1. **Eligibility**

1.1 The right to Unpaid Parental Leave entitles all eligible staff who have completed one year’s qualifying service.

1.2 To qualify for Unpaid Parental Leave you must:

* named on the child's birth certificate or the child's adoption certificate
* have legal parental responsibility for a child under eighteen

1.3 If you are separated and you don't live with your children, you have the right to unpaid parental leave if you keep formal parental responsibility for the children

1.4 You are able to start taking unpaid parental leave as soon as the child is born or placed for adoption, or as soon as you have completed the required one year’s qualifying service with the University, whichever is later.

1. **Key Elements Which Apply In Every Case**

2.1 You are entitled to 18 weeks’ unpaid parental leave for **each child** under the age of 18 years old, so if you have a multiple birth you are entitled to 18 weeks leave for each child. e.g. if you have twins, you are entitled to up to 36 weeks parental leave.

2.2 If your child is adopted, each parent can take a total of up to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave up until their 18th birthday.

2.3 You can take unpaid parental leave immediately after your maternity, paternity or adoption leave providing you give the correct notice.

2.4 You remain employed while on unpaid parental leave. Some terms, such as contractual notice and redundancy terms, will still apply.

2.5 You are entitled to accrue annual leave and fixed leave during unpaid parental leave.

2.6 Pension arrangements differ during periods of unpaid leave dependant on your Pension Scheme provider. Information concerning unpaid parental leave and pension scheme contributions is detailed in [on](https://staffworkplace.napier.ac.uk/Services/hr/tradeunionconsultationmeetings/Shared%20Documents/Policies%20Currently%20in%20Consultation/Maternty%20policy%20updated%20April%202015%20track%20changes.docx#Appendix_B) the relevant pension website. For academic staff this is [Scottish Teachers Pension Scheme](http://2015.sppa.gov.uk/scheme/teachers) (<http://2015.sppa.gov.uk/scheme/teachers>) and for Professional Service staff this [Lothian Pension Fund](http://www.lpf.org.uk/lpf1/info/3/current_members) (<http://www.lpf.org.uk/lpf1/info/3/current_members>)

2.7 At the end of unpaid parental leave, you are guaranteed the right to return to the same job as before, or, if that is not practicable, a suitable alternative which has the same or better terms and conditions. Where leave is taken for a period of 4 weeks or less, you are entitled to return to the same job.

2.8 Unpaid parental leave is an individual right and you cannot transfer the leave between parents.

1. **The Purpose of Unpaid Parental Leave**

3.1 The purpose of unpaid parental leave is to care for your child. This means looking after their welfare and could include making arrangements for the good of your child.

3.2 Caring for a child does not necessarily mean being with the child 24 hours a day. Unpaid Parental leave might be taken simply to enable you to spend more time with your child.

1. **Unpaid Parental Leave For Part-Time Staff**

4.1 Unpaid parental leave for part-time staff will be allocated on a pro-rata basis according to your hours worked.

1. **Length of Unpaid Parental Leave**

5.1 Colleagues cannot take off more than four weeks during a year. A week is based on an colleagues working pattern. Unpaid Parental leave should normally be taken in blocks of a week or multiples of a week, unless the line manager agrees otherwise or the child is disabled.

1. **Unpaid Parental Leave Notification Procedures**

6.1 If you wish to take Unpaid Parental Leave, you must apply in writing to your Line Manager giving at least 21 days notice. This should include the dates that you would like your leave to begin and end.

6.2 Once agreed you must submit your request through HR Connect for approval and then The People Team will action the request.

6.3 All requests should be discussed, wherever possible in advance with the manager, before submitting a request online through HR Connect.

**7. Conditions of Parental Leave**

7.1 The timing of Parental Leave is at the discretion of your Line Manager and will be subject to operational needs. However, the University’s aim is to grant leave when it is needed and will therefore attempt to avoid refusing or postponing leave as far as practicably possible.

7.2 It is therefore in your interest to give your Line Manager as much advance notice as possible. In the most extreme cases, and for business reasons, Parental Leave can be postponed by your Line Manager for up to 6 months from the date of request. However, such a request will not be postponed if you wish to take Parental Leave immediately after the time of birth or placement of a child for adoption.

**8.** **Useful Links**

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dti.gov.uk/employment/employment-legislation/employment-guidance/page18480.html>

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Moneyandworkentitlements/WorkAndFamilies/Parentalleaveandflexibleworking/DG_10029416>

<http://www.worksmart.org.uk/rights/parental_leave>

**9. Related University Policies**

* Disability Leave Policy
* Time off for Dependant Carers
* Paternity Leave Policy
* Maternity Leave Policy
* Flexitime Scheme Policy
* Flexible Working Policy
* Shared Parental Leave