

MATERNITY & PARENTING LEAVE POLICY

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Version Control History

Reviewer	Date of Change	Summary of Revisions made
HR Manager	09/06/2008	Review approved by BoM
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HR Manager	28/03/2017	Review approved by BoM
HR Manager	30/04/2020	Review approved by BoM
Head of HR	June 2025	Review approved by BoM
Head of HR	April 2026	Added new relevant legislation Added clearer definition of shared parental leave Reverted to using Employee throughout for consistency Revert to Professional Services rather than Support Staff.

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1. Policy Statement

UHI Inverness recognises the importance of a positive approach to ensuring that, as far as reasonably practicable, employees are able to combine their career and family responsibilities, maintaining a healthy work-life balance. This will assist UHI Inverness in operating effectively through retaining a valued subset of the workforce, providing the necessary support to employees and ensuring that all employees are treated in a consistent and fair manner and in accordance with relevant legislation.

This policy sets out the arrangements for:

- Maternity leave and pay
- Adoption leave and pay
- Paternity leave and pay
- Fertility leave and pay
- Shared parental leave and pay
- Neonatal leave and pay

UHI Inverness is committed to supporting and maintaining a family-friendly environment that encourages individuals in their ongoing contribution to the organisation whilst supporting or starting a family.

The aim of this policy, and the supporting procedures, is to provide employees, line managers and HR staff with important information regarding:

- Working whilst pregnant.
- Eligibility and applying for maternity or other forms of parenting leave.
- What happens during maternity or other parenting leave.
- The assistance available.
- Rights regarding returning to work.
- Requests for Fertility Leave.

In addition, this policy aims to ensure consistency of approach in line with employment legislation and UHI Inverness' commitment to good employment practices.

2. Legislative Framework / Related Policies

Publicly available UHI Inverness policies and procedures can be accessed via our website: [About us – Publications](#). Staff and Board Members can access the full range of internal policies and procedures through the Quality SharePoint site.

- The Employment Relations Act 1999
- The Maternity and Parental Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2002
- Additional Statutory Paternity Pay (weekly rates) Regulations 2010
- Additional Paternity Leave Regulations 2010
- The Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014
- Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations 2020
- The Employment Act 2002
- The Employment Rights Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- UHI Inverness Special Leave Policy and Procedure
- The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023
- Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2024
- Employment Rights Act 2025
- Flexible Working Regulations 2014
- Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023

Any circular which is issued under the provisions of the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) is binding on Inverness College UHI as a signatory of the National Recognition and Procedures Agreement.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees at UHI Inverness who qualify under the various eligibility criteria for the different types of parenting leave, as outlined in the Maternity & Parenting Leave Procedure.

4. Definitions

Type of Leave	Definition
Maternity Leave	A period of absence from work granted to a mother before and after the birth of her child.
Adoption Leave	A period of absence from work granted to a primary adopter before and after the adoption of their child.

Shared Parental Leave	Allows birth mothers to share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay with their partners to care for a child from two weeks after birth until their first birthday.
Paternity Leave	A period of absence from work granted to a biological/adoptive father after or shortly before the birth of their child.
Neonatal Care Leave	Allows parents up to 12 weeks leave to support employees whose baby is receiving, or has received, neonatal care within the first 28 days of birth and care has continued for a period of 7 consecutive days.
Ordinary Parental Leave	Up to 18 weeks unpaid leave from work per child until the child is 18, up to a maximum of 4 weeks per year.
Fertility Leave	Paid time off to undergo fertility treatment.
KIT/SPLIT	“Keeping in Touch” Days or “Shared Parental Leave in Touch” Days.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Human Resources (HR)

- Provide advice, guidance and support to managers and employees on parenting leave eligibility, application process, support available and return to work.
- Process applications for parenting leave, confirming eligibility to employees within a timely manner.
- Notify payroll of parental leave arrangements in a timely manner.
- Process KIT/SPLIT forms submitted following parenting leave, notifying payroll of hours to be paid.
- Enter parenting leave absences in the HR system to ensure accurate recording.

5.2 Line Managers

- Discuss with employees their plans to take parenting leave, negotiating dates for periods of leave where necessary and applicable and maintaining a supportive and family-friendly approach to requests.
- Implement risk assessment protocols and recommendations for pregnant employees.
- Refer pregnant employees to Occupational Health (OH) as required, where pregnancy is affecting attendance or performance at work.
- Progress OH recommendations as required for pregnant employees.

- Review and sign applications for parenting leave, before submitting to HR for processing.
- Maintain contact with employees during periods of parenting leave, ensuring they are kept informed of organisational updates or changes, particularly those affecting their contract of employment (e.g., staff consultation and national bargaining), or in relation to health & safety, or security.
- Respond to employee requests to take KIT/SPLIT Days.
- Review and sign KIT/SPLIT forms, submitting to HR once approved.
- Liaise with employees around return-to-work arrangements, ensuring HR are kept informed in advance of any return to work.

5.3 Employees

- Read this policy and associated procedure thoroughly prior to applying for a period of parenting leave.
- Follow notification requirements for parenting leave.
- Complete the appropriate form(s) when applying for parenting leave, submitting to the line manager for review in line with notification timescales.
- Complete pregnancy risk assessment, as applicable, in conjunction with the Health & Safety Manager.
- Agree arrangements for keeping in contact with line manager during periods of parenting leave.
- Follow notification requirements for amending leave dates or ending a period of leave early.
- Liaise with line manager about KIT/SPLIT days to be worked.
- Record KIT/SPLIT Days worked on the appropriate form, submitting to the line manager in a timely manner.

6. Compliance

6.1 This policy is a cross-wide college policy; and all employees must work to meet the requirements outlined within the policy. Compliance with the Policy will be monitored through regular audits, with outcome reports being reported to the appropriate committee.

6.2 This document is compliant with the statutory provisions outlined in the Maternity, Adoption, Ordinary Parental Leave and Shared Parental Leave Regulations as detailed in the 'Legislative framework/related policies' above.

7. Monitoring

Each College policy will be monitored, and its implementation evaluated. Appropriate procedures for monitoring and evaluation are the responsibility of the lead officer. These procedures will be subject to audit by the Quality Unit.

The following maternity or adoption Performance Indicators will be used to monitor implementation:

- Quarterly reporting of numbers of employees on maternity, paternity, fertility or adoption leave with associated data analysis.
- Utilisation of 'Keeping in Touch' Days.
- Average number of sick days per employee.
- Breakdowns will be by department.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis to ensure currency of content, or sooner if legislative change requires, and will be amended as a result of any agreed changes to the terms and conditions of Academic and/or Professional Services employees as a result of agreements reached through National Bargaining