



# LSE Family Friendly Initiatives

## Frequent Asked Questions

July 2017

### **What maternity leave and pay am I entitled to?**

There is a maternity leave calculator on the School's intranet that can be found [here](#). This will assist you to calculate your maternity leave entitlement and the earliest date you can begin your maternity. This does not however calculate the exact amount of pay you will receive.

### **What happens if I'm sick during my maternity leave?**

If your sickness delays your return to work date, the normal sickness absence procedure should be followed. If you do not return to work before the end of the 26 weeks of Ordinary Maternity Leave and subsequently fall unwell, you will not be eligible to receive Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), instead you would be able to resume your SMP or MA payments.

### **What happens to my annual leave (AL) when I am on maternity leave?**

Your annual leave will continue to accrue during your whole maternity leave period. For example, if you took 52 weeks' leave, you would accrue 41 days' annual leave including Bank Holidays and Closure Days (pro-rata for part time staff). Employees often choose to use their accrued leave to facilitate a phased return to work, by working shorter weeks for a fixed time, ending unpaid leave early or tagging the leave on to the end of the maternity period to extend their time off. As normal, leave requests must be agreed by your line manager. You can find a Maternity Annual Leave calculator [here](#).

### **How much SMP do I receive if I have a multiple birth?**

You are only entitled to one SMP payment regardless of the number of children born. However, you may be entitled to Child Benefit for each child. Contact your local Benefits Agency for further details.

### **Can I return part-time or to a job share?**

If you wish to apply for a flexible working arrangement following family friendly leave then you would need to do so in line with the School's [Flexible Working Policy and Procedure](#). Options may include part-time working or job share, where these options are appropriate and available and within the needs of the service provision. However, in the absence of such an agreement, you will be expected to return to your previous job under the same terms and conditions.

### **Can I go back on maternity leave once I have returned to work if it's still within the maternity leave period?**

No. Unless your child was born before the Sunday of the 29th week of pregnancy, once you have returned to work from your maternity leave you will not be able to go back onto Maternity Leave, paid or unpaid with respect to the birth of that child (or children). Subsequent pregnancies will, of course, give rise to maternity leave rights associated with that separate pregnancy.

### **What happens to my auto increment whilst I'm on leave?**

Your incremental date will not change due to going on any family friendly leave. If you are on fully paid leave, you will receive your auto increment within the next monthly pay. If you are on SMP or unpaid leave, your auto increment will kick in once you return to work.

**What happens if I have a stillbirth or miscarriage?**

If you have miscarriage or stillbirth at or after the start of the 16<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC, this will be treated as a confinement and the entitlement to maternity pay and leave will be the same as for a live birth. Where a miscarriage or stillbirth occurs before this date, the procedures relating to sickness absence will apply.

If this is the case, you may wish to contact the staff counselling service, or your [HR Partner](#).

**What happens if I decide not to return to work after my maternity leave? Will I have to pay back my maternity leave pay?**

You must provide written notice of resignation to the School, as per your contractual notice period. You will not be required to pay back your maternity leave.

**What happens if My Baby is born early?**

If your baby is born before the notified start date then the maternity leave will begin with the day after childbirth. You should advise your manager and the Pay Team in writing and within 28 days of the childbirth date, with a copy of the birth certificate as evidence of the date of birth.

**Can I take time off to attend antenatal appointments?**

Yes, you are entitled to paid time off during working hours to receive antenatal care. This is not restricted to medical examinations. It could, for example, include relaxation classes and parent craft classes as long as these are advised by a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife or registered health visitor.

Fathers and partners also have a statutory right to unpaid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments. If the father or partner involved with the pregnancy and baby is employed by the School they are entitled paid time off to attend up to two ante-natal appointments.

You may be required to present your appointment card to your line manager.

**I have specific questions about Family Friendly leave, who do I need to speak to?**

You may contact your [HR Adviser](#) for advice or support regarding all types of family friendly leave. For advice regarding pay and your entitlements, please speak to the Payroll Team.

You can also find lots of information on the HR webpages under Family Friendly Leave, including all Family Friendly Policies and Procedures.

**What happens to my pension while I'm on Family Friendly Leave?**

Your pension contributions will continue as normal whilst you are on full pay. During a statutory pay period of leave you will not make any contributions but the School will continue to pay the normal contributions. During unpaid leave the contributions will freeze, however, you may be able to reimburse these when you return to work at the School. If you have any further queries, you can contact the [Pensions Team](#).

**Can I work during my maternity leave?**

If you wish to work during your maternity leave, you may use your Keeping in Touch (KIT) day entitlement of 10 days. These may be used to attend team meetings, conferences, training, or to catch up on your workload. KIT days must be agreed mutually by you and your line manager. You may take these individually or in a block, however, please try to plan carefully. If you use a KIT day to come in for an hour meeting, you will be paid for that hour, however this will use up one KIT day from your allowance.

**What happens if my fixed term contract ends while I'm on maternity leave?**

If your work or funding is continuing then your fixed term contract should be renewed. If, however, your work or funding is not continuing then you will be informed by your line manager that you are at risk of redundancy and the School's redundancy procedure will be followed where applicable. If you are at risk of redundancy you will be offered the opportunity to join the LSE's redeployment register to help you secure alternative employment at the School.

**Can I take shared parental leave at the same time as my partner?**

Parents can take up to a maximum of 50 weeks as SPL, and a maximum of 37 weeks of Shared Parental Pay (ShPP). You can take SPL at a different time from your partner/other parent, or at the same time. For example, a woman can be on maternity leave and her partner can be on shared parental leave at the same time. Dates must be agreed by both line managers (if both parents are employed at the School) and line managers may suggest alternative dates.

**What can I do if I'm not entitled to Paternity Leave?**

If you are not entitled to Paternity Leave, you may take annual leave or unpaid leave. This must be agreed by your line manager.

**What is the childcare voucher scheme?**

Childcare vouchers are an employee benefit for all members of staff. Part of your gross salary you exchange for childcare vouchers is tax-free and exempt from National Insurance contributions (NI) and because of this, you can make savings per parent, each year. The School uses Computershare as their provider. You can find more information [here](#).

**What happens to my sabbatical leave whilst I'm on family leave?**

Sabbatical accrual will continue during any period of family friendly leave.

**What is Research Leave and am I entitled?**

If you are a member of Academic staff, employed under the terms and conditions of the New Academic Career you are entitled to a period of research leave following long-term absence from the School. The purpose of research leave is for Academic Staff members to re-establish their research trajectory following a long period of absence. If you have taken Maternity/Paternity/Shared Parental/Adoption leave for a total period of 18 weeks, you will be entitled to one term's research leave. Research leave will normally commence on the first day of term, for the full term allowance, however this may be varied at the Head of Department's discretion. You should discuss your research leave plans with your Head of Department. You can find more information on research leave [here](#).