

Paternity Leave Policy V3.1 0321AL

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Author & Title:	HR Manager
Responsible Director:	Director of People Services
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Version history	
V1	Previous policy to 2008
V2	New policy September 2011 (new legislation)
V3	March 2015 internal review: minor change to link to Shared Parental Leave policy
V3.1	Minor changes to language. – March 2021
V4	V4 Updated to reflect April 2026 legislative changes, including day one entitlement



## **Paternity Leave Policy**

### **1. Objective**

Liverpool Hope University is committed to ensuring equality and diversity across the organisation and this policy should provide an opportunity for our staff to integrate the development of a career with family responsibilities. This policy sets out the paternity provisions to which employees are entitled. These provisions comply with the relevant legislation. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Shared Parental Leave Policy and other relevant family friendly policies. This policy does not form part of the contract of employment.

### **2. Introduction**

Following the birth or adoption, eligible employees can take up to two weeks' paid leave to care for the child and/or to support the mother/adopter in the form of Ordinary Paternity Leave.

As the paternity provisions are complex, individuals should clarify the relevant procedures as soon as possible with their HR Manager to ensure that they are followed.

### **3. Ordinary Paternity Leave Entitlements**

An employee whose partner (including spouse or civil partner) gives birth to a child, or who is the biological father of the child, is entitled to two weeks' ordinary paid paternity leave. Employees are entitled to Ordinary Paternity Leave from the first day of employment, subject to statutory eligibility criteria.

Employees who meet the eligibility criteria can choose to take either one week or two consecutive weeks' Ordinary Paternity Leave. Ordinary Paternity Leave can be taken as either one continuous period of one or two weeks, or as two separate one-week blocks. Leave cannot be taken as individual days.

Ordinary paternity leave is also available to adoptive parents where a child is matched or newly placed with them for adoption. Either the adoptive father or the adoptive mother may take ordinary paternity leave where the other adoptive parent has elected to take adoption leave. A separate policy is available in respect of adoption leave.

To qualify for ordinary paternity leave, the individual must also have, or expect to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child and be making the request to help care for the child or to support the child's mother.

Eligibility for Statutory and Occupational Paternity Pay remains subject to statutory service and earnings requirements. During Ordinary Paternity Leave, eligible employees will be paid by the University at their normal rate of pay. (Occupational Paternity Pay is inclusive of Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP), which is effectively enhanced by the University to equal full pay). Employees who do not meet the statutory service requirements for Statutory Paternity Pay will still be entitled to take unpaid Ordinary Paternity Leave.

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Employees can take only one period of leave per pregnancy even if more than one baby is born as the result of the same pregnancy.

Ordinary paternity leave is granted in addition to an individual's normal annual holiday entitlement. Ordinary Paternity Leave must be taken in periods of one week or two weeks and can be taken as either one continuous block or two separate one-week blocks within 52 weeks of the birth or placement. If the child is born early, it must be taken from the time of the birth but within 52 weeks of the expected week of childbirth. Ordinary paternity leave can start either from the date the child is born or placed for adoption or from a chosen number of days or weeks after that date.

Employees may take Ordinary Paternity Leave either before or after Shared Parental Leave, subject to meeting eligibility and notice requirements.

Employees may also be entitled to Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave and Pay in accordance with statutory provisions effective from April 2026.

Employees may also be entitled to Neonatal Care Leave and Pay where applicable. Further details are available in the relevant policy.

### 3.1 Notification of ordinary paternity leave

Where an individual wishes to request Ordinary Paternity Leave in respect of a birth child, they must notify their HR Manager. Employees must provide notice in accordance with statutory requirements. This will typically include notification of intent by the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (where reasonably practicable) and at least 28 days' notice of the intended leave dates. Employees must provide notice in accordance with statutory requirements. This will typically include early notification of intent and at least 28 days' notice of the intended leave dates, where reasonably practicable. The length of ordinary paternity leave they wish to take and the date on which they wish the leave to commence.

In the case of an adopted child, the individual must give written notice of their intention to take ordinary paternity leave no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was given by the adoption agency. The notice must specify the date the child is expected to be placed for adoption, the date the individual intends to start ordinary paternity leave, the length of the intended ordinary paternity leave period and the date on which the adopter was notified of having been matched with the child.

If an individual subsequently wishes to change the timing of the ordinary paternity leave, they must give 28 days' written notice of the new dates. The individual must also, if so requested, complete and sign a self-certificate declaring that they are entitled to ordinary paternity leave and ordinary statutory paternity pay.

### 4. Rights on and after return to work

On resuming work after ordinary paternity leave, the individual is entitled to return to the same job as they occupied before commencing paternity leave on the same terms and conditions of employment as if they had not been absent.

### 5. Time off for antenatal care

Employees have the right to take time off to accompany a pregnant partner with whom they are having a child at up to two antenatal appointments. This time off will be **unpaid**.

To be eligible to take this form of time off, the employee could be the husband or civil partner of the pregnant partner, or could be living with the pregnant partner in an enduring family relationship. In addition, the employee will be eligible for the time off if he is the biological father of the expected child. The antenatal appointment must be made on the advice of a

registered medical practitioner, midwife or nurse. The organisation expects that normally no more than half a day is needed for an antenatal appointment.

The employee must produce documentation giving details of the appointment date and time and discuss their request with their line manager

The employee should endeavour to give their line manager as much notice as possible of when they need the time off for the antenatal appointment and, wherever possible, try to arrange them as near to the start or end of the working day as possible.

## **6. Time off to attend adoption appointments**

From 5 April 2015, employees who are adopting a child are entitled to take time off to attend adoption appointments.

Where an employee is part of a couple jointly adopting a child, the couple can elect for one of them to take **paid** time off to attend up to five adoption appointments (under s.57ZJ of the Employment Rights Act 1996). The other can elect to take **unpaid** time off to attend up to two adoption appointments (under s.57ZL of the Employment Rights Act 1996). For clarity, The parent who plans to be in receipt of Statutory Adoption Pay is the parent with the right to five adoption appointments, the other parent with the right to two unpaid adoption appointments. Entitlement to paternity leave and pay may be affected depending on which adoption appointment rights are exercised. Employees should seek advice from HR.

The purpose of the appointment is to enable the employee to have contact with the child (for example, to bond with him/her before the placement) or for any other purpose connected with the adoption (for example, to meet with the professionals involved in the care of the child).

The appointment must have been arranged by or at the request of the adoption agency. The time off must be taken before the date of the child's placement for adoption with the employee.

The University will ask the individual for proof of the date and time of the appointment and that the appointment has been arranged by or at the request of the adoption agency (for example, a letter or email from the adoption agency).

The University will ask the individual to sign a declaration confirming that they have elected to exercise their right under either s.57ZJ or s.57ZL of the Employment Rights Act 1996 to take time off to attend an adoption appointment. The University will ask for the declaration on the first occasion on which the individual asks for time off to attend an adoption appointment.

## **7. Shared parental leave**

Shared parental leave is available in relation to babies due on or after 5 April 2015 (or, in the case of adoption leave, children placed for adoption on or after 5 April 2015). Shared parental leave enables mothers or adopters to commit to ending their maternity or adoption leave and pay at a future date, and to share the untaken balance of leave and statutory pay as shared parental leave and pay with their partner.

An employee can choose to take both ordinary paternity leave and shared parental leave. Employees may take Ordinary Paternity Leave either before or after Shared Parental Leave, subject to meeting eligibility and notice requirements.

Shared parental leave must be taken in blocks of at least one week. Individuals can request to take shared parental leave in one continuous block (in which case the University is required to accept the request as long as the individual meets the eligibility and notice requirements), or as a number of separate blocks of leave (in which case the individual needs the University's agreement).

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To be able to take shared parental leave, an employee and their partner must meet various eligibility requirements and have complied with the relevant curtailment, notice and evidence requirements. This includes the mother curtailing their maternity leave, or adopter curtailing their adoption leave.

Employees can refer to the organisation's policy on shared parental leave ([please see this link](#)), where they will find full details of the eligibility requirements, as well as instructions as to how the mother's maternity leave can be curtailed. The organisation's policy on shared parental leave sets out the notice periods with which employees must comply and what evidence they must provide to the organisation. The policy also contains more details on employees' entitlement to statutory shared parental pay.

The mother/adopter and the partner should ensure that they are each liaising with their own employer when making requests for shared parental leave.