



University of London

Shared Parental Leave Policy

Index

1. Introduction and purpose	p.2
2. Eligibility for Shared Parental Leave	p.2
3. Notification of Intention to take SPL	p.2
4. Contact during SPL	p.2
5. Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) days	p.2
6. Statutory Shared Parental Pay	p.3
7. University of London, Occupational Parental Pay	p.3
8. Where both parents are employees of the University	p.3
9. Evidence Requirements	p.4
10. Terms and Conditions during SPL	p.4
11. Returning to work following SPL	p.4
12. Fraudulent claims	p.5

1. Introduction and purpose

- 1.1. This policy sets out the rights, responsibilities, and arrangements in relation to Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and entitlement to Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP). The purpose of SPL is to give parents flexibility in deciding how best to care for their child during the first 52 weeks following the birth or adoption. SPL enables eligible parents to choose how to split the available leave between them. All eligible employees (see section 2 below) have a statutory right to take SPL. Further information is available in the SPL guidance notes.
- 1.2. Eligible employees will continue to be entitled to 52 weeks of maternity/adoption leave and 39 weeks of maternity/adoption pay in accordance with the Maternity Leave policy and the Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) scheme. However, the employee can choose to curtail their maternity/adoption leave to take SPL.
- 1.3. All rights described apply to full time, fixed term and part time employees, regardless of how many hours they work or length of contract, provided they meet the qualifying conditions.
- 1.4. A member of staff who would like to consider taking SPL should speak to their manager in the first instance to discuss their entitlement and plans.

2. Eligibility for Shared Parental Leave

- 2.1. To qualify for SPL, the employee would need to satisfy certain eligibility requirements. Details of eligibility requirements are referenced in the SPL guidance.

3. Notification of Intention to take SPL

- 3.1. Employees entitled to and intending to take SPL, must give their line manager notification in writing of their entitlement to take SPL, at least 8 weeks before the start of the first period of leave.
- 3.2. The relevant forms to complete are available on the Intranet, with further details of notice to be given available in the SPL guidance notes.

4. Contact during SPL

- 4.1. Before an employee's SPL begins, their line manager will discuss the arrangements for the employee to keep in touch during their leave. The University reserves the right to maintain reasonable contact with the employee from time to time during their SPL. This may be to discuss the employee's plans to return to work, to ensure the individual is aware of any opportunities, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease their return to work or simply to update them on developments at work during their absence.

5. Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) days

- 5.1. During SPL employees can undertake up to 20 days' work for the University (or attend training, conferences, or departmental away days).

5.2. SPLIT days are in addition to Keeping in Touch (KIT) days available during any preceding Maternity Leave.

5.3. Any requests to return to work part time or on a flexible basis following SPL, should be made to the employee's manager as early as possible, so that options can be explored fully.

5.4. Further details on SPLIT days are referenced in the SPL guidance.

6. Statutory Shared Parental Pay

6.1. A maximum of 37 weeks' ShPP is payable and this will be reduced by the number of weeks' statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance already taken by the mother or main adopter. ShPP is a standard weekly rate which is set by the government each tax year or (90 per cent of the employee's normal weekly earnings if this is lower). Details of the current rate of ShPP is available [here](#).

7. University of London, Occupational Parental Pay

7.1. Enhanced Occupational Parental Pay (OPP) is payable to employees on SPL who have been employed continuously for 1 year prior to the beginning of the expected week of childbirth. The amount of pay available will be reduced by the number of weeks taken as maternity or adoption pay by the mother or adopter which is a minimum of two weeks or four weeks where the mother works in a factory.

7.2. The maximum available pay is 22 weeks'; this is made up of the following:

- 6 weeks' full pay
- 16 weeks' half pay (ShPP will be paid in addition to half pay) ShPP at the lower rate will be paid in addition to half pay to those eligible provided that no combination of payments exceeds full pay.

7.3. If an employee fails to return to work after SPL for a minimum of three months, their entitlement to enhanced OPP will be replaced by the relevant statutory scheme and the employee will be required to repay the non-statutory elements of maternity pay.

8. Where both parents are employees of the University

8.1. If both parents are employees of the University and meet the eligibility criteria for enhanced OPP, between them they will be entitled to a maximum of 22 weeks' pay (6 weeks' full pay, followed by 16 weeks' half pay). ShPP will be paid in addition to half pay. ShPP at the lower rate will be paid in addition to half pay to those eligible provided that no combination of payments exceeds full pay, with no requirement to share the statutory leave provision.

8.2. Any weeks paid as University Maternity Pay or Adoption Pay will be deducted from the amount of enhanced OPP available to both parents and payment will not exceed 22 weeks. Further details on enhanced OPP is available in section 7.

9. Evidence Requirements

- 9.1. The University will request a copy of the child's birth certificate and the name and address of the other parent's employer.
- 9.2. In the case of adoption, the University may request the name and address of the other parent's employer, along with evidence confirming the following:
- The name and address of the adoption agency;
 - The date that the main adopter was notified of having been matched for adoption with the child;
 - The date on which the adoption agency expects to place the child.
- 9.3. The request will be made by the University within 14 days of receiving the employees Notice of Entitlement and intention to take SPL and ShPP. The employee must respond to the request for evidence within 14 days (or within 14 days of the birth of the child if the request was made before the child was born).
- 9.4. If a birth certificate has not yet been issued, the employee must sign a declaration to confirm this and the date and location of the child's birth. If the other parent has no employer, this will also need to be declared.

10. Terms and Conditions during SPL

- 10.1. During any period of SPL, the employees contract of employment continues and the employee will be entitled to all contractual benefits, except for salary. Benefits in kind (such as gym membership and staff discounts) will continue. Employees will also continue to accrue annual leave during SPL in accordance with their leave entitlement. Where possible accrued annual leave should be taken following the end of SPL, if this is not possible then it should be taken in the year that it is accrued. Where an SPL period overlaps two leave years the employee should consider how their annual leave entitlement can be used to ensure that it is not untaken at the end of the leave year i.e. 1 February – 31 January, as normally a maximum of up to 5 days' carryover of leave from one year to the next still applies.
- 10.2. Pension contributions will continue to be made during any period when an employee is receiving ShPP, but not during any period of unpaid SPL. Employee contributions will be based on actual pay, while the University's contributions will be based on the salary that the employee would have received had they not been taking SPL.

11. Returning to work following SPL

- 11.1. The employee will have been formally advised in writing by the University of the end date of any period of SPL. The University will expect the employee to return on the first working day agreed with their manager following the end of their SPL period and any accrued annual leave taken, unless the employee has formally notified the University otherwise.
- 11.2. If the employee is unable to attend work due to sickness or injury, the normal reporting arrangements for sickness absence as set out in the University's [Attendance Management Procedure](#) would apply. In any other case, late return without prior

authorisation will be treated as unauthorised absence and managed in line with the University's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

- 11.3. If the employee wishes to return to work earlier than their expected return date, they must provide the University with written notice to vary the leave, this must be at least eight weeks prior to their date of early return. This will count as one of the three notifications. If the employee has already used their three notifications to book and/or vary leave, then the University does not have to accept this notice to return early but may do if it is considered to be reasonably practicable to do so.
- 11.4. If the employee returns to work immediately following a period of SPL which (together with any maternity/adoption leave they may have taken to care for the same child) was 26 weeks or less, will return to the same job that they left.
- 11.5. If the employee returns to work following a period of SPL which (together with any maternity/adoption leave they may have taken to care for the same child) was 26 weeks or more they will normally be entitled to return to the job in which they were employed before their absence. If that is not practicable for the University, then the employee will return to another job which is both suitable and appropriate in the circumstances.

12. Fraudulent claims

- 12.1. The University can, where there is a suspicion that fraudulent information may have been provided or where the University has been informed by the HMRC that a fraudulent claim was made, investigate the matter further in accordance with the University's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure without acting in a discriminatory manner in relation to any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Human Resources

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