternity/adoption entitlement then the birth parent/adopter's partner can take leave while the birth parent/adopter is still using their maternity/adoption entitlements.
- 7.8 If the employee is eligible to receive it, shared parental pay may be paid for some, or all, of the shared parental leave period (see shared parental pay below).
- 7.9 Shared parental leave must end no later than 1 year after the birth/placement of the child. Any shared parental leave not taken by the first birthday or first anniversary of placement for adoption is lost.
- 7.10 Shared parental leave can only be taken in complete weeks but may begin on any day of the week. For example, if a week of shared parental leave began on a Tuesday it would finish on a Monday. Where an employee returns to work between periods of shared parental leave, the next period of shared parental leave can start on any day of the week.
- 7.11 All terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and 'other' University days at Christmas if the period of shared parental leave falls over these periods)).

Notification of intention to take shared parental leave

- 7.12 Applications should be made in writing on a Shared Parental Leave Application Form to People Services, at least 8 weeks before they can take any period of shared parental leave. This includes a signed declaration from themselves, along with a signed declaration from their partner.
- 7.13 The University may, within 14 days of receipt of the application, request further details including: name and business address of the partner's employer, a birth certificate or evidence of adoption. In order to be entitled to shared parental leave, the employee must produce this information within 14 days of request.
- 7.14 The employee has the statutory right to submit three notifications specifying leave periods they intend to take or vary. Each notification may contain either (a) a single period of weeks of leave; or (b) 2 or more weeks of discontinuous leave, where the employee intends to return to work

between periods of leave, for example the employee may request to take a period of 6 weeks' unbroken leave, then to work every other week for 3 months.

- 7.15 The University is required to agree to continuous blocks of leave, if fully eligible, but has the right to refuse a discontinuous leave notification after full consideration. Where there is concern over accommodating the notification, this would be best discussed at a meeting with a view to agreeing an arrangement that meets the needs of the employee and the University.
- 7.16 Leave notifications will be dealt with as soon as possible, and a response in writing provided no later than the 14th day after the request was made.
- 7.17 The employee has the right to vary or cancel an agreed and booked period of shared parental leave, including a notice to return to work early, so long as they do this in writing at least 8 weeks before the date of any variation. This will count as one of the maximum three notifications, unless it is as a result of a child being born early, or as a result of the University requesting it be changed, and the employee being agreeable. Any variation will be confirmed in writing.

Shared parental pay

- 7.18 Eligible employees may be entitled to up to 37 weeks' shared parental pay while taking shared parental leave. The number of weeks will depend on the amount by which the birth parent/adopter reduces their maternity/adoption pay period or maternity allowance period.
- 7.19 Eligibility is also dependent on timing of the leave, length of service, and income. This should be discussed with the People Services Team via ServiceNow who will give details of eligibility and amounts payable.
- 7.20 Applications for shared parental pay should be made along with applications for leave on a Shared Parental Leave Application Form, which will include declarations by the employee and their partner.

Keeping in touch

- 7.21 The University may need to contact an employee on shared parental leave, but any contact would only occur where necessary and reasonable, for example to keep them advised of departmental changes, or to discuss their return to work. The employee is encouraged to keep in touch with their department and the University while they are on leave. They may use the Staff Portal to keep up to date with the University, if they have access to it, but if not, they may wish to contact their line manager or the People Services Team to have any relevant information forwarded to them.

- 7.22 There may be occasions during a period of shared parental leave where it would be beneficial for an employee to attend for work or training. This could be used to attend team meetings, conferences or training events for example. A maximum of 20 ‘shared parental leave in touch’ (SPLIT) days will be possible during a period of shared parental leave without bringing leave or pay to an end. Such days would only occur where both the employee and the University agree, and an employee should feel under no obligation at all if they do not wish to work during their leave. Any day or part of a day would count as one of the 20 allowable keeping in touch days. Any period of work would be paid using the normal hourly or daily rate minus any shared parental pay received for that day.

Notice of return to work

- 7.23 No notice is required to return to work at the end of the agreed period of shared parental leave.
- 7.24 At Least 8 weeks’ notice in writing on a return-to-work form is required if an employee wishes to return before the agreed end date. This will count as one of the employee’s notifications. If this notice is not given, the employee’s return may be postponed in order for the full notice to be given (or until the agreed leave would ordinarily have ended).

Return to work

- 7.25 Wherever possible, employees will normally return to the job in which they were employed under the original contract of employment and on terms and conditions no less favourable than those which would have been applicable to them if they had not been absent.
- 7.26 All accrued annual leave, including public holidays and University ‘other’ days at Christmas, regardless of the holiday year accrued in, may be added immediately to the end of the shared parental leave period, but only that holiday accrued during the current holiday year can be taken once the employee has returned to work.
- 7.27 All of our employees have the right to request flexible working from day one of employment. We encourage open discussion and employees who think they may benefit from flexible working are encouraged to speak to their line manager to talk informally about the options that may be available. To make a formal request for flexible working, please refer to the Flexible Working Policy.

Non return to work

- 7.28 Any absence in excess of the periods stated above, supported by a medical certificate will be dealt with under the arrangements for sickness absence.

- 7.29 If an individual decides not to return to work as planned, they should give notice of this in writing to People Services, stating a date of resignation.
- 7.30 Any employee who fails to return to work without explanation or notice of resignation, will receive a request in writing for information about return to work, requiring a response within 21 days. Investigation and possible disciplinary action will follow as necessary.

8. Neonatal care leave

- 8.1 Neonatal care leave and neonatal care pay are statutory provisions to support parents with additional time off to support a baby who is receiving neonatal care. This can include:
- Hospital care (not necessarily in a neonatal unit)
 - Medical care after leaving the hospital, under the direction of a consultant
 - Palliative care

Eligibility and entitlements

- 8.2 Neonatal care leave is a day one right for any employee who is responsible for the baby receiving neonatal care. There is no length of service requirement for neonatal care leave or pay at the University.
- 8.3 Employees are entitled to an additional period of leave if their baby receives neonatal care for at least 7 consecutive days within their first 28 days of life (beginning the day after the baby is born), and in the case of an adoption, if the adoption was disrupted as a result of this.
- 8.4 Employees who are intended parents in a surrogacy will also be eligible for neonatal care leave if they have applied or intend to apply for a parental order within 6 months of the baby's birth.
- 8.5 Neonatal care leave is separated into two different types depending on when the employee takes the neonatal care leave:
- Tier 1 - If the employee is taking neonatal care leave whilst their baby is in neonatal care (or in the first week after).
 - Example - An employee's baby is born early and is in neonatal care for 4 weeks in total from birth. The employee takes 2 weeks of paternity leave straight after the birth. They then take a further 2 consecutive weeks of neonatal care leave when their paternity leave ends. The employee has 2 more weeks of neonatal care leave accrued to take at a later time. Leave taken at a later date would be classed as tier 2 leave, as outlined below.
 - Tier 2 - If the employee is taking neonatal care leave more than a week after the baby has left neonatal care but before the end of 68 weeks from the date of the baby's birth.
 - Example 1 - An employee intends to take 52 weeks' maternity leave. Their baby is at home after a total of 4 weeks in neonatal care. The employee gives 8 weeks' notice

before the end of their maternity leave that they wish to take 4 weeks of neonatal care leave directly after the end of their maternity leave.

- Example 2 - Another employee's baby had a 12-week stay in neonatal care. They planned to take the full enhanced maternity provision with total maternity leave of 76 weeks. The employee has to decide whether to continue with their maternity leave or to end their maternity leave early (at 56 weeks) to allow for 12 weeks' neonatal care leave at full pay (giving 8 weeks' notice to curtail their maternity leave). Alternatively, they can decide to remain on maternity leave for the full planned duration of 76 weeks, and the neonatal care leave will be lost.

- 8.6 Neonatal care leave can be taken in blocks of 7 days for a maximum period of 12 weeks, regardless of which tier the entitlement is taken under.
- 8.7 In the event both parents are employees, the entitlement is available to both parents individually, though separate applications should be made.

Taking neonatal care leave with maternity or adoption leave

- 8.8 If the employee is taking a period of maternity or adoption leave, neonatal care leave can be taken following this. They can choose to take neonatal care leave before they return to work or at a different time, but it must be no later than 68 weeks after the baby's birth. In cases where maternity/adoption leave extends beyond 68 weeks, the employee will need to consider curtailing their maternity/adoption leave to ensure they can take all of their neonatal care leave entitlement before 68 weeks after the baby's birth, otherwise this entitlement will be lost.

All other family leave types

- 8.9 If the employee is taking a period of paternity leave, shared parental leave or parental leave, more flexibility can be provided as to when this leave can be taken, but it must be taken no later than 68 weeks after the baby's birth.
- 8.10 Neonatal care leave is in addition to other statutory entitlements to family leave if eligibility is met.
- 8.11 The right to neonatal care leave is per child. Therefore, if an employee has multiple births (e.g. twins) and both require neonatal care, the total neonatal care leave will be added together, though will only be counted once where all babies are in neonatal care at the same time. This will be capped at 12 weeks in total.
- 8.12 In the unfortunate event that a baby is admitted to neonatal care (for a period of at least 7 consecutive days), discharged, and then readmitted to neonatal care (for a period of at least 7

consecutive days), providing that the second admittance occurs before 28 days following the birth, both instances will count towards neonatal care leave.

- 8.13 During the neonatal care leave period, employees will be paid at full pay, regardless of length of service. For more information, please contact the People Services Team via ServiceNow who will give details of eligibility and amounts payable.

Notification of intention to take neonatal care leave

- 8.14 Employees who are eligible to take neonatal care leave should notify their line manager as soon as possible after the birth of the baby to let them know that there have been complications. During their maternity/adoption/shared parental leave, they should confirm to their line manager how many weeks their baby was in the hospital. Employees will be required to give their line manager 8 weeks' notice of when their maternity/adoption/shared parental leave will cease and therefore when their neonatal care leave will commence.
- 8.15 In the event an employee is taking neonatal care leave outside of the maternity/adoption/shared parental leave process; employees should give their manager notice of intention to take neonatal care leave as soon as is reasonably practicable but must be no less than 15 days before taking a single week or 28 days for taking multiple consecutive weeks. Applications should be made in writing on a Neonatal Care Leave Application Form to the People Services Team.

Return to work

- 8.16 Neonatal care leave is usually taken following a period of other family leave. Wherever possible, employees will normally return to the job in which they were employed under the original contract of employment and on terms and conditions no less favourable than those which would have been applicable to them if they had not been absent.
- 8.17 The University understands that returning to work can be a difficult time for parents, particularly those who have experienced a traumatic and upsetting experience seeing their baby in a neonatal ward. Babies can have ongoing medical needs requiring regular hospital appointments and check-ups when the parent returns to work. Employees should refer to other family leave and agile working provisions for support with this.

9. Parental leave

Eligibility and entitlements

- 9.1 Parental leave applies to all employees who:
- Have a child. The provisions apply whether or not a live birth occurs for any pregnancy lasting at least 25 weeks.

- Adopt a child.
- Already have a child or adopted child who is under the age of 18.

- 9.2 Unpaid leave of up to 18 weeks for each child or adopted child (part-time employee entitlement is pro rata).
- 9.3 During parental leave, all terms and conditions except for remuneration continue (e.g. continuity of employment and accrual of annual holiday, (including public holidays and 'other' University days at Christmas if the period of parental leave falls over these periods)).
- 9.4 Wherever possible, employees will normally return to the job in which they were employed under the original contract of employment and on terms and conditions no less favourable than those which would have been applicable to them if they had not been absent.
- 9.5 These provisions are in addition to maternity leave, adoption leave, and paternity leave.
- 9.6 All of our employees have the right to request flexible working from day one of employment. We encourage open discussion and employees who think they may benefit from flexible working are encouraged to speak to their line manager to talk informally about the options that may be available. To make a formal request for flexible working, please refer to the Flexible Working Policy.

Unpaid leave

- 9.7 May be used to attend antenatal classes, to make arrangements before the birth or adoption, to attend during the birth, to assist with domestic arrangements after the birth or adoption, to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare.
- 9.8 Leave can be taken any time up until the child's 18th birthday.
- 9.9 A maximum of 4 weeks can be taken in each year.

Notification of intention to take parental leave

- 9.10 Parental leave requests should be submitted via Workday at least 21 days before the intended absence (wherever possible) stating the date of the intended absence.
- 9.11 The dates of the absence must be agreed in advance with the line manager, to ensure they will not cause undue disruption in the workplace.
- 9.12 Evidence should be provided at the first application only, such as a copy of the MAT B1 certificate showing the expected date of childbirth, a birth certificate or adoption papers.

10. Salary sacrifice childcare voucher scheme

10.1 The University's salary sacrifice Childcare Voucher Scheme (known as the Computershare Scheme) closed to new entrants in 2018 following the government's roll out of the Tax-Free Childcare scheme. If, as an existing member in the Scheme prior to its closure, you go onto maternity, adoption, parental or shared parental leave, your payments into the Scheme will cease for any period during which you are in receipt only of statutory maternity pay, statutory adoption, parental or shared parental pay, or no pay at all. This is because salary sacrifice cannot be made on the statutory minimum rates or when you are not receiving pay. Please contact the Payroll and Pensions Team for details of how to contact the Scheme provider and for information about your membership should this be the case.

11. Time off for an emergency involving a dependant

11.1 All employees regardless of length of service are entitled to take a reasonable period of unpaid time off work to deal with an emergency involving someone who relies on them for help (as a dependant). This could include your spouse, partner, child, parent, or others for example someone who lives with you as part of your family or who reasonably depends on you for assistance in times of illness or injury.

11.2 Examples of when you would be granted time off for an emergency include:

- Your usual care arrangements have broken down or been disrupted.
- You need to deal with the death of a dependant.
- A dependant falls ill, has been assaulted or has been in an accident.
- You need to make long-term arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured (but not to provide long-term care yourself).
- You need to deal with an incident involving a child during school hours.

11.3 In certain circumstances you may be able to take paid compassionate leave. Please refer to the University's Leave Policy for details.

Notifying your manager

11.4 As soon as practicable, you should contact your manager to keep them informed of your circumstances and so that any relevant support can be offered.

11.5 If the need to take leave involves the care of a child in a non-emergency situation (e.g. arrangements can be made ahead), you should arrange to take annual leave or parental leave.

12. Time off for carer's leave

- 12.1 If you are caring for a dependant with a long-term care need you are entitled to take 5 days' unpaid carer's leave in a year. The entitlement of 5 days is for those who work full-time. Part-time employees will have a pro rata entitlement, depending on how many hours they work in a week.
- 12.2 There is no requirement to provide evidence of how the leave is used, it can be anything to do with caring responsibilities and is intended to allow carers to better balance their caring and work responsibilities and support them to remain in employment.
- 12.3 Carer's leave can be taken in half or full days up to and including a block of one week.
- 12.4 To request leave you should speak to your manager and wherever possible give as much notice as you can. As a minimum requirement, you need to give 3 days' notice to take a half or 1 day. If you want to request more than one day, you must give at least twice as long as the requested leave period, for example if you want to take 2 days, you must give 4 days' notice before you want to start your leave.

13. Time off for fertility treatment

Eligibility and entitlements

- 13.1 All employees regardless of length of service are entitled to:
- Take a reasonable period of time off work to attend appointments related to fertility treatment. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.
 - A mixture of paid and unpaid leave will be considered in the context of the particular circumstances.

Notification of intention to take time off

- 13.2 As soon as practicable, employees should inform their line manager of the need to take time off work, giving dates and approximate durations wherever possible.
- 13.3 Each case will be considered by the line manager, in consultation with the individual and the People Services Team via ServiceNow.

14. Time off for foster caring

- 14.1 Employees who have been with the University for 12 months' continuously, can apply for paid time off to prepare for and undertake foster caring responsibilities. For full details, please refer to the University's Leave Policy.

15. Pensions

- 15.1 Employees should contact the Payroll and Pensions Team with regard to pension rights and contributions during periods of paid and unpaid leave detailed in this policy.

16. Equality, diversity and inclusion

- 16.1 All colleagues are to be treated with dignity and respect. Every policy is subject to our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy. If you have any questions concerning any of the requirements related to a disability or other protected characteristic in this policy, as soon as feasible, you should raise such concerns with your line manager or the designated People Services Team representative so that adjustments can be given consideration.

17. Communication

- 17.1 The University aims to raise awareness of these procedures and about the rights and responsibilities under this policy.

18. Further information

- 18.1 This policy is not contractual and is not intended to be incorporated into individual terms and conditions of employment. It may be subject to review, amendment, or withdrawal but any changes will be made following consultation with the recognised trade unions.

19. Monitoring

- 19.1 This policy will be reviewed, including relevant data, as available to monitor the effectiveness of its application at the review date in consultation with the recognised trade unions.

20. GDPR

- 20.1 All collected data will be managed and processed in accordance with the [University's Data Protection Policy](#) and retained in line with the [University Retention Schedule](#).
- 20.2 Data will be securely stored within Workday and physical records maintained within the individual's central file. In cases where deemed necessary, data may also be securely stored within relevant departments. Access to this data is restricted to staff whose responsibilities necessitate the use of such information for the execution of their roles.

20.3 For further details regarding the handling of your data, please refer to the [University's Staff Privacy Notice](#) or contact the Data Protection Team via dataprotection@hull.ac.uk.

21. Version control record

Version number	Summary of changes including paragraph numbers	Date approved by PWG
V11	Legal update only. No further ratification needed.	June 2018
V12	Review date to change to 2024.	June 2021
V12	Salary sacrifice and statutory minimum earnings. Reference to time off for foster caring.	
V13	Inclusion paragraph and gender-neutral language added.	Via circulation
V14	All references to gender changed to gender neutral.	Via circulation
V15	Updated legal changes 2024 to paternity and carer's leave	February 2024 Via circulation
V16	Updated to adoption leave. References to the right to request flexible working updated. Reduced notice period of intent to take parental leave from 28 to 21 days.	October 2024 Via circulation
V17	Inclusion of neonatal care leave statutory provisions.	April 2025 Via circulation
V18	Transferred to new policy template and updated with new naming conventions.	July 2025
V19	Updated neonatal care leave following release of technical guidance and adoption leave service requirements. Simplified wording and amended paragraph order to be more appropriate. Updated to reflect Employment Rights Act statutory provisions for paternity leave, parental leave and bereaved partners paternity leave.	March 2026