



Supporting Families Policy

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Supporting Families Policy

1 Purpose

The University is committed to creating an environment in which staff are supported in balancing their work commitments with their family responsibilities. The aim of this Policy is to ensure that the University adopts a fair, consistent and transparent approach to dealing with family-related matters.

2 Scope

This policy covers maternity, adoption, paternity and parental leave, time off to care for dependants and arrangements to cater for nursing mothers.

3 Eligibility

The general Policy applies to all staff of Glasgow Caledonian University, whether in full-time or part-time employment, and whether on permanent or fixed-term contracts. Any specific eligibility criteria for different aspects of this policy are explained in the relevant sections.

Note: this Policy does not apply to agency staff as it is the agency that employs the individual and therefore the policies in place at the agency will apply.

4 Maternity and Adoption

4.1 Maternity and Adoption Leave

The University will allow up to a maximum of 52 weeks' leave in each case. This will comprise of a period of 26 weeks 'Ordinary Leave', which may be followed immediately by up to 26 weeks 'Additional Leave'. A pregnant woman will be eligible to apply for Maternity Leave; a member of staff who qualifies as 'The Adopter' will be eligible to apply for adoption leave if they meet the criteria in [Appendix 1](#).

4.2 Maternity and Adoption Pay

All staff employed by the University will receive the statutory entitlement to paid leave if they meet the qualification criteria contained in [Appendix 1](#). Staff with a minimum of 52 weeks' service with Glasgow Caledonian University at the date on which their leave commences will be eligible for the University's Enhanced Pay entitlement. Details of maternity and adoption pay rates can be found here www.direct.gov.uk

4.3 Keeping In Touch

A member of staff and their line manager will be expected to maintain contact during the maternity or adoption leave period to ensure that the manager is aware of changes to the member of staff's situation or intentions, and to ensure that the member of staff is aware of any issues or developments in the University which may have an impact on them or their role.

Additionally, provision may be made for a member of staff to attend the University through 10 Keeping In Touch (KIT) days during their leave period without bringing the leave to an end, or losing any statutory pay. These KIT days may be for the purpose of undertaking work, attending meetings, or attending training. **N.B.** there is no obligation on the member

of staff to undertake any work during Maternity or Adoption Leave. For each KIT day that a member of staff chooses to undertake they will receive a full day's pay.

4.4 Returning From Maternity or Adoption Leave

The University will operate on the assumption that a member of staff will take their full 52-week leave entitlement. If a member of staff intends to return earlier than 52 weeks they must give at least 8 weeks' written notice of the date on which they intend to return. If a member of staff provides less than 8 week's notice the University may postpone the return date until 8 weeks after the notice is received, or until the end of the 52nd week of leave, whichever is the sooner. If a member of staff wishes to alter his/her working arrangements on return from maternity or adoption leave he/she must submit a flexible working application to his/her line manager. Further details about Flexible Working and the application procedure can be found on the [Supporting Families](#) section of the [People Services](#) pages on [GCYOU](#).

4.5 Opting into Shared Parental Leave

If an eligible member of staff would like to end their maternity or adoption leave and opt into Shared Parental Leave (SPL) then they must give at least eight weeks' written notice (a "curtailment notice") to end their maternity leave before the member of staff and/or their partner can take SPL.

4.6 Annual Leave Entitlement

All annual leave entitlement which a member of staff accrues must be taken before their maternity or adoption leave commences. Only in cases of premature birth can unused annual leave entitlement be carried forward into the maternity leave period.

Both annual leave and public holiday entitlement will accrue during the entire maternity or adoption leave period. If the annual leave year ends during the maternity or adoption leave period, the accrued leave will automatically transfer to the new leave year. Accrued holidays must be taken at a time agreed between the member of staff and his/her Line Manager, and can be taken before and/or after returning to work.

5 Paternity Leave

5.1 Eligibility

A member of staff who is either:

- i. the biological father or the adopter of a child, or
- ii. the spouse or partner of the mother, or adopter, of a child

will qualify for paternity leave if they meet the criteria contained in [Appendix 1](#).

5.2 Ordinary Paternity Leave

The University will allow up to a maximum of two weeks' paid Paternity Leave, consisting of one week's leave at full pay followed by one week's leave at the statutory paternity leave rate. This leave can be taken as a one-week or a two-week block, and must commence within 56 days of the date of birth/adoption. Staff can opt to take this leave as two separate weeks if they wish. Details of the Statutory Paternity Pay rate can be found at www.direct.gov.uk.

5.3 Additional Paternity Leave

Entitlement to additional paternity leave was abolished from 5 April 2015 with the introduction of the new right to Shared Parental Leave. This provides additional flexibility for employees to take time off work to care for a child.

6 Shared Parental Leave

6.1 Entitlement

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) is a flexible leave option as it provides both parents with the opportunity to consider the best arrangements to care for their child during the child's first year. It enables eligible employees, i.e. mothers, fathers, adopters and partners of a mother/adopter, to choose how to share time off work after their child is born or placed for adoption.

Employees continue to be entitled to 52 weeks maternity and adoption leave however SPL means that a mother or adopter is able to share some of the leave (up to 50 weeks which includes 37 weeks paid) by choosing to curtail their maternity leave. SPL enables the mother/adopter to return to work for part of the time and then resume leave at a later date. SPL can be taken as one continuous period or as up to 3 separate blocks and can be taken separately or by both parents at the same time.

Further details about Shared Parental Leave and the application procedure can be found on the [Supporting Families](#) section of the [People Services](#) pages on [GCYOU](#). Please contact People Services to discuss your personal circumstances and the options available to you.

6.2 Shared Parental Leave Pay

All staff employed by the University will receive the statutory entitlement to paid leave if they meet the eligibility criteria ([Appendix 1](#)). Staff with a minimum of 52 weeks' service with Glasgow Caledonian University at the date on which their leave commences will be eligible for the University's Enhanced Pay entitlement.

Where a staff member is either the father of a child, adopter of a child or partner of the mother/adopter, they should consider using their two weeks' paternity leave before taking SPL otherwise this entitlement will be lost once SPL has started. If an employee chooses to take Paternity Leave and SPL, the maximum enhanced paid period will not exceed the enhanced pay entitlement as provided for under Maternity or Adoption Leave.

7 Parental Leave

Staff who meet the eligibility criteria contained in [Appendix 1](#) will be entitled to take up to 18 weeks' unpaid Parental Leave per child. The leave must normally be taken in blocks or multiples of one week, however the first week's entitlement may be taken in blocks or multiples of one day. If the leave request is in relation to a child who is disabled the leave may be taken in blocks or multiples of one day. The total Parental Leave entitlement will be reduced by the amount of any Parental Leave taken while the member of staff was employed by a different employer.

In normal circumstances a member of staff will be required to provide a minimum of 21 days notice when requesting Parental Leave. Requests for leave will not be refused if they are made immediately after the birth or adoption of a child. However, in other

circumstances the Line Manager may postpone the parental leave for up to 3 months if the function or service would be particularly disrupted by allowing the leave. In these circumstances the Line Manager will provide written reasons for the postponement to the member of staff and will discuss an alternative date for the leave with them within 7 days of the request being made. If the member of staff is unhappy with the alternative date proposed then he/she may appeal the matter to the Line Manager's manager who will make a final decision.

8 Dependants Leave

A member of staff may request leave to deal with matters relating to a dependant. Dependants Leave will be granted on the basis of time that is reasonably required by the member of staff to take action to address a matter. Dependants Leave is not intended to be long-term, and may be paid or unpaid leave depending on the circumstances.

All staff have a legal right to take reasonable unpaid time off work to deal with cases of domestic emergencies affecting a dependant. Details of the enhanced entitlements that the University provides can be found on the People Services pages within the GCYOU staff portal.

9 Arrangements for Nursing Mothers

The University recognises the health benefits to a mother and baby of breastfeeding, and will provide support to mothers who wish to continue breastfeeding when they return to work. Support will include the provision of facility that is exclusively for the use of nursing mothers, and reasonable flexibility in working arrangements to allow the facility to be used. Further details of the arrangements for nursing mothers, including Health & Safety considerations and responsibilities can be found in the New and Expectant Mother's policy.

10 Impact of Unpaid Leave on Pension Contributions

No pension contributions, either employee's or employer's, will be paid during periods of unpaid leave. A member of staff may have the option of 'buying back' any reckonable service, depending on the pension provider. Staff who wish to understand the impact that unpaid leave will have on their pension should contact their pension provider. Contact details for the pension schemes which the University contributes to can be found here http://www.gcu.ac.uk/People_Services/work/pensions.html.

11 Accountabilities

The Executive Board will be accountable for overseeing the implementation of this Policy. Managers and staff will be expected to apply the spirit of this Policy, and to seek advice from People Services where interpretation of the Policy is required. People Services will ensure that any guidance and/or training required to support the operation of this Policy is available, and will provide detailed advice to staff on their rights and on the processes they must follow to obtain leave and/or pay under this Policy.

12 Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy and is attached in [Appendix 2](#). The main potential for negative impact is expected to arise from decisions made by managers during the operation of this policy. To reduce the potential risk, People

Services will monitor the impact of the operation of this policy on an ongoing basis, will provide detailed guidance for managers and staff to support this policy, and will work with managers as necessary to ensure that, as far as possible, their decisions are fair and equitable.

13 Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed by People Services on an annual basis. If no amendments are required this will be reported to SPC. Where minor amendments are found to be necessary the policy will be revised and circulated to JCC, EB and SPC with the amendments highlighted for information. Where more significant amendments are necessary the policy will be re-drafted and updated through the normal consultation and approval process.

Appendix 1. **Eligibility Criteria**

Adoption Leave

A member of staff may apply for adoption leave if he/she meets the following criteria:

1. an adoption agency has given written notice that it has matched the member of staff with a child for adoption,
2. the adoption agency has given a date on which it expects to place a child into the member of staff's care with a view to adoption (the 'Expected Placement Date'),
3. the member of staff has notified the adoption agency that he/she agrees that the child should be placed with them, and agree with the Expected Placement Date, and
4. the member of staff's spouse/civil partner/partner will not be taking adoption leave with their employer.

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Statutory Maternity and Adoption Pay

A member of staff will qualify for Statutory Maternity or Adoption Pay if he/she meets the following criteria:

1. she is pregnant or he/she has been matched with a child by an adoption agency,
2. he/she had been employed by Glasgow Caledonian University for at least 26 consecutive weeks at the 'Qualifying Week'. The Qualifying Week is defined as being:
 - i. 15 weeks before the date the baby is due for maternity pay, or
 - ii. the date on which the adoption agency gave notice that it had matched the member of staff with a child for adoption,
3. he/she has average weekly earnings that are equal to or higher than the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL) during the 8 weeks prior to the Qualifying Week. (Details of the current LEL can be obtained on the Directgov website at www.direct.gov.uk.)

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Paternity Leave

A member of staff will qualify for Paternity Leave if he/she meets the following criteria:

1. He is the biological father of the child, or
2. He/she is the spouse or partner of the mother of the child, or
3. He/she is the adopter of the child, or
4. He/she is the spouse or partner of the person adopting the child

And,

5. He/she has responsibility for the child's upbringing;
6. He/she is taking time off work to either support the mother, or the person adopting the child, or to care for the child.

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Shared Parental Leave

A member of staff will qualify for Shared Parental Leave if he/she meets the following criteria:

1. Is the mother or adopter, father or (secondary) adopter of a child, or partner (includes spouse, civil partner or partner) of the mother/adopter;
2. The mother/adopter has been employed by Glasgow Caledonian University for at least 26 continuous weeks by the end of the Qualifying Week or on the date of the adoption placement, and is still employed in the week before the leave is to be taken, and/or
3. The employee meets the eligibility criteria detailed at <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay/overview>

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Parental Leave

A member of staff will qualify for Parental Leave if he/she meets the following criteria:

1. he/she has been employed by Glasgow Caledonian University for at least 52 consecutive weeks, and
2. is named on the birth certificate, adoption certificate, or have legal responsibility for, a child under the age of 18.

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Carers

A member of staff will be considered a 'Carer' if he/she has a dependant:

1. spouse or partner,
2. child,
3. parent,
4. other person living in the household as a member of their family, or
5. other person who reasonably relies on the member of staff for assistance.

Dependants do not include tenants, boarders or lodgers.

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Appendix 2. **Equality Impact Assessment**

| | |
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| Name of policy/procedure/strategy: Supporting Families Policy | |
| School/Directorate: Directorate of People Services | |
| Name of policy/procedure/strategy owner: Kathleen Cleary, Professional Services Manager | |
| Date of Assessment: 25 February 2015 | |
| 1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/strategy. | This Policy aims to ensure a fair, consistent and transparent approach to family related matters, and outlines the rights of staff in relation to maternity, adoption, paternity, shared parental and parental leave, time off to care for dependants, flexible working arrangements. |
| 2. What are the intended outcomes? | To create an environment where staff are supported when balancing their work and family responsibilities. |
| 3. Who are the main stakeholders? (e.g. staff, students, visitors) | Senior Managers, Line Managers, Staff. |
| 4. How does the policy/procedure/strategy take into account different needs and circumstances (e.g. Ethnicity: cultural sensitivities, plain English; Disability: Alternate/ accessible formats; Gender: inclusive to women and men; Sexual Orientation; Faith or Belief, religious practices; Age: needs of younger and older people)? | The Policy takes into account relevant circumstances but these are determined on a case by case basis. |
| 5. What is the likely impact on the general duty to have <i>due regard</i> to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act? <i>E.g. Is there evidence to indicate that the policy may result in less favourable treatment for particular groups?</i> | Positive – aspects of the Policy promote gender equality for female and male staff. Positive – the Policy positively promotes the rights of staff who have dependants or caring responsibilities. |

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| <p>6. What is the likely impact on the general duty to have <i>due regard</i> to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it?</p> <p><i>E.g. Is there evidence to show that the policy helps to remove disadvantage or encourages the participation of particular groups?</i></p> | <p>There is likely to be neutral impact as the Policy does not consider protected characteristics as a relevant factor.</p> |
| <p>7. What is the likely impact on the general duty to have <i>due regard</i> to the need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, or not?</p> <p><i>E.g. Is there evidence to illustrate that the policy helps to tackle prejudice or promote understanding?</i></p> | <p>There is likely to be neutral impact as the Policy does not consider protected characteristics as a relevant factor.</p> |
| <p>8. How will any negative impact identified above be addressed?</p> | <p>No explicit negative impact has been identified. However, until the Policy is implemented, the actual impact (negative or positive) on different protected groups is unknown. It is recommended that equality data relating to uptake of the various rights is collected and analysed annually, and feedback from staff accessing these rights is actively asked for. This will help to meet the data and involvement requirements under the Equality Act 2010, and to identify any negative impact.</p> |
| <p>9. What is the overall impact rating? (Choose one rating)</p> | <p>Medium: There is some evidence that people from different groups are (or could be) differently affected (positively or negatively)</p> |
| <p>10. How will the results of the equality impact assessment be published?</p> | <p>They will be published as part of the Policy and also on the Equalities and Diversity website.</p> |
| <p>11. How will the implementation of the policy, procedure, strategy and its impact on equality be monitored and reviewed?</p> | <p>The Policy will be reviewed as part of GCU's annual Policy review.</p> |

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