



Guide to navigating the Birkbeck family leave policy

Congratulations! You are expecting a new baby or child in your home. What should you do next?

Note for line managers:

Section 4.0 is most relevant to you as it outlines your responsibilities. Please also check through the notes below so that you can help your employee to consider key issues early enough. Consider how you can best cover for your employee whilst they are on leave, whilst minimising demands placed on other members of the staff team, and provide a reduced workload for a period (e.g. a term) once they have returned, whilst they are settling into their new family / work situation. You may also be able to offer to pair them up with a ‘buddy’ in your Department or team who has recently been through the process.

| If you will be a birth mother: | If you will be an adoptive parent: | If you will be the partner of a birth mother or adoptive parent: |
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| Sections 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8 are most relevant to you | Sections 2.2, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8 are most relevant to you | Sections 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8 are most relevant to you |
| A checklist of your responsibilities is in section 4.0 | A checklist of your responsibilities is in section 4.0 | A checklist of your responsibilities is in section 4.0 |
| Before 12 weeks of pregnancy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you do a job that could be hazardous to your or your babies health, tell your line manager as soon as possible and stop | Whilst you are waiting to be matched with a child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You are not obliged to tell Birkbeck that you are in this position, which we know can be a | During your partners pregnancy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decide whether you will take Paternity Leave (1 or 2 weeks - section 2.3) or Shared Parental Leave (a longer time to be |

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| <p>doing those parts that are hazardous straight away (section 2.1.6).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work out how long you will be paid and at what rate (it depends how long you have worked here but can be up to six months on full pay – section 2.1.2-2.1.4) ○ Start counting your annual leave (including bank holidays and closure days) if you are not used to doing this. You could get longer maternity leave by adding annual leave on at the start and end. Your HR Officer can confirm your entitlement i.e. what you are likely to accrue during maternity leave. ○ Start to think about childcare options for returning to work – many day nurseries have long waiting lists. Birkbeck has an evening nursery for children over the age of two (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/service/s/facilities/nursery), but no day nursery. Spaces are sometimes available at the UCL day nursery: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/news/a-z-services/nursery-services. | <p>hard and uncertain time. However if you feel comfortable to do so, it would help your line manager's planning to be aware of this. In addition, you are entitled to time off for a set number of pre-adoption meetings, but will need to liaise with your line manager about this (section 2.2.5).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you are adopting as a couple, decide which parent will be the primary adopter and which the 'other parent'. ○ If you are the parent taking adoption leave, work out how long you will be paid and at what rate (it depends how long you have worked here but can be up to six months on full pay – section 2.2.1-2.2.4) ○ If you are the 'other parent', decide whether you will take Paternity Leave (two weeks - section 2.3) or Shared Parental Leave (a longer time to be shared with the adoptive parent - section 2.4). ○ Start counting your annual leave (including bank holidays and closure days) if you are not used to doing this. You could get longer adoption leave by adding annual leave on at the start and end. ○ Start to think about childcare options for returning to work – many day nurseries have long waiting lists. Birkbeck has an evening nursery for children over the age of two (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/nursery), but no day nursery. Spaces are sometimes available at the UCL day nursery: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/news/a-z-services/nursery-services. | <p>shared with the birth mother - section 2.4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remember that you are entitled to paid time off for two medical appointments (section 2.1.7) ○ Start counting your annual leave (including bank holidays and closure days) if you are not used to doing this. You could get longer Paternity or Shared Parental Leave by adding annual leave on at the start and end. ○ Start to think about childcare options for returning to work – many day nurseries have long waiting lists. Birkbeck has an evening nursery for children over the age of two (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/nursery), but no day nursery. Spaces are sometimes available at the UCL day nursery: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/news/a-z-services/nursery-services. |
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| <p>Before 20 weeks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete the maternity leave planner with your proposed leave start and end dates (remember your annual leave including bank holidays and closure days!) and MAT B1 form, meet with your line manager to get them signed and send on to your School's or P& S Department's HR Business Partner or HR Officer. You should hear back within ten days (section 2.1). <p>Throughout pregnancy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remember that you are entitled to paid time off for medical appointments (section 2.1.7) | <p>Once you have been matched with a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete the adoption leave planner as soon as possible with your proposed leave start and end dates (remember your annual leave including bank holidays and closure days!), meet with your line manager to get them signed and send on to your School's HR Business Partner (sections 2.2.6-2.2.7). | <p>Whilst your partner is on leave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apply to convert part of your salary into tax-efficient childcare vouchers, so that you can be building up credit whilst you are on leave: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Childcare/index.html ○ If you plan to take Shared Parental Leave, notify Birkbeck at least 8 weeks in advance of the start of this. |
| <p>Once you are on leave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apply to convert part of your salary into tax-efficient childcare vouchers, so that you can be building up credit whilst you are on leave: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Childcare/index.html ○ Remember that annual leave (including bank holidays and closure days) will be accruing whilst you are on maternity leave (section 2.7). Remember to note somewhere all your accrued annual leave and then notify Birkbeck of your return date. Or maybe use it to have a phased return over the course of a few weeks. ○ Remember that you are not obliged to return on the date that you originally planned to return. Your life has just changed, and it is OK to need to change your plans. Birkbeck does need 8 weeks written notice though (section 2.6). You | <p>Once you are on leave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apply to convert part of your salary into tax-efficient childcare vouchers, so that you can be building up credit whilst you are on leave: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Childcare/index.html ○ Remember that annual leave (including bank holidays and closure days) will be accruing whilst you are on adoption leave (section 2.7). Remember to note somewhere all your accrued annual leave and then notify Birkbeck of your return date ○ Remember that you are not obliged to return on the date that you originally planned to return. Your life has just changed, and it is OK to need to change your plans. Birkbeck does need 8 weeks written notice though (section 2.6). You also must return after 52 weeks, although remember to add your annual leave onto that. ○ If you just want to ease yourself back in gently/not miss an important event, you can | <p>If you go on Shared Parental Leave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remember that annual leave (including bank holidays and closure days) will be accruing whilst you are on shared parental leave (section 2.7). Remember to add all that annual leave on when you notify Birkbeck of your return date. Or maybe use it to have a phased return over the course of a few weeks. ○ Remember that you are not obliged to return on the date that you originally planned to return. Your life has just changed, and it is OK if you need to change your plans. Birkbeck does need 8 weeks written notice though (section 2.6). You also must return after 52 weeks from the start of your partners leave, although remember to add your annual leave (including bank holidays and closure days) onto that. ○ If you just want to ease yourself back in gently/not miss an important event, you |

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| <p>also must return after 52 weeks, although remember to add your annual leave onto that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If you just want to ease yourself back in gently/not miss an important event, you can use your 'Keeping in touch days' that are paid days(section 2.5). These can be taken at any time that you and your line manager agree. It is best to organise these formally where possible so that you can be paid, and will be covered by insurance. o If you want to apply to return on a different contract, you will need to make this case in writing and then meet with your line manager well in advance of your return (decisions will be made within 3 months): http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/policies_az/FlexibleWorking/index.html | <p>use your 'Keeping in touch days' that are paid days(section 2.5). These can be taken at any time that you and your line manager agree. It is best to organise these formally where possible so that you can be paid, and will be covered by insurance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If you want to apply to return on a different contract, you will need to make this case in writing and then meet with your line manager well in advance of your return (decisions will be made within 3 months): http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/policies_az/FlexibleWorking/index.html o If there is an issue that causes the adoption not to go ahead, consult section 2.2.8. | <p>can use your 'Keeping in touch days' that are paid days(section 2.5). These can be taken at any time that you and your line manager agree. It is best to organise these formally where possible so that you can be paid, and will be covered by insurance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If you want to apply to return on a different contract, you will need to make this case in writing and then meet with your line manager well in advance of your return (decisions will be made within 3 months): http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/policies_az/FlexibleWorking/index.html |
| <p>When you have returned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o You are entitled to request unpaid parental leave of up to 18 weeks per child (in blocks of 1 week, up to 4 weeks per child before their 18th birthday (section 2.8). This may be helpful if your child needs settling in to a new school or childcare setting, or has a health problem. If your child is disabled, you can apply to take single days. | <p>When you have returned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o You are entitled to request unpaid parental leave of up to 18 weeks per child (in blocks of 1 week, up to 4 weeks per pear) before their 18th birthday (section 2.8). This may be helpful if your child needs settling in to a new school or childcare setting, or has a health problem. If your child is disabled, you can apply to take single days. | <p>When you have returned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o You are entitled to request unpaid parental leave of up to 18 weeks per child (in blocks of 1 week, up to 4 weeks per pear) before their 18th birthday (section 2.8). This may be helpful if your child needs settling in to a new school or childcare setting, or has a health problem. If your child is disabled, you can apply to take single days. |

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| <p>If you choose not to return to work, or leave within 12 weeks of your return to work, the College will ask you to repay the occupational maternity pay that you received above the legal minimum (section 2.6). This situation will differ if you are on a fixed term contract – please consult with your HR Officer.</p> | <p>If you choose not to return to work, or leave within 12 weeks of your return to work, the College will ask you to repay the occupational maternity pay that you received above the legal minimum (section 2.6). This situation will differ if you are on a fixed term contract – please consult with your HR Officer.</p> | <p>If you choose not to return to work, or leave within 12 weeks of your return to work, the College will ask you to repay the occupational maternity pay that you received above the legal minimum (section 2.6). This situation will differ if you are on a fixed term contract – please consult with your HR Officer.</p> |
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