

Parental Leave Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The University is committed to providing staff with parental leave arrangements that enable access to paid and unpaid leave to support and protect working parents.

Section 2 - Application

(2) This Policy applies to all staff of the University (excluding casual professional and sessional academic staff unless otherwise stated).

Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Staff member	Provides as much notice as possible of the proposed leave. Informs their Supervisor/Manager of the proposed leave. Submits an application for leave. Once leave is approved, provide Human Resources with relevant documentation for processing purposes.
Supervisor/Manager	Considers a staff member's application for leave. Provides recommendation to the authorising officer.
Authorising officer	Determines the final outcome of an application for leave.

Section 4 - Parental Leave

(3) Parental leave includes paid and unpaid leave associated with the birth of a staff member's child (including in a legal surrogacy arrangement) or placement of a child with the staff member, comprising maternity leave, partner leave, primary carer parental leave, unpaid parental leave and adoption leave.

(4) Parental leave, excluding partner and primary carer parental leave, must commence before the medically certified expected date of birth, date of adoption or commencement of a long-term fostering or guardianship arrangement.

(5) Parental leave (paid and unpaid) must be accessed within 12 months of the actual date of birth of the child or placement of the child or commencement of the long-term fostering or guardianship arrangement.

(6) All paid parental leave must be completed within 52 weeks after the actual date of birth, placement of the child or commencement of the long-term fostering or guardianship arrangement. All unpaid parental leave must be completed within two years after the actual date of birth, placement of the child or commencement of the long-term fostering or guardianship arrangement.

(7) A staff member on primary carer parental leave or unpaid parental leave may initially apply for a maximum period

of 52 weeks parental leave, although this may be extended for a further period of up to 52 weeks unpaid parental leave.

(8) Parental leave will normally be available as one continuous period with the exception of 'Keeping In Touch' days which may be accessed where the staff member meets the relevant eligibility criteria in line with Federal Government requirements (Refer below). Shorter, non-continuous periods of leave may be available in special circumstances as outlined in the [Parental Leave Guidelines](#).

(9) The University will not refuse employment or dismiss a staff member, or take any other action that disadvantages a staff member on the grounds of pregnancy, possible pregnancy, a request for parental leave, or a possible request for parental leave.

(10) Procedures for applying and taking leave, including notice and documentation requirements, are contained in the [Parental Leave Guidelines](#). Staff are required to comply with these procedures in order to access parental leave.

Federal Government Paid Parental Leave Scheme

(11) A staff member may be entitled to access the Federal Government Paid Parental Leave Scheme which is separate to the University's parental leave entitlements as outlined in this Policy.

(12) A staff member accessing the Federal Government Paid Parental Leave Scheme is not restricted from also accessing parental leave at QUT.

Section 5 - Maternity, Primary Carer, and/or unpaid Parental Leave

(13) A staff member (excluding casual professional and sessional academic staff) who gives birth to a child or whose child is born in a legal surrogacy arrangement is eligible for parental leave in the form of paid maternity leave, paid primary carer parental leave, and/or unpaid parental leave as follows:

QUT Continuous Service	Paid Leave Entitlement	Unpaid Leave Entitlement
12 months	26 weeks paid parental leave comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 weeks paid maternity leave;• 14 weeks paid primary carer parental leave.	52 weeks less any period of paid parental leave taken.
Between 9 and 12 months	12 weeks paid parental leave comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6 weeks paid maternity leave;• 6 weeks paid primary carer parental leave.	52 weeks less any period of paid parental leave taken.
Less than 9 months	Nil	52 weeks

(14) Staff employed on a part-time basis are eligible for parental leave paid on a proportional basis of the full-time entitlement.

(15) Staff are entitled to access a further period of unpaid parental leave of up to 52 weeks (Section 9, clause 37).

Other Leave

(16) It is not intended that personal leave will be used to duplicate, replace or extend parental leave. However, prior to taking parental leave, personal leave, additional personal leave or recreation leave can be used for medical appointments or illness directly related to the pregnancy.

Transfer to Suitable Position

(17) Where a staff member is pregnant and, in the opinion of a registered medical practitioner, illness or risks arising out of the pregnancy or hazards connected with the work assigned to the staff member make it inadvisable for the staff member to continue at her present work, the staff member will, if the authorising officer deems it practicable, be transferred to a suitable position at the same rate of pay and on the same conditions until the commencement of parental leave.

(18) If the transfer to a suitable position is not practicable the staff member may elect to commence parental leave.

Special circumstances for Paid Maternity Leave

(19) After 16 weeks of pregnancy have elapsed, the staff member shall be entitled to 12 weeks paid maternity leave (if the staff member is entitled to paid leave) regardless of the outcome of the pregnancy, for example, if a pregnancy terminates by miscarriage or still birth. If a pregnancy terminates before 16 weeks, the staff member can use other leave credits such as personal leave, additional personal leave, compassionate leave and/or recreation leave.

Section 6 - Partner Leave, Primary Carer Parental Leave and/or unpaid Parental Leave

(20) A staff member (excluding casual professional and sessional academic staff) whose partner gives birth to a child or whose child is born in a legal surrogacy arrangement is eligible for parental leave in the form of paid partner leave, unpaid partner leave (which can be taken to facilitate the Federal Government Paid Parental Leave Scheme), paid primary carer parental leave, and/or unpaid parental leave, subject to the following:

QUT Continuous Service	Paid Leave Entitlement	Unpaid Leave Entitlement
12 months	16 weeks paid parental leave comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 days paid partner leave;• 14 weeks paid primary carer parental leave.	52 weeks less any period of paid parental leave taken.
Between 9 and 12 months	7 weeks paid parental leave comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 days paid partner leave;• 6 weeks paid primary carer parental leave.	52 weeks less any period of paid leave taken.
Less than 9 months	Nil	52 weeks

(21) Staff employed on a part-time basis are eligible for parental leave paid on a proportional basis of the full-time entitlement.

(22) Staff are entitled to access a further period of unpaid parental leave of up to 52 weeks (Section 9, clause 37).

Unpaid Parental Leave

(23) In addition to paid partner and primary carer parental leave, staff who become the carer of a new child are entitled to unpaid parental leave so that the total period of leave is no more than 24 months.

Section 7 - Adoption Leave

(24) Adoption leave is granted to eligible staff who become the primary carer for a new child who is under six years of age (not including adopting a child of the staff member's partner) and comprises both paid leave and unpaid leave.

QUT Continuous Service	Paid Leave Entitlement	Unpaid Leave Entitlement
12 months	26 weeks paid adoption leave.	52 weeks less any period of paid parental leave taken.
Between 9 and 12 months	12 weeks paid adoption leave.	52 weeks less any period of paid parental leave taken.
Less than 9 months	Nil	52 weeks

(25) Staff are entitled to access a further period of Unpaid Parental Leave of up to 52 weeks (Section 9, clause 37).

(26) Eligible staff (excluding casual professional and sessional academic staff) may also be entitled to parental leave, consistent with Section 6 above. Upon successful adoption, this leave may be used for any event directly related to the placement of the child.

(27) Where the placement of a child for adoption with a staff member does not proceed or continue, the staff member will notify the University immediately and the University will nominate a time at least four weeks from receipt of notification for the staff member's return to work.

Section 8 - Parental Leave for Casual Professional and Sessional Academic Staff

(28) A casual or sessional staff member with primary carer responsibilities is entitled to a maximum of 52 weeks of unpaid parental leave.

Section 9 - General Conditions of Parental Leave

Payment

(29) The salary received for paid parental leave is the normal salary paid to the staff member immediately prior to the commencement of leave (exclusive of higher duties allowance). The method and calculation of paid parental leave will occur in accordance with the [Parental Leave Guidelines](#).

Superannuation

(30) The University will pay 17% employer superannuation contribution (not including on any higher duties salary) to ongoing and fixed-term staff members accessing paid parental leave for up to 52 weeks following the birth (including in a legal surrogacy arrangement) or placement of the child.

General Conditions

(31) For the purposes of parental leave, continuous service is calculated as at the first commencement date of parental leave, or the date of birth of the child, date of adoption or commencement of a long-term fostering or guardianship arrangement, whichever is earlier.

(32) If a staff member applies for a period of paid or unpaid parental leave for a subsequent new child whilst already on unpaid parental leave, the new period of leave supersedes the initial period of leave granted and will not be in addition to that leave.

(33) The University is not required to extend a fixed-term, casual or sessional appointment solely by reason of a period of paid or unpaid parental leave.

(34) Staff on probation will have their probation period suspended by any period of extended leave.

'Keeping in Touch' Days

(35) Up to 10 'Keeping In Touch' days may be accessed when the staff member is in receipt of entitlements under the Federal Government Paid Parental Leave Scheme, or when the staff member is on unpaid parental leave from the University, in accordance with this Policy. The purpose of a 'Keeping In Touch' day is to enable the staff member to keep in touch with their employment in order to facilitate a return to work, in line with the [Federal Government](#) requirements.

(36) Where it is mutually agreed between the staff member and the authorising officer, a staff member may attend work for up to 10 days for the purposes of keeping in touch in line with Federal Government requirements. Where a staff member extends their unpaid parental leave (Section 9, clause 37), they are eligible to access an additional 10 'Keeping In Touch' days.

Additional Unpaid Parental Leave

(37) A staff member who has accessed their full entitlement to unpaid parental leave (52 weeks) may apply to extend their period of unpaid leave up to a further, maximum period of 52 weeks. The University may only refuse such an application on reasonable business grounds, and this must be discussed with the staff member prior to refusal.

Subsequent Periods of Paid Parental Leave

(38) A staff member is eligible to subsequent periods of parental leave in accordance with the eligibility criteria outlined within this Policy. Parental leave is an individual entitlement and there is no restriction on the number of times a staff member may access paid and/or unpaid parental leave. Previous paid and/or unpaid parental leave is treated as continuous service for the purpose of determining eligibility for subsequent periods of paid/unpaid parental leave. The calculation of a paid parental leave entitlement is in accordance with the [Parental Leave Guidelines](#).

Section 10 - Returning to Work

(39) A staff member will be entitled to return to the position which they held immediately before commencing parental leave. Where this position no longer exists but there are other positions available which the staff member is qualified for and capable of performing, the staff member will be entitled to a position as nearly comparable in status and pay to that of their former position.

Transfer to Suitable Position

(40) In the case of a staff member transferred to a suitable position, pursuant to Section 5 above, the staff member will be entitled to return to the position held immediately before such transfer.

Early Return to Work Options

(41) With the agreement of the University, a staff member may elect to return to work earlier than the expected end date of their parental leave. This request may also come from the University, provided the staff member no longer has responsibility to care for a child and 4 week's written notice is given. Where a mother has given birth, the date of return may be no earlier than 6 weeks after the date of birth.

(42) In special circumstances, for example still birth, the staff member may request to return to work earlier than the expected end date of their parental leave by written request and within 4 weeks of providing notice. Alternatively, this request may come from the University provided at least 6 weeks' written notice is given.

Flexible Return to Work Options

(43) A staff member who has responsibility for the care of a child may request for an individual flexibility arrangement. The University will only refuse such a request on reasonable business grounds. This may include part-time work for a period agreed between the staff member and supervisor, with the option for the staff member to revert to their former employment arrangement at the end of the agreed period.

(44) Procedures for applying for an individual flexibility arrangement are contained in the [Parental Leave Guidelines](#).

Section 11 - Exceptions to Policy

(45) The Vice-President (People) and Chief People Officer is authorised to approve variations to this Policy in exceptional circumstances. Any such variation will be recorded by Human Resources.

Section 12 - Definitions

Term	Definition
Adoption Leave	Means leave taken in association with becoming the primary carer of the placement of a child who is under six years of age with the staff member for adoption, and who is not a child of the staff member's partner.
Continuous Service	Means a period of unbroken service. A staff member's service will be deemed to be unbroken provided that the time between ceasing employment and recommencing employment with the University does not exceed three (3) months.
Keeping in Touch Day	Means a day a staff member may attend work and undertake activities for the purposes of staying up to date with their workplace, refreshing their skills and assisting in their return to work, in line with the Federal Government requirements.
Maternity Leave	Means leave taken in association with the staff member giving birth to a child or becoming a parent and primary carer of a child born in a legal surrogacy arrangement.
Partner	Means spouse (including a former spouse, de facto spouse, former de facto spouse, same sex partner and former same sex partner) of the person who gives birth or become a parent and primary carer of a child born in a legal surrogacy arrangement or, in the case of adoption leave, of the person who is nominated as the primary carer.
Partner Leave	Means short-term leave taken by staff in association with their spouse or de facto partner giving birth to child, becoming a parent and primary carer of a child born in a legal surrogacy arrangement, or adopting a child.
Primary Carer Parental Leave	Means leave taken where the staff member has or will have primary responsibility for the care of their own, or their spouse's new born child, or their child born in a legal surrogacy arrangement.

Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Gillian Bromley Vice-President (People) and Chief People Officer
Author	Gillian Bromley Project Manager
Enquiries Contact	Gillian Bromley Vice-President (People) and Chief People Officer <hr/> Administrative Division