



Pregnancy, Maternity & Paternity: your rights and benefits at work

If you or your partner are pregnant or planning on having a baby, this leaflet will provide you with lots of useful information about your entitlements and responsibilities at UCL and will hopefully answer most of your initial questions.

The UCL Parental Leave Policy can be found here:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php>

There is also an FAQ page you might find useful:

http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/maternity_faqs.php

If you are still unsure of something, additional support is available through your department, the Parents and Carers Together network (PACT) <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/gender/pact.php>, and the UCL HR Employment Contracts Administration team who can be contacted by emailing hr.eca@ucl.ac.uk or calling 0203 108 7160.



1. Antenatal Care

If you are pregnant, you are entitled to take reasonable paid time off during working hours for antenatal care (scans, midwife appointments etc.)

If your partner is pregnant, you are entitled to request unpaid time off to accompany them to two such appointments. You may also request to use annual leave, time off in lieu, or arrange to make up the time (if appropriate) with your Line Manager.

2. Risk Assessment

Once you have told your Line Manager that you are pregnant, they must review the existing risk assessment(s) for your work and consider any risks to your own health and safety, or that of your unborn child. Further information about Risk Assessments is available here: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/pregnant_workers/index.htm

3. Pregnancy-related Illness

Pregnancy-related sickness absence must be reported and recorded the same as any other absence, however it will not be taken into account when assessing whether sickness absence needs to be managed formally.

If you are absent from work due to a pregnancy-related reason, within the four weeks before the expected week of childbirth (even for just one day), your maternity leave will commence automatically to protect your health and safety and that of your baby.

4. Miscarriage / Stillbirth

In the tragic event of a miscarriage or still birth, certain entitlements still apply.

Where a child is stillborn at 24 weeks or more into the pregnancy, your entitlements to Maternity Leave and Pay will be unaffected.

There are no entitlements to maternity pay and/or leave in the event of a miscarriage which occurs prior to 24 weeks. A mother will however, be entitled to occupational and/or statutory sick pay depending on the employee's length of service.

Where a child is born and only survives for a short period of time after birth, full maternity rights to maternity leave and pay will be retained irrespective of the timing of the birth.

Free and confidential advice and support (including counselling) is available through UCL's independent Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/occ_health/services/major_incident.php

Specialist support is also available through charitable organisations such as Tommy's and SANDS:

<http://www.tommys.org/website/pregnancy/problems>

<https://www.uk-sands.org/>

NB. Fixed term contracts, including researchers with fixed term funding

Regardless of your funding arrangements, if you are employed by UCL then you are entitled to UCL's occupational maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave and pay for the duration of your employment. You are also eligible for statutory leave and pay if you meet the relevant criteria.

If you are on a fixed-term contract, for example, because of fixed-term funding, however, and do not obtain a contract or funding extension, then your occupational maternity entitlements will end on the last day of your employment. UCL will, however, continue to pay statutory pay to which you are entitled, for the duration of your entitlement even if your fixed-term contract has ended, plus any outstanding holiday.

For researchers, it is strongly recommended that you contact UCL Research Services (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/finance/fba-teams/research-services>) as soon as possible to discuss how your funder may support you during your leave, for example, by extending your grant.

Should your funding end whilst you are on maternity leave, the normal consultation process still applies and you will be given access to UCL's redeployment database. If you are put at risk of redundancy while on maternity leave, then UCL will offer you suitable alternative employment for which you meet the essential criteria, if a suitable post is available, giving you priority over other candidates who are at risk.

5. Maternity Leave

You are entitled to take up to 52 weeks' Maternity Leave, starting on any day of the week you choose. The earliest you can start Maternity Leave is 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth. Before this you may request to take annual leave if you wish. If you are unable to work due to ill health, sickness absence will apply, unless it is within 4 weeks of the expected date of birth (see section 3).

6. Maternity Pay

There is no qualifying length of service for occupational maternity pay at UCL, so you will be entitled to receive up to 18 weeks full pay from the day you start maternity leave. If you are eligible, you will also receive up to an additional 21 weeks of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP).

UCL offers a maternity leave calculator on the UCL HR website to help you understand the essential information about your maternity leave entitlement. the calculator can be found here: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/maternity_calculator.php

7. Paternity / Partner Leave

UCL offers all employees 4 weeks Paternity / Partner Leave on full pay, regardless of length of service. Partners include same sex couples.

8. Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave offers a flexible approach to parents wishing to share the responsibility for childcare. It allows a mother to end her Maternity Leave early and 'share' the remaining leave with her partner. UCL offers the same enhanced benefits as for Maternity Leave, with no qualifying length of service required for enhanced pay. Full details about Shared Parental Leave at UCL and eligibility criteria can be found here: www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php



9. Keeping in Touch (KiT) Days

Whilst on Maternity Leave, you are entitled to request up to ten KiT days, while those taking shared parental leave are entitled to request up to twenty SPLiT days. These days can be used to undertake work or attend meetings or training. Using these days will not end or affect the leave period. KiT/SPLiT days must be requested in advance and will be agreed by your Line Manager if they are productive and mutually beneficial to UCL and yourself. You will be given equivalent time off in lieu for any keeping in touch days used. Please note that it will be your responsibility to arrange suitable childcare prior to undertaking any KiT/SPLiT day, as crèche facilities are not available on campus. More information can be found in our parental leave policy: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php>

10. Annual Leave

You will accrue annual leave throughout your maternity leave and may choose to take this in lieu of any equivalent amount of unpaid maternity leave, or take it after your maternity leave ends.

You should take any accrued annual leave by the end of the leave year during which you return. Any carryover of leave past this point must be by agreement with your Line Manager.

11. Sabbatical Leave

If you are a research-active academic staff member, you are entitled to one term of sabbatical leave, without teaching commitments, directly upon your return from parental leave of three months or more. This is to enable you to more quickly re-establish your research activity.

Applications should be made to your Head of Department. More information can be found in our sabbatical leave policy: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/sabbatical.php>

12. Return to work

For your own health and safety, you must take a minimum of 2 weeks Maternity Leave, immediately following the birth of your baby. This is called the 'compulsory leave period'.

You are entitled to a maximum of 52 weeks maternity leave and will be expected to return to work on the day following the last day of Maternity Leave, unless you have arranged to take annual leave or Ordinary Parental Leave at that time.

The Government's recently announced restrictions

on salary sacrifice arrangements will not apply to childcare vouchers. Anyone already in the existing childcare scheme can remain in the scheme until they no longer have qualifying children, whichever is sooner.

However, this scheme will close to new applicants when the new Government Tax-Free Childcare scheme is introduced in 2017. This will allow parents to create a tax-free childcare account where the Government tops up your contributions by 25% up to a maximum of £8,000 per year. You can find out more about Tax Free Childcare on the Government website

For further information about Childcare Vouchers and how you can apply, please visit the UCL HR website (www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/childcare_voucher_scheme.php)



13. Flexible Working

All UCL staff have the right to request flexible working. There are many ways in which staff can arrange to work flexibly in order to achieve a healthy work life balance and/or to work around caring commitments.

If you are employed full time but wish to return from parental leave on a part-time basis, please put a request in writing to your Line Manager as early as possible and forward a copy of your request to UCL Human Resources. Further information can be found in the UCL Work Life Balance Policy: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/work_life_balance.php and in our guidance document for supporting working parents and carers: www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/guidance_on_supporting_working_parents_and_carersFINAL.pdf

14. Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

UCL offers an independent, free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme through Care First. Care First employ professionally qualified Counsellors and Information Specialists, who are experienced in helping people to deal with all kinds of practical and emotional issues.

Further information and contact details are available here: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/occ_health/eap.php



15. UCL Nursery and Childcare Vouchers

UCL Nursery runs two sites in Bloomsbury, which provide childcare for staff and students. There are limited places available and you are advised to contact the UCL Nursery and complete an application form as soon as possible. More information can be found here: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/news/a-z-services/nursery-services>

UCL also operates a childcare voucher scheme through Kiddievouchers Ltd. This entitles parents to sacrifice part of their salary for a payment towards their childcare costs, and receive tax savings by doing so.

Further information about the scheme and how you can apply are available at http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/childcare_voucher_scheme.php

16. Ordinary Parental Leave (OPL)

Anyone with formal parental responsibility for a child under the age of 18, who has at least one year's continuous service with UCL, is entitled to apply for unpaid OPL. The current entitlement is for up to a total of 18 weeks unpaid OPL per child. OPL must be requested in advance and agreed by your line manager, for up to a maximum of four weeks per block of leave, for each individual child in any one year.

17. Parents and Carers Together Network (PACT)

PACT is a social network that aims to support UCL staff members who are balancing ongoing caring responsibilities with work. It is a peer support group led by network members for members, so new ideas and activities are always welcomed and encouraged. PACT aims to provide a supportive environment for letting off steam, asking for help, dealing with issues, a sounding board, and informal advice. Informal sessions are held monthly including social events, training and coaching sessions.

You can access the PACT website at www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/gender/pact.php

To join the PACT mailing list and online Moodle forum, please contact equalities@ucl.ac.uk



A quick guide to your UCL parental leave entitlements*:

Type of Leave	Length	Additional Information
Maternity Leave	52 weeks	The first two weeks of maternity leave following birth are compulsory.
Paternity Leave	4 weeks	
Ordinary Parental Leave	18 weeks	Ordinary Parental Leave can be taken up to the child's 18 th birthday in blocks of up to four weeks (as approved by your line manager). OPL requires 12 months' continuous service before being taken.
Shared Parental Leave	52 weeks	Any Shared Parental Leave taken will reduce the mother's maternity leave entitlement by an equivalent amount.
Sabbatical Leave	1 term	Only applies to research-active academic staff at the discretion of the Dean.

Type of Pay	Length	How much?	Required Length of Service
Occupational Maternity Pay	18 weeks	Full pay	None
Occupational Paternity Pay	4 weeks	Full pay	None
Occupational Shared Parental Pay	18 weeks	Full pay	None

*Please note that your statutory entitlements will depend on your personal circumstances. Please refer to the HR policies and speak to UCL HR Employment Contracts Administration for information regarding your individual entitlement. The UCL maternity leave calculator can be found on the UCL HR website: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/maternity_calculator.php.

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