



PRIFYSGOL  
**BANGOR**  
UNIVERSITY

**BEREAVEMENT LEAVE POLICY**

Rev	Date	Purpose of Issue/Description of Change
1	2014	Cosmetic changes
2	2015	Update for clarity
3	2016	Cosmetic changes
4	2018	Review – no changes
5	2020	Addition of parental bereavement leave
6	2023	Cosmetic changes and clarity to wording that does not affect content
7	2026	Legislative changes – ERA 2026
<b>Policy Officer</b>	<b>Senior Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Approved By and Date</b>
Catherine Jones	Steffan Griffith	Compliance Committee 06/04/2020

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# **Bereavement Leave Policy**

## **1. Purpose**

This policy sets out the University's approach to supporting colleagues who experience the death of someone close to them. Bereavement affects individuals in different ways, and we are committed to providing compassionate, flexible and inclusive support during difficult times.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to colleagues of the University regardless of contract type or length of service.

## **3. Principles**

It is acknowledged that grief affects people differently. Managers should respond with empathy, sensitivity and flexibility and ensure employees are treated with dignity and respect.

## **4. Inclusive Definitions of Family and Relationships**

We recognise that families and close relationships take many forms. Bereavement leave may apply following the death of a close relative or someone with whom a colleague had a significant relationship.

This may include, but is not limited to, partners, spouses, civil partners, chosen family, co-parents, children, parents, siblings, step-relatives, grandparents, grandchildren, in-laws, foster or kinship care relationships, guardians, dependants, or any other person with whom the colleague had a close or significant relationship. Managers should adopt an inclusive approach when considering requests.

## **5. Bereavement Leave Entitlement**

As circumstances, relationships and cultural observances vary, requests for bereavement leave will be considered sensitively and on a case-by-case basis. The following provides general guidance:

- Immediate family or an equivalent close relationship (for example partner, spouse, civil partner, parent/guardian, child, adult child, sibling, or another person considered immediate family by the colleague): up to 5 working days' paid bereavement leave will normally be granted. This includes time required to attend the funeral. Where the employee is responsible for organising the funeral, additional time off may be granted.

- Death of a child under 18 or stillbirth after 24 weeks: employees may be entitled to Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave of up to two weeks which may be taken as one block or two separate blocks within 56 weeks of the loss.
- Close relative. A close relative or person with whom the colleague had a close familial or culturally significant relationship (for example grandparent, in-law, extended family member, or an equivalent person the colleague identifies as family).: up to 3 working days' paid leave will normally be granted.
- Attendance at the funeral of a family member (including chosen family), friend, or colleague: normally up to 1 day's paid leave will be granted.
- Travel considerations: where significant travel is required to attend or arrange the funeral, an additional day's paid leave may be granted depending on the circumstances.

Managers may consider additional annual leave, unpaid leave, or flexible working arrangements where appropriate.

## **6. Pregnancy Loss and Miscarriage**

We recognise that pregnancy loss, including miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy and other early pregnancy losses, can have a significant emotional and physical impact on colleagues and their partners. Colleagues who experience pregnancy loss, or who are the partner or intended parent of someone who experiences such loss before 24 weeks' gestation, or whose partner experiences such loss, may be supported through paid compassionate leave of up to 5 days and/or pregnancy-related sickness absence, depending on individual circumstances. Additional leave, annual leave or flexible working may be considered where needed.

## **7. Bereaved Partner / Surviving Parent Leave**

Where the where the birth parent or primary adopter of a child dies during pregnancy, childbirth, or within the first year following birth or adoption placement, the surviving partner may suddenly become the child's primary carer. We recognise that this is a devastating and life altering situation. We will support colleagues with compassion, flexibility and clarity so that they have the time and space to care for their child, manage essential arrangements and begin to adjust to changed circumstances.

This leave is available to the surviving partner or another person who had parental responsibility or was acting as a parent to the child, inclusive of all genders and family structures, including same-sex parents, trans parents, non-binary parents, kinship carers and

intended parents and applies in birth, adoption, fostering to adopt and concurrent planning arrangements.

Colleagues may take up to 52 weeks of leave. This leave is paid on a decreasing basis as follows:

- 8 weeks full pay (at your normal weekly rate).
- 18 weeks at half pay (half your normal weekly rate)
- 26 weeks unpaid leave.

Annual leave and University closure days will continue to accrue throughout the period of leave.

Statutory Bereaved Partner Leave is unpaid. The pay provisions set out above are an enhanced contractual benefit offered by the University.

#### **8. Interaction with other types of leave**

This leave may follow or precede other family leave where that best supports the family, including Paternity/ Partner Leave or Shared Parental Leave. Where an adoption or fostering to adopt placement does not continue, we will maintain this leave for a reasonable period to support practical arrangements and will consider additional compassionate or parental bereavement leave where applicable.

#### **9. Keeping in Touch (KIT days)**

By mutual agreement, colleagues may undertake up to 10 Keeping in Touch (KIT) days during the bereaved partner paternity leave. KIT days are optional; there is no obligation to undertake work. KIT days may be used for activities such as essential updates, meetings or training. KIT days will be paid at the colleague's normal daily rate. Working part of a day counts as one KIT day. KIT days do not reduce or interrupt the leave period; the colleague remains on Bereaved Partner Paternity Leave throughout.

#### **10. Cultural and Religious Observances**

Different cultures, religions and family structures observe bereavement and mourning in a wide variety of ways. Colleagues may require time to attend funerals, religious ceremonies, family rituals or longer periods of mourning, and managers should take a flexible, inclusive and culturally sensitive approach when considering requests for time away from work. Decisions made under this policy must be fair and respectful of individual circumstances,

acknowledging that cultural, religious and family practices relating to bereavement vary widely. Managers are expected to consider reasonable adjustments or additional leave where appropriate, handling all conversations sensitively and confidentially.

### **11. Notification and Requesting Leave**

Colleagues should inform their line manager as soon as reasonably practicable if they need to take bereavement leave. Line managers should ensure that requests for time off due to bereavement are handled sympathetically, considerately, and in a timely manner. Bereavement leave should be recorded through the University's iTrent system.

Each request for leave will be considered in light of the circumstances of the case, including the colleague's relationship or connection with the deceased, cultural or religious observances, funeral arrangements and travel requirements.

### **12. Returning to Work Following Bereavement Leave**

It is not always easy to know when to return to work following bereavement. Colleagues are encouraged to discuss their return with their manager and consider any adjustments that may help them settle back into work.

Managers may consider temporary adjustments to duties, flexible working arrangements or a phased return where appropriate. If further absence becomes necessary due to ill health, the employee should follow the normal sickness absence reporting procedures.

Colleagues are reminded that support is available through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and other wellbeing services.

### **13. Cross-Reference to Other Policies**

This policy should be read alongside the University's Paternity/Partner Leave Policy, Maternity Leave Policy, Adoption Leave Policy, Shared Parental Leave Policy, Flexible Working Policy, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion documents.

### **14. Policy Review**

This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals of not less than three years and will always be read and applied subject to the general law. All reviews will be undertaken in consultation with the recognised campus Trade Unions.