



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

MATERNITY LEAVE POLICY

Review	Date	Purpose of Issue/Description of Change
1	2014	Cosmetic changes
2.	2015	Update for clarity
3.	2016	Cosmetic changes
4.	2018	Update for improved readability
5.	2021	Review – amendments to wording that do not affect content
6.	2023	Cosmetic changes and clarity to wording that does not affect content
7.	2025	Inclusion of Neonatal Leave provision – adherence to legislative change
Policy Officer	Senior Responsible Officer	Approved By and Date
Catherine Jones	Steffan Griffith	Compliance Committee 24/02/2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

Congratulations and we wish you all the best for this next chapter!

Here at Bangor University we know that having a new child is an important and exciting time and we want to support colleagues throughout, and upon their return to work. This policy sets out the entitlement to leave and pay for pregnant parents, including surrogate birth parents.

Please note, if a colleague is having a child by adopting (including fostering to adopt / concurrent planning) or through a surrogacy agreement, their entitlements are set out in our Adoption Leave policy or the Paternity Leave policy.

We recognise that some of our colleagues may not identify with the term 'maternity', so we have added the term 'pregnant parent' into this policy to ensure inclusivity for our parents. However, for simplicity, and in line with legislation, the term 'maternity' will still be used in our forms and systems, so please note that when used, this term includes all pregnant parents.

2 NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Although early notification pregnancy is encouraged, colleagues must complete the Maternity Application form in the iTrent system in order to notify their Line Manager by no later than the 15th week before their baby is due or as soon as reasonably practicable.

As part of the notification process, the Line Manager needs to conduct a risk assessment of the role (the risk assessment forms part of the workflow process in iTrent) and the workplace and adjust if needed. The line manager will review working arrangements throughout the pregnancy. Further information on this can be found on the [Health & Safety Services' website](#) and additional advice can be sought from the Occupational Health Practitioner, if helpful.

*If a colleague has more than one job at the University, they will need to apply for maternity leave under each role so as their Line Managers can be notified. Leave must be taken at the same time in each role and have the same start and end dates.

Payroll require a copy of your MATB1 certificate, available from the midwife sometime after the 21st week of pregnancy. The original MATB1 form needs to be scanned and uploaded to iTrent for HMRC (HM Revenue & Customs) purposes. Please follow the iTrent guidance as to how to do this.

Once the maternity application form is completed and your Line Manager has authorised, Human Resources will confirm the leave and pay arrangements. Please note, the notification requirements are the same regardless of the scheme that a colleague qualifies for.

Colleagues may commence their maternity / pregnant parent leave at any time from the 11th week before the expected week of date of birth, subject to compliance with the notification procedures. If they give birth before the maternity leave period was due to commence, they must notify their Line Manager as soon as is reasonably practicable of the date on which they gave birth. In this instance, their maternity / pregnant parent leave period will commence automatically on the day after the date of birth of the child. An amended start date also requires Line Management notification, in order they can update the maternity record and inform the Payroll department. Once processed, amended details will be confirmed by Human Resources.

3 PAY ENTITLEMENTS

Scheme	Entitlement/Pay
University Maternity Leave Scheme	• 8 weeks full pay (at your normal weekly rate).
	• + 18 weeks at half pay (half your normal weekly rate) + Statutory Maternity Pay.
	• + 13 weeks at the statutory rate
	• + 13 weeks unpaid leave.
Maternity Allowance	• Should the payroll department confirm they are not eligible to receive SMP (Statutory Maternity Pay), i.e., if their average earnings are below the 'lower earnings limit' for national insurance purposes, Human Resources will be informed and they will issue an SMP1 form that will indicate why the University cannot pay the SMP. This form needs to be presented to the local Jobcentre Plus office in order that they can process your Maternity Allowance payment

Note - Average weekly earnings will be calculated by Payroll in accordance with the statutory maternity pay regulations that may apply at that time.

4 ANTE-NATAL CARE

Colleagues are entitled to have paid time off to attend appointments for antenatal care, including reasonable time for relaxation or parentcraft classes. Colleagues should inform their line manager of their appointment(s) as soon as reasonably practicable. Where possible, appointments should be made at times which cause

minimal disruption to the working day, however we are aware these sessions are normally at set times on set days

5 SICKNESS ABSENCE ASSOCIATED WITH PREGNANCY / CHILDBIRTH

Should a colleague be absent from work during pregnancy due to ill health, they will receive the normal occupational sick pay that they would have been entitled to during any other period of sickness absence, provided that their period of maternity leave has not commenced.

If, however they are absent from work for any pregnancy related illness during the four-week period prior to the commencement of the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC), regardless of when the maternity leave period was planned to begin, maternity leave will automatically commence. In such cases, the maternity / pregnant parent leave will begin on the day after the first day of their absence from work. They (or their partner/spouse) must notify your Line Manager that they are absent from work wholly or partly because of pregnancy as soon as possible, specifying the date on which the absence began and following due departmental notification procedures.

Any absence following the end of the period of maternity /pregnant parent leave will be managed in accordance with the University's Sickness Absence Policy.

6. NEONATAL LEAVE

We understand that having a premature baby or one that needs immediate care can be an emotional and financial challenge for families.

Under Neonatal Care Leave (NCL) colleagues are entitled to paid extra neonatal leave, equivalent to the number of days that their baby has been in hospital for immediately following birth, for at least 7 days and within 28 days of the baby being born. This leave is capped at 12 weeks and will be added onto their maternity / pregnant parent, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave periods. The leave will be available to both parents and for all colleagues regardless of length of service and must be taken within 68 weeks of the baby's birth.

The University has enhanced the statutory pay provision in the legislation to a maximum benefit of:

- 8 weeks at full pay (or at the normal weekly rate if working part time) and,

- 4 weeks half pay (or half the normal weekly rate if working part time) plus statutory pay (should 26 weeks of continuous service be met).

Leave must be taken before the member of staff returns to work and must not be taken in conjunction with any other type of parental leave, or annual leave.

If neonatal care starts on a Monday, parents would be entitled to a week of NCL after the Tuesday the following week. If the baby stays in neonatal care for another full week beyond that Tuesday, the parents would be entitled to another week of NCL.

Neonatal Care Leave must be taken in minimum blocks of one week. If the leave is taken while the baby is receiving neonatal care or within seven days following the baby's discharge from care, the weeks of leave do not need to be taken consecutively. However, if Neonatal Care Leave is taken at any time beyond seven days after discharge, then the leave weeks must be taken consecutively. Neonatal leave **after** Paternity leave therefore must be taken in one continuous block.

During their maternity /pregnant parent leave, colleagues should confirm with their Line Manager how many weeks their baby was in the hospital and give their line manager 8 weeks' notice of when their leave will cease and therefore when their neonatal leave will commence.

Neonatal leave must be recorded by the Line Manager in iTrent as 'Other paid leave', in order for the pay to be processed. A comment **MUST** be made to state the leave is neonatal leave.

Employees who take neonatal care leave will have the same employment protections as those associated with other forms of family-related leave (such as maternity or paternity leave). These include protection from dismissal or detriment as a result of taking the leave.

We understand that returning to work can be a difficult time, particularly if there are ongoing medical needs requiring regular hospital appointments and check-ups when the parent returns to work. Please refer to our other family leave policies for further information.

7. KEEPING IN TOUCH

If colleagues wish to be kept updated on certain matters or developments whilst on maternity / pregnant parent leave, this should be discussed and agreed with their Line Manager before their leave commences.

Keeping in Touch (KIT) Days - On agreement with their line manager, they may work up to a maximum of 10 days during their maternity / pregnant parent leave period, known as 'keeping in touch' days. These days may be taken at any stage during their maternity leave, except within the first 2 weeks after their child is born. Keeping in touch days should be mutually agreed – colleagues are not required to undertake such days, but may find them useful supporting their return to work, for example.

Where KIT days are taken normal daily rates of pay will apply, this will not equal a day off in lieu. During the period of full pay no additional payment will be made except for SMP which will be an additional payment on top of the normal daily rate. Should colleagues take one of these days on their period of half pay, SMP or No pay their payment will be 'topped up' to their normal daily rate and when applicable by SMP. Attendance for part of a day will count as one KIT Day e.g., 2 hours will count as 1 day.

Should colleagues wish to undertake a KIT Day, they must agree the dates with their Line Manager. Their Line Manager will then process the details in ITrent to ensure Payroll is notified Dates processed after the Payroll cut off will be processed the following month.

KIT days can include training courses, staff meetings, away days, checking of emails, reading minutes of meetings, meeting with a Line Manger to discuss return to work plans etc.

8 RETURNING TO WORK

To ensure colleagues are supported on their return to work, there are a number of key considerations to be taken into account by the manager.

- A welcome back / reinduction should be held if not via a KIT day then via an initial meeting early into the first week of return.
- Appropriate support should be provided in relation to updates on new or amended systems of work and information should be shared in relation to any new staffing changes, with appropriate introductions being made if required.
- There should be regular 'check-in' meetings, between the returning member of staff and their manager to ensure the return to work is fully supported
- Colleagues should notify their manager of any concerns or problems at the earliest opportunity

Change of return date (notice required) –

If a colleague intends to return to work before the end of their full maternity / pregnant parent leave period (i.e., 52 weeks) they must give 8 weeks' notice of the date on which they intend to return to their Line Manager. Their Line Manager will then update their absence details in iTrent. Please note, the law requires colleagues to take a minimum of 2 weeks' maternity leave following the birth of their child.

Right to return to the same/similar role –

Colleagues will return to the job in which they were employed prior to their maternity / pregnant parent leave, on the terms and conditions that would have applied had they not been absent or if this is not reasonably practicable (for example due to a restructure), we will consult with you and you may return to an equivalent job which would be considered suitable alternative work, on terms and conditions no less favourable than would have applied if you had not been absent.

Right to request flexible working –

We know it can be challenging balancing having a new baby with your work. Flexible working might help – you can find our Flexible Working Policy on the website.

If a colleague wants to breast / chest feed when they are back in work, we will do our best to support them, so talk to the Line Manager about what is needed. This will form part of the risk assessment.

If a colleague is sharing responsibility for the upbringing of their new baby, they may be able to end their maternity / pregnant parent leave early and they and / or their partner can take Shared Parental Leave instead. This allows them to share their remaining leave with their baby's other parent during their baby's first year – our Shared Parental Leave policy can be found on the website.

9 MEMBERS OF STAFF NOT RETURNING TO WORK

If a colleague decides to resign, they will need to give the required notice in line with their employment contract. If they have received University Maternity Pay (UMP) and do not return to work for a period of at least 3 months, Payroll will contact them and arrange for them to repay the non-statutory part of their UMP.

10 STAFF ON FIXED-TERM CONTRACTS

Colleagues should consult with their line manager at the earliest opportunity in the event their contract of employment is due to expire during their maternity / pregnant parent leave.

If they are on a fixed term contract that ends during / at the end of their leave and it has not been possible to identify a redeployment opportunity, they would not be expected to repay the non-statutory part of their UMP. However, if they are offered an extension of their current contract or a redeployment position at the University, but choose not to accept it, we reserve the right to reclaim the non-statutory part of their UMP if they reject or do not pursue these options.

Where no extension is possible the remaining maternity pay will be honoured, and Payroll will process outstanding monies accordingly in a lump sum.

11 RIGHTS & OBLIGATIONS

11.1 PENSION RIGHTS

Pension rights and contributions shall be managed in accordance with the provisions of the relevant superannuation scheme, providing that these provisions do not conflict with any statutory requirements that may apply at the time.

Pension benefits will normally be preserved during the period of paid leave. Colleagues have the option to agree to pay the contribution for the unpaid leave on their return to work and, if this occurs, the University will also pay employer contributions for the unpaid period of leave.

Further information on specific provision under respective pension schemes can be provided by the Pensions Manager.

11.2 CONTINUOUS SERVICE

The period of absence will be considered continuous service with the University for the purpose of redundancy rights and other similar rights. Colleagues will also be entitled to progress through the normal annual increments on the University's salary scale in accordance with their terms and conditions of employment.

11.3 ANNUAL LEAVE

Colleagues will accrue annual leave during their maternity / pregnant parent leave. This includes any Bank holidays or University days that may fall within this period. It is not possible to take annual leave whilst on maternity /pregnant parent leave.

Upon return, colleagues may carry over any accrued / untaken annual leave into the following leave year. Leave carried over into the next leave year must be taken

within that leave year. Their Line Manager or departmental administrator will ensure that the iTrent Self Service dashboard is updated accordingly.

12 MEMBERS OF STAFF FUNDED BY EXTERNAL INCOME

Should a colleagues' contract be funded by external income they should consult with their Line Manager and / or the grant holder at the earliest possible opportunity.

The policy of research funders with regards to increasing funding and extending the duration of the grants to cover these types of leave varies. In conjunction with the line manager, the funder's provision should be checked to see whether, for example, they will provide additional funding to make a substitute appointment to compensate for the whole, or part, of a period of leave, extend the duration of a grant for a period equivalent to the leave taken so that the project can be completed, and / or cover additional costs associated with the period of maternity / pregnant parent leave such as time off following the period of leave via use of accrued annual leave for example.

In conjunction with the Line Manager, please check the terms and conditions of the funder from the award letter, funder website or contact the Research and Impact Support Officer in Integrated Research and Impact Support (IRIS) Service for further information.

The default position is that additional costs associated with maternity / pregnant parent leave should be recovered from the external funding body wherever possible. Where this is not supported by the funder, the employing School / Department will meet the costs from their central funds. The matters noted above are those agreed between the University and the funding body and will not affect a colleague's right to leave and pay.

13 MISCARRIAGE AND STILL BIRTH

In the very unfortunate event that a colleague suffers a stillbirth (from 24 weeks onwards), or if their baby dies after being born, they are entitled to take their full period of maternity / pregnant parent leave and pay. If they suffer a miscarriage before the 24th week, they will be able to take a period of sick leave under the normal contractual arrangements, as directed by their doctor. In either of these situations, please consider talking confidentially with a line manager or nominated HR Officer about how they can help at this time. This could include engaging with NHS support services. In addition, there is also emotional and counselling support available through the University's Employee Assistance Programme

14 POLICY REVIEW

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

changes agreed with them, prior to approval from the University Council. This policy has been equality impact assessed prior to its implementation.