

# Paternity leave and provisions

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## 1. Introduction

This policy is part of a suite of materials setting out QMUL's legal duties and enhanced support for employees who have parental / guardian responsibilities.

Additional materials linked to Parental, Carer and Special Leave are available at [Family Friendly Policies - Human Resources](#).

## 2. Purpose

We want to ensure that employees are fully aware of their entitlements through our parental support policies.

This policy sets out our statutory obligations to provide Paternity Leave and also, enhanced pay entitlements, where employees are eligible, through the QMUL scheme.

## 3. Legislative context

Our Paternity Leave and Pay Scheme reference the day one leave rights for fathers to be to take Paternity and Parental Leave as set out in the Employment Rights Act 2025.

This also extends to paternity provisions set out in our Shared Parental and Adoption / Surrogacy Leave policies.

The policy covers equality and inclusion, and the scheme applies equally to all university employees including part time; casual, temporary or Fixed Term staff and people in a same sex relationship.

## 4. Scope and eligibility

This policy is applicable to an employee who:

- is the father of a newborn child; or married to, or the civil partner or partner of someone who is having a baby; and
- will share responsibility for the upbringing of the child.

Provisions also apply for Secondary Adopters as set in [Adoption / Surrogacy Leave policy](#).

The entitlement to Paternity Leave (and pay where applicable) is the same whether one or more than one child is born.

In addition to this policy, an employee may choose to opt for [Shared Parental Leave](#) set out in a separate policy. Where an employee's partner chooses to return from their maternity leave early, they may be able to pass on that leave entitlement to their partner, so providing additional leave over and above the two weeks Paternity Leave.

Paternity Leave can also be taken after any agreed Shared Parental Leave is exhausted. Annual leave will also accrue during this period. This can be quite complex and should be discussed with HR to confirm entitlements and plans.

## **5. Paternity procedure**

- 5.1 Employees should notify their line manager and HR no later than the end of the “qualifying week” that they intend to take Paternity Leave. This is 15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth. At that point, they should inform them of the baby’s expected due date and provide a copy of the MatB1 form confirming this. In practice this is usually around or after the 20<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy.
- 5.2 The employee must also state whether they intend to take one week or two weeks of Paternity Leave and confirm the proposed start and end dates. A form for this purpose is available in Appendix 1.
- 5.3 Dates may need to be amended if circumstances change. The employee may alter the intended start date provided sufficient notice is given. Normally, 28 days’ notice is required; however, where this is not possible (for example, if the baby is born early), the employee must give as much notice as is reasonably practicable.
- 5.4 All employees are entitled to up to two weeks of Paternity Leave from day one of employment at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL). This leave may be taken within 52 weeks of the child’s birth.
- 5.5 Paternity Leave will be unpaid unless the employee has 26 weeks of continuous service. After that, under the QMUL scheme, eligible employees are entitled to two weeks of paid Paternity Leave. There is also a statutory ordinary paternity scheme. However, it is not described in detail in this document, since the QMUL scheme pays more and is easier to qualify for.
- 5.6 Both weeks must be taken as whole weeks, although they do not need to be taken consecutively. Employees may commence their Paternity Leave on any day of the week, provided it is on or after the date of the child’s birth.
- 5.7 In addition to Paternity Leave, employees are entitled to unpaid Parental Leave from the first day of employment. Eligible employees may take up to four weeks of unpaid Parental Leave per year per child, until the child reaches 18 years of age. Employees wishing to take Unpaid Parental Leave in addition to Paternity Leave must ensure this is discussed and planned in advance with both their line manager and HR.
- 5.8 During any period of extended unpaid Parental Leave, Queen Mary University of London remains obligated to formally consult with the employee if organisational changes or restructures arise that may affect their role, including situations where the role is considered to be at risk. This obligation applies regardless of the reason for the employee’s absence.
- 5.9 In extended periods of unpaid leave, employees may choose to plan and attend Keeping in Touch (KIT) days to remain informed of workplace developments. Up to 10 KIT days are permitted, these are paid, and participation is voluntary.

## 6. Unforeseen events

6.1 In the case of unforeseen and sad events, additional support if available:

If a partner suffers a miscarriage after 24 weeks any Paternity Leave entitlements will remain.

Our [Special Leave policy](#) also account for additional support if a baby requires neonatal care.

In the sad event of the loss of a child at birth additional support is also available.

Additional Leave is also available if a partner (giving birth or primary surrogacy / adoption partner) dies within the first year of the birth/ adoption. This Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave allows for up to 52 weeks unpaid leave. More details on this can be found in our [Special Leave Policy](#).

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Expectant fathers / Secondary Adopters are required to:

- notify their line manager and HR as soon as possible and at the 15<sup>th</sup> weeks before childbirth is due
- complete and submit the form in Appendix 1 to HR.
- inform if they wish to take Shared Parental Leave
- inform HR and their line manager as soon as reasonably practicable of any changes to the agreed arrangements ( preferably 28 days before)

7.2 Line managers are responsible for:

- confirming the agreed dates of leave.
- informing HR of any changes to the arrangements.
- ensuring employees on extended leave are kept informed of any relevant changes or formal consultation processes if there are concerns that the employee's role may be at risk.

## 8. Associated Information

[Adoption Leave Policy](#)

[Shared Parental Leave](#)

## 9. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three year or earlier if legislation changes.

Minor amendments that do not affect the rules, principles, or intent of this policy may be approved by Director of Human Resources on behalf of the Policy Scrutiny Group.

# Appendix 1: Application for Paternity Leave

## Instructions for the employee

Use this form to tell HR that your partner is expecting a child and that you want to take Paternity leave. Don't forget to tell your manager that you are applying for Paternity Leave too. There is a box for them to sign at the bottom of the page.

Make sure that HR get this form and a copy of your partner's MatB1 by the end of the 15th week before the week the baby is due. If there are practical reasons why you cannot do this, tell your HR Administrator. The email address [HR Operations Team - Human Resources](#)

**Your name:**

**Your employee/payroll number (see MyHR):**

**My partner is expecting a child. The week the baby is due is:**

- I plan to take the following two weeks (which need not be consecutive) as ordinary Paternity Leave:

WEEK ONE:

WEEK TWO:

**Please note:** You cannot begin ordinary Paternity Leave before the day the baby is born. Both weeks must be taken in the first 52 weeks following the birth of the baby.

- I enclose a copy of The MATB1 Form confirming the pregnancy and expected due date.
- I will give you 4 weeks' notice of any change to the date I plan to start ordinary Paternity Leave (unless I am unable to do so for practical reasons - in which case I will let you know as soon as is reasonably practicable).
- I qualify for ordinary Paternity Leave as I am one of the following:
  - Father of the child
  - Married to / civil partner of the child
  - Secondary Adopter as per our Adoption Leave Policy

- I confirm that I will have joint responsibility for the child's upbringing. Please find attached document confirming pregnancy/ adoption / surrogacy arrangements.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Managers Signature:**

**Date:**

***Please email the completed form to the [HR Operations Team](#).***

## Policy information and document control

<b>Policy title</b>	<i>Paternity Leave and Pay Provisions.</i>
<b>Version number</b>	2
<b>Related policies and procedures</b>	<i>Shared Parental Leave Adoption and Surrogacy Special Leave</i>
<b>Superseded policies</b>	<i>Code of Practice has been replaced by separate policies for all forms of parental leave.</i>
<b>Changes:</b>	<i>Day one rights to Paternity Leave and unpaid parental leave as set out in Employment Rights Act 2025. Alignment with Adoption and Surrogacy Policy Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave Act 2026</i>
<b>Approval level</b>	<i>PSG – Legislative changes</i>
<b>Approval date</b>	<i>May 2026</i>
<b>Effective date</b>	<i>May 2026</i>
<b>Next review due</b>	<i>July 2029 or before if legislative changes require it</i>
<b>Policy owner</b>	<i>HR Lead</i>
<b>Policy contact</b>	<i>HR</i>

## Version control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reason for updates/Summary of key changes</b>
<b>2</b>	<i>May 2026</i>	<i>Code of Practice has been replaced by separate policies for all forms of parental leave</i>
<b>2</b>	<i>May 2026</i>	<i>Reflects new day one rights for unpaid Paternity and Parental Leave as set out in the Employment Rights Act 2025.  Stronger links to Special Leave for unforeseen circumstances e.g. bereavement of a primary parent as set out in Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave 2026.</i>