

Information for Staff: Maternity

A. Pre-Leave

1. Risk Assessment of Work Environment

Employers who employ women of childbearing age have a duty to do a “general” health and safety assessment to identify risks to pregnant women. As soon as we have been informed in writing that a member of staff is pregnant (this can include a sick note for pregnancy-related illness), and there is evidence of risk, a personal health and safety assessment should be carried out. As every pregnancy is different, the assessment should be done in conjunction with the staff member. It may be helpful for the staff member to ask their doctor for evidence that there are potential risks either to themselves or to their unborn baby. Arrangements for the risk assessment will be made by your HR Adviser in conjunction with the appropriate Health and Safety Officer.

2. Antenatal Classes

Employees have the right to reasonable paid time off work for ante-natal appointments, which includes the time spent travelling to an appointment and waiting. Time off for the first appointment cannot be refused, but for subsequent appointments we can ask for written proof of the appointment and a certificate or note from the staff member’s doctor or midwife, confirming the pregnancy. If a staff member fails, when asked to provide these, we can refuse the time off. *With effect from 1st October 2014, the Children and families Act allows fathers-to-be and partners of pregnant women, to take time off to attend two antenatal appointments with the expectant mother.*

3. Coaching

A coaching programme is available to members of staff which aims to support staff in planning for maternity leave. The programme aims to provide staff with support in managing the transition between work and leave, particularly planning for going on leave and planning for returning to work. The programme is provided by a fully qualified external coach and sessions do not have to be held on the University campus. The coaching is offered free of charge, it is completely confidential and no feedback on the content of any coaching session will be provided to the University. **Details can be found [here](#).**

B. Maternity Leave

4a. Maternity Leave

You are entitled to receive 52 weeks’ Maternity Leave, irrespective of your length of service with the University. This is made up of 26 weeks’ Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) and 26 weeks’ Additional Maternity Leave (AML). Your overall maximum entitlement to maternity leave will be 52 weeks from the date your maternity leave started.

Full details of maternity leave can be found in the [Maternity Procedure](#).

C. Maternity Pay

4b. Maternity Pay

You are entitled to receive 39 weeks of paid maternity leave. You will also be entitled to take 13 weeks of unpaid maternity leave following on from your 39 week period of paid maternity leave.

The University provides several options in relation to maternity pay benefits. Your entitlement to maternity pay is based on:

- your earnings during a specific time period before your maternity leave
- your length of service with the University of Aberdeen
- whether or not you intend to return to work following the birth of your baby.

The University provides 5 options for maternity leave and pay entitlements, with varying levels of benefits. The options available to you are summarised in the [Maternity Procedure](#).

4c. Pension Payments

During any paid period of maternity leave, the University will continue to pay employer's contributions to your pension scheme for as long as you continue to make contributions. The percentage paid will be based on what your earnings would have been if you had not been on maternity leave. The period during which you receive paid maternity leave also counts towards your pensionable service.

During unpaid maternity leave, the University will not make employer's contributions into your pension scheme. You do not have to make any contributions, but you may do so if you wish. It should be noted that if you choose to make these contributions, you would be required to pay both employer and employee contributions to the scheme. If you choose not to make such contributions, your membership of the pension scheme will be suspended and the period of unpaid maternity leave does not count as pensionable service.

D. During Leave

5. Keeping In Touch (KIT) Days

We may make reasonable contact with you from time to time during the maternity leave e.g. to make arrangements for the staff member's return to work or to notify them of developments in their School/Section etc. You are able to work (including attending training or conferences) for up to 10 days during your maternity leave without bringing your maternity leave or SMP to an end. If you undertake such work during your maternity leave, you will receive a full day's pay for each day worked. You are not obliged to undertake any such work during your maternity leave and you must not work in the 2 weeks immediately following the birth of your child. If you wish to utilise "KIT" days, you should contact your Line Manager in the first instance. Your Line Manager will notify your HR Adviser of any work which you undertake as KIT days and appropriate arrangements will be made to ensure that you receive payment for them.

6. Holidays

Contractual annual leave entitlement will continue to accrue throughout the period of maternity leave. Annual leave can, with the agreement of the Line Manager entitlement onto the beginning or end of your maternity leave. Arrangements for carrying over annual leave

entitlement should be discussed and agreed with your Line Manager. Where you do not return to work following your maternity leave, you will be paid for your accrued holidays.

E. Post- Leave

7. Returning to Work

If you wish to return to work on alternative working arrangements, you should refer to the Flexible Working Procedure

8. Childcare Vouchers

The University has a Childcare Voucher scheme, which is a tax-saving initiative for staff. This scheme can save money on any kind of registered childcare including childminders, nannies, nurseries, breakfast and after school clubs, play schemes and summer camps, as well as the care element of boarding schools.

The vouchers are offered through a salary sacrifice scheme which means that as it is a voluntary benefit scheme, it allows the staff member to nominate part of their monthly salary payment, in return for Childcare Vouchers.

The amount saved will depend on how much tax and national insurance the staff member is required to pay. The Savings Calculator on the HMRC website can help to illustrate potential savings. It can be found at this address: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-vouchers-better-off-calculator>

The proportion of salary nominated as part of the scheme will not be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions, and allows the staff member to take up to £55 per week (£243 per month) in Childcare Voucher credit. In addition the staff member will receive tax and national insurance exemption on any value taken up to this amount. Details can be found here: <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/childcare-vouchers-211.php>

Please note that legislation is changing and with effect from 1 October 2015 it will no longer be possible to join a Childcare Voucher Scheme. Instead Tax Free Childcare will apply and further details can be found at this address: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tax-free-childcare-10-things-parents-should-know>

9. Rocking Horse Nursery

The Rocking Horse Nursery is located within the Old Aberdeen campus and is an independent nursery registered with the Scottish Care Commission. The Nursery is accommodated in a listed building situated on the University's Old Aberdeen campus. A large family house and adjacent smaller house have been connected internally and adapted to create one childcare facility for three "departments", divided by age, namely 0-2, 2-3 and 3-5 years. There is a large play area of grass and tarmac which is fenced and ringed by mature trees, and three small areas have been cultivated for flower and vegetable patches.

The three departments each have a spacious playroom, a dining/craft room, toilet area and cloakroom. The first floor of the main building, used by the 0-2 age group, also has a sleep room, utility room and staff room. The ground floor of the main building is used by the 2-3 group and also houses the kitchen and laundry. The 3-5 year old children use the accommodation (on two floors) of the extension.

There are 47 places available at any one time.

Further details for the Rocking Horse Nursery can be found at:
<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/rockinghorse/about>

10. Transfer Of Maternity Leave

If you decide to return to work early (and without using your full 52 week entitlement to maternity leave) you may be able to transfer up to 50 weeks of the outstanding leave to your partner as Shared Parental Leave. Further information is available within the Shared Parental Leave Policy which is accessible from the Policy Zone at:

http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-family-friendly/SPL_Policy_Approved_by_Court_March_2015.pdf

If you wish to take Shared Parental Leave and Pay you must meet the eligibility criteria as must your partner. You must also provide the relevant completed documentation as per the SPL Policy.

F. Probation and Redundancy

11. Members Of Staff On Probation Affected By Maternity

In cases where the Probationer has been absent due to maternity leave, consideration may be given to the extension of the period of probation. This will be discussed with your line manager and Head of School in advance of maternity leave and the relevant HR Adviser will be informed.

12. Members Of Staff On Maternity Affected By Redundancy

Members of staff who are pregnant and at risk of redundancy will receive full occupational maternity and statutory maternity pay. Individuals whose contracts conclude during the course of maternity leave will have their contracts extended to allow for full occupational maternity and statutory maternity pay to be received.

Where feasible, staff members' work activities will be put on hold and completion deadlines extended in order to allow such individuals to return to work following the period of maternity leave. Where staff members' work is in support of projects with specific end dates which cannot be moved individuals' contracts will conclude at the end of their maternity pay period; however, individuals on maternity leave will nevertheless receive the same support as other staff at risk of redundancy and are entitled to be considered for further employment through the redeployment process. Staff members on maternity leave will be invited to participate in individual consultation on the avoidance of redundancy, either in person or via telephone.

13. Useful Contacts:

Payroll	Mrs Jackie Pirie	Telephone 272127	j.pirie@abdn.ac.uk
Pensions	Mrs Suzanne Laing	Telephone 272128	s.laing@abdn.ac.uk

Rocking Horse Nursery

Ms Sarah Walker (Manager)	Telephone 273400	s.walker@rhs.abdn.ac.uk
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Redeployment Co-ordinators

HR Partners