

Family Leave Guidance for Line Managers

These guidance notes are designed to be used in conjunction with other relevant policies and documents, including:

- Adoption, Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave (SPL) policies (see [HR Policies](#))
- Maternity Information Packs 1 & 2 (received upon notifying HR)
- [Flexible Working Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Breastfeeding Statement](#) and
- [Staff Handbook](#)

Please note the information included here is for guidance only and some points only relate to those taking certain types of family leave. Specific forms, procedures, notifications and timeframes are included in the relevant policy documents and forms. The term colleague has been used throughout the document to refer to any member of staff you line manage.

Before Checklist

1. Talk to your colleague about their planned maternity/paternity/adoption leave and also discuss any additional plans for SPL. Signpost your colleague to the [handy planning tool](#), which is useful to work out SPL and pay alongside other family leave.
2. Obtain a copy of the relevant policy documents from the HR webpages and read through to check what information/forms need to be submitted and by when.
3. Where applicable:
 - Develop a handover timetable with your colleague and arrange cover for your colleague's period of leave. Ask your colleague to prepare a list of key things that would be helpful for whoever will cover their work during their leave period.
 - Agree with your colleague how they wish to keep in touch during the leave period. This includes who can initiate contact, how the communication will be made and the frequency. As part of this consider how they would like to be updated about departmental/school/service/university news or changes while they are on leave.
 - Discuss with your colleague how they plan to take the annual leave accrued during their leave period.
 - Discuss with your colleague plans for Keeping in Touch (KIT) days and/or SPL Keeping in touch (SPLIT) days.

¹ The term 'family' leave is used to represent maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave

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During Checklist

1. Keep in touch with your colleague in the agreed manner.
2. If applicable:
 - Discuss Keeping in Touch (KIT) days / SPL Keeping in touch (SPLIT) days. Examples of activities for KIT/SPLIT days include: training, update on changes - team/university/ department/campus/IT/ policies/benefits/facilities, team meeting, return to work plans.
 - Recommend having at least one KIT/SPLIT day, in order to have a trial run of their first day back at work. Complete with your colleague their KIT/SPLIT notification form and submit to payroll.
 - Discuss with your colleague their plans regarding return to work. Things to consider in the discussion are the timing of their return to work, how they plan to use their accrued annual leave and any requests to change their working pattern.
3. If your colleague requests to change their working pattern. Any requests should be treated seriously and sympathetically. If they wish to make a request, they will need to complete a Flexible Working Request form ([See HR webpages - forms - other](#)).
4. If you are no longer the manager of a colleague on leave then provide your manager with the communication preferences of the colleague and inform the colleague of their new manager or future point of contact. Inform HR that you are currently the manager of someone on family leave.
5. If you take on the role of managing a colleague when they are on leave then make contact with the colleague using their preferred manner of communication.
6. Plan a meeting with your colleague for the day they return to work. If this is not possible then arrange for as soon as possible thereafter and arrange for a meeting between a team member or your manager and the colleague on their first day back. Items to consider when preparing for a colleague returning to work after a significant period of family leave include:
 - Changes in IT, workstation, access and other infrastructure and campus changes.
 - Changes in policies, processes and procedures.

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After Checklist

Where applicable:

1. Ask if you need to arrange support in facilitating breastfeeding, for example, by providing a private space to express milk. Contact the [Staff Wellbeing Team](#) if no appropriate space is available near their workstation. Read the [Breastfeeding Statement](#) and review the Health and Safety Risk Assessment form with your colleague and submit to HR.
2. Meet with your colleague upon their return to work to catch up on how things are at home as well as to provide an overview of any organisational, infrastructure and administrative changes whilst they have been on leave. Introduce any new members of staff.
3. Remind your colleague of undertaking their [Display Screen Equipment](#) self-assessment.
4. Meet with your colleague regularly for the first few weeks (as part of your regular catch-up meetings or otherwise) to discuss how things are at home and how they are settling back into work.
5. Agree a date for an objectives setting meeting/ interim PDPR. This may be about two months after your return to work, or whatever time you and your colleague agree is appropriate. Use this meeting to agree short-term objectives, talk about their career plan and discuss any training/development needs.

Please note:

Miscarriage or Still Birth: In the unfortunate event of a miscarriage or still birth, please read through the relevant family¹ leave policy document, and bereavement leave policy, if applicable. Please provide your colleague with information from the relevant [Staff Wellbeing Webpages](#) and remind them that they can contact the [Staff Wellbeing Confidential Support Service 24/7](#) for support.

Make your colleague aware of the Returning Parents Group which provides peer support for parents of young children. They can join by contacting the [Staff Wellbeing Team](#).