



Paternity/Partner's Leave Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. LSE works towards positively supporting employees who are working parents and has attained a reputation as a top university for working families. The School is committed to developing work policies and practices that support the work-life balance of employees. As part of this commitment, paternity/partner's leave and pay is available to all eligible employees within the diverse School community, including LGBTQ+, same-sex families and those involved in a surrogacy arrangement.
- 1.2. This policy uses the following key terms:
 - Birth parent / mother: the individual who gives birth to a child. They can be male, female or of a non-binary identity.
 - Partner: the child's biological father or the partner of the birth parent / mother / adopter. This can be a spouse, civil partner, or a partner who is living in an enduring relationship with the birth parent / mother and the child. Partners may be male, female or trans (including individuals of a non-binary identity).
 - Adopter: the person who is eligible for adoption leave and/or pay. Adopters may be male, female or trans (including individuals of a non-binary identity).

2. Policy aims

- 2.1. The School seeks to sustain a strong track record as a diverse, fair and flexible employer that attracts and retains high calibre talent and supports the career progression of the School's diverse community during their employment. In keeping with that aim, this policy outlines the School's provision in respect of paternity/partner's leave and pay, as well as offering flexibility in how employees choose to manage their work and personal commitments during, and following, such periods of leave.

3. Policy scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all LSE employees of all grades who meet the eligibility criteria set out below. Access to contractual paternity/partner's leave and pay applies regardless of length of service, i.e., an employee may take such leave from their first day of employment with LSE.

4. Policy principles

- 4.1. As part of LSE's commitment to support working parents and improved work-life balance, all qualifying employees can access contractual paternity/partner's leave, which is paid for up to four weeks and applies regardless of length of service.
- 4.2. This policy and procedure outline entitlements to contractual paternity rights. Any employee who wishes to apply for paternity/partner's leave and pay may also contact their HR Adviser for more specific advice.
- 4.3. The policy and procedure also set out the additional provisions and entitlements for partners whose baby is born prematurely and requires neonatal care.

5. Eligibility for Occupational Paternity/Partner's Leave and Pay (OPL/OPP)

- 5.1. Employees who qualify for Occupational Paternity/Partner's Leave (OPL) are eligible to take up to four weeks' leave which is paid at full pay (pro-rata for less than full-time employment)¹, regardless of their length of service.
- 5.2. This is inclusive of Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) ² (the rates can be found on: www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave/pay).
- 5.3. To qualify for contractual paid paternity/partner's leave, the employee must be:
- the child's biological father; or the partner of the birth parent/adopter (i.e., a spouse, civil partner, or a partner who is living in an enduring relationship with the birth parent/mother and the child), and
 - employed at the School on the date the child is born/adopted, *and*

¹ For hourly paid staff, this is calculated on the basis of the average of previous working hours up to a maximum of twelve months.

² To qualify for statutory paternity pay (SPP), employees must be employed up to the date the child is born ((or placed with the adopter) (paternity pay only)), have at least 26 weeks continuous service at the Notification Week (15th week before the expected week of childbirth) or 26 weeks up to any day in the week they were matched with a child (UK adoptions) or 26 weeks by either the date the child arrives in the UK or when they want their pay to start (overseas adoptions), and with average weekly earnings above the [lower earnings limit](#) for National Insurance contributions

c. responsible for the child's upbringing.

- 5.4. To be fully eligible, staff must follow the procedure set out below.
- 5.5. Paternity/partner's leave can be taken before and around the time of childbirth (or the date of placement/the date of the child's arrival in the UK, in case of adoption) or at any point in the first year after the child is born (or after the date of placement/the date of the child's arrival in the UK, in case of adoption). If there are pregnancy complications, additional time off can be given, on a compassionate basis, for attendance at antenatal appointments.
- 5.6. Employees can expect to take the full entitlement in blocks of one or more weeks. If it is intended to take the leave as one or more blocks of two to four weeks, employees are encouraged to give the manager as much notice as possible to allow for appropriate planning to cover for the absence.

6. Stillbirth and Miscarriages

- 6.1. LSE will support employees throughout the practical implementation of this policy, including in the sad event of a miscarriage or stillbirth. For the purposes of this policy, a miscarriage is when a baby is born dead before the 24th week of pregnancy; a stillbirth is when the baby is born dead after the beginning of the 24th week of pregnancy. In such cases, individuals may wish to seek support from the Staff Counselling Service or the [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#).
- 6.2. In the event of a stillbirth, the partner can still apply for and take paternity/partner's leave (and pay) under this policy. This leave must be completed within the period from the actual date or birth to 56 days after the expected week of childbirth.
- 6.3. In the event of a miscarriage, the partner is not entitled to take paternity/partner's leave. The employee) is encouraged to discuss options with their line manager and/or HR, where relevant, to help them manage the situation. This may include taking appropriate time for their wellbeing, e.g., through a period of sickness absence and/or compassionate leave.

7. Neonatal Leave and Pay

- 7.1. In the case of premature birth³, in addition to the paternity/partner's leave provisions set out in section 5, qualifying employees are entitled to an additional period of leave paid at full pay (pro-rata for less than full-time employment).

³ Including extremely pre-term (under 28 weeks), very pre-term (28-31 weeks) and moderate pre-term (32-36 weeks).

- 7.2. An employee whose baby is born prematurely is entitled to neonatal leave for every week (i.e., seven calendar days) that their baby is in neonatal care prior to the Expected Week of Childbirth (for a minimum of one week and up to a maximum of twelve weeks). In such circumstances, paternity/partners' leave can be taken following the neonatal leave.
- 7.3. Employees who are eligible to take neonatal leave should notify their line manager as soon as possible after the birth of the baby and subsequently confirm how many days their baby was in hospital ([neonatal leave notification form](#)).

Paternity/Partner's Leave Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The procedure provides information on the steps that qualifying employees are required to follow to be eligible for Occupational Paternity/Partner's Leave (OPL). The procedure also includes ways in which employees will be supported prior to and during a period of paternity/partner's leave.

2. Time off for antenatal care

- 2.1. Biological fathers and partners of the birth parent/adopter have a statutory right to unpaid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments.
- 2.2. The School recognises the importance of a partner being involved with the pregnancy and baby, and therefore offers paid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments. Employees wishing to accompany their partners to antenatal appointments should speak to their manager and provide as much notice as possible to minimise any operational impact. Any further antenatal appointments that partners wish to attend will be at the manager's discretion and subject to operational needs. Managers, depending on the operational requirements, could, for example, adopt a flexible working approach whereby a partner makes up any time missed.
- 2.3. Since 5 April 2015, intended parents in a surrogacy case who meet the conditions set out under the Human Embryology and Fertilisation Act 2008 also have the right to unpaid leave to attend up to two antenatal appointments. Once again, the School recognises the importance of a partner being involved with the pregnancy and baby, and therefore offers paid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments.

3. Notification requirements

- 3.1. Prior written notification of the intention to take paternity/partner's leave must be provided in or before the 15th week before the expected week of the child's birth using the [attached form](#). If it is not reasonably practicable to do so, notice should be provided as soon as is reasonably practicable.

In addition, notice of the dates of leave (as well as any cancellation or variation in the dates) should be provided as follows:

- One week's leave: at least two weeks' notice
- Two or more weeks' leave: at least 28 days' notice (Heads of Department should seek agreement from the Vice President and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Faculty Development)). If it is not reasonably practicable to provide notice within the above timescales, it should be given as soon as possible. Line managers are expected to be as flexible as possible in these circumstances.

- 3.2. Employees who qualify for statutory paternity leave should also complete the SC3 form

and return it to their HR Adviser. Employees should be prepared to send a copy of the respective birth certificate to Human Resources.

- 3.3. In case of adoption, employees who qualify for statutory paternity leave should complete the SC4 form (or SC5 in case of overseas adoption) and return it to their HR Adviser. Employees should also confirm that their partner is getting Statutory Adoption Pay in writing or provide a copy of their partner's SC6 form.

4. Contract of employment

- 4.1. During paternity/partner's leave, the employee's contract of employment continues in force, and they are entitled to receive all their contractual benefits. In particular, contractual annual leave entitlement will continue to accrue.
- 4.2. Pension contributions will continue to be made during any period when the employee is receiving paternity/partner's leave. Employee and employer contributions will be based on actual pay.
- 4.3. Employees have the right to return to the job in which they were employed under the original contract of employment and on the same terms and conditions following a period of statutory paternity leave.

5. Contact during paternity/partner's leave

- 5.1. The employee should discuss with their line manager arrangements for keeping in touch whilst the employee is on paternity/partner's leave. The manager has the right to make reasonable contact with the employee whilst they are on paternity/partner's leave.

6. Returning to work

- 6.1. Following the end of paternity/partner's leave, the employee is expected to return on the next working day unless an additional period of annual leave has been agreed or they notify the School otherwise.
- 6.2. If the employee is unable to attend work at the end of paternity/partner's leave due to sickness or injury, the School's normal arrangements, including notification procedures, for sickness absence will apply.
- 6.3. Failure to return on the due date after the paternity/partner's leave expires will be regarded as unauthorised absence and may be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- 6.4. LSE has a range of resources to support disabled staff, including reasonable adjustments and other measures set out in the Disability Policy. In addition to pre-existing disabilities, it is recognised that partners of the birth parent/adopters may also develop and suffer from mental health conditions relating to paternity (such as postnatal depression or post-adoptive depression) that can in some cases amount to a disability. In all situations, staff and managers are encouraged to seek further advice and support as appropriate, which may include their HR Partner, Staff Counselling, or the EAP.

7. Advice

- 7.1. An employee considering/taking paternity/partner's leave is encouraged to contact their HR Adviser to discuss their entitlements.

Review schedule

Review interval	Next review due by	Next review start
3 years	July 2027	January 2027

Version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Notes
1	2 Mar 2015		
2	November 2022	JNICC – February 2023	
3	July 2024	JNICC	

Links

Contacts

Position	Name	Email	Notes
Senior HR Policy Adviser	Kieran Darling	k.darling@lse.ac.uk	
HR Policy Adviser	Elisabetta Viotto	e.viotto@lse.ac.uk	

Communications and Training

Will this document be publicised through Internal Communications?	Yes
Will training needs arise from this policy	Yes
If Yes, please give details Guidance and training on the amended policy is offered to line managers via the 'LSE Manager: Bringing Policy to Life' sessions.	