



University  
of Exeter

## Unpaid Parental leave

Please note this is for Unpaid Parental Leave taken after 6<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

Unpaid Parental leave is the right to take time off work to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare. It can be used to spend more time with children and strike some balance between work and family commitments.

### Eligibility

- You must be an employee of the University of Exeter
- you must be the parent (named on the birth certificate) of a child who is under eighteen years old, or
- you have adopted, or begun a placement for adoption by you, a child under the age of eighteen, or
- you have acquired formal parental responsibility for a child who is under eighteen years old
- you must not have exhausted your entitlement while working with previous employers or for the University of Exeter
- parental leave is to look after a child, which may include making arrangements for the good of the child
- parental leave may be taken immediately after a period of other family leave, subject to the notice requirements

### Entitlement

#### Taking parental leave

- You're entitled to 18 weeks' leave for each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday.
- You may take up to four weeks in any one year per child
- You may apply for leave in blocks of one week at a time, therefore part of a week will count as one complete week.
- A 'week' equals the length of time you normally work over 7 days.

#### Taking parental leave for a disabled child

- An employee can take parental leave in blocks of days or hours if they are entitled to one of the following for their child:
  - Disability Living Allowance
  - Personal Independence Payment

## How to Apply

- you should apply at least 21 days in advance of the leave, giving dates when the leave is to start and finish, in writing (email), to your line manager (with HoD approval)
- line managers must obtain HoD approval before confirming any leave
- whenever possible you should not apply for leave during peak work times, unless the leave is requested on or around the time of the birth, or adoption, of the child
- the University may postpone parental leave for up to six months when it is considered that the business has a significant reason to do so
- the reason for the postponement will be given in writing within 7 days of the original request and will set out the new dates of parental leave
- the University cannot postpone paternal leave where it starts on the day of birth or adoption, before paternity leave
- the University cannot postpone parental leave where the delay would mean you no longer qualify for parental leave e.g. postponing until after 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- you may be required to produce documentary evidence of parental responsibility, such as a copy of the child's birth certificate or adoption order.

## During parental leave

- parental leave will be recorded on iTrent by PS Connect once it has been approved by your manager
- you remain an employee of the University during parental leave (unless your employment contract is terminated for other reasons)
- you continue to benefit from your statutory employment rights during parental leave
- you will continue to accrue holiday entitlement during parental leave
- if you are a member of one of the University recognised pension schemes please see below
  - USS - a period of parental leave will not count towards your pensionable service. Please contact [payandbenefits@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:payandbenefits@exeter.ac.uk) for more information.
  - ERSS- please contact ERSS for information on how parental leave effects your pension <https://www.scottishwidows.co.uk/save/erss.html>
  - NHS - If you don't make up the contributions then you are made a leaver from the scheme and, due to strict eligibility criteria set by NHS pensions, there is no guarantee that you would be able to re-join. Please contact [payandbenefits@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:payandbenefits@exeter.ac.uk) for more information.

## After parental leave

- you have the right to return to the same job after a standalone period (not combined with other statutory family leave) of ordinary parental leave that is 4 weeks or less.
- you have the right to return to the same job after a standalone period (not combined with other statutory family leave) of ordinary parental leave of more than 4 weeks, or if not reasonably practicable a similar job which has the same or better status, terms and conditions as the old job.

Owner:	HR Policy
Approved by:	UEB originally HRSLT for statutory changes in 2026
Equality Impact Assessment date:	Feb 2026
Date approved:	2026
Review date:	2029