Shared Parental Leave Policy (SPL) – Key Facts for Fathers/Partners

A. SPL and maternity/adoption leave and pay
There is no change to the existing arrangements for maternity or adoption leave and pay. The only difference is that the mother/lead adopter can choose to give up some of their leave and pay so that they and/or you, their partner, can take it as SPL. Note: they don’t have to - it’s entirely their decision.

Parents can share 52 weeks’ leave and 39 weeks’ statutory pay; however your partner must take at least 2 weeks’ of this as maternity/adoption leave and pay immediately following your child’s birth/placement. The actual amount of leave/pay available will depend on the number of weeks’ maternity/adoption leave and pay your partner takes. You can take SPL while your partner is on maternity/adoption leave, at a different time, or both take SPL together.

Your partner opts-in to the SPL regime by either a) returning to work or b) giving notice to curtail their maternity/adoption leave/pay at a future date. They can return to work and decide to opt-in to SPL at a later date – provided you both meet certain conditions and give the required amount of notice. Your partner doesn’t have to take any SPL, they can pass all of their untaken maternity/adoption leave to you to take as SPL.

B. SPL and paternity leave and pay
You can take 2 weeks’ paid paternity leave within 56 days (8 weeks) of your child’s birth/placement. If you’re thinking about taking SPL, you should consider taking paternity leave/pay before your first period of SPL as once this starts, you cannot then take paternity leave/pay.

C. Leave entitlement and qualifying conditions
In order to access SPL, your partner must first begin the process. They need to curtail their maternity/adoption leave and/or statutory pay/allowance and agree to share the outstanding leave/pay with you. They must have been employed/self-employed for at least 26 of the 66 weeks before your child is due and must have earned an average of at least £30 per week in any 13 of these 66 weeks. If your partner does not opt-in to SPL and meet these employment and earnings conditions, you will not be able to take SPL.

D. Statutory shared parental pay (ShPP)
To qualify for statutory ShPP, you need to have 26 weeks’ service at the ‘qualifying week’ and have earned £116 per week on average in the eight weeks prior to this ‘qualifying week’. Your partner has to be entitled to statutory maternity pay (SMP)/statutory adoption pay (SAP) or maternity allowance; they need to curtail their maternity/adoption leave and pay/allowance and be willing to share any of their outstanding SMP/SAP with you. They don’t have to – it’s entirely their decision.

Statutory ShPP is set by government. Current rates can be found here.

E. University enhanced shared parental pay (UEShPP)
You can opt for:
- Up to 14 weeks’ full pay, followed by up to 23 weeks’ ShPP (if eligible) & 13 weeks’ unpaid; or
• Up to 6 weeks’ full pay, followed by up to 16 weeks’ half pay + ShPP (if eligible), 15 weeks’ ShPP (if eligible) & 13 weeks unpaid.

Please see note below if your partner is also employed by the University.

If you’re eligible, you can opt to receive statutory ShPP only and claim your enhanced pay as a lump sum once you’ve had your final period of SPL and you’ve been back at work for three months.

UEShPP must be taken in the same weeks as any statutory ShPP is due. It must also be taken within 52 weeks of your child’s birth/placement.

**Note:** If your partner is employed by the University, you will only be entitled to enhanced pay if: they have not exhausted their entitlement during their maternity/adoption leave when they curtail their leave and they choose to transfer some or all of their untaken enhanced maternity/adoption pay to you to be taken as UEShPP. Should they do so, you will receive any remaining weeks at your own rate of pay. You must take this in the same weeks as any statutory ShPP and within 52 weeks of your child’s birth/placement.

F. Notification requirements
Each step in the process requires you to give at least eight weeks’ written notice.

When applying for SPL you must give a non-binding indication of when and how you propose to take your leave; you and your partner must self-declare your entitlement to leave and pay. Although legally entitled to request documentary evidence, the University will normally take such declarations on trust.

G. Booking time off
You must take SPL in whole-week blocks. You have the right to make three separate requests for leave. Each request can be for continuous or discontinuous leave. If you request a single block of continuous leave, this will be granted automatically. A request for discontinuous leave (e.g. 4 weeks’ SPL, followed by 8 weeks at work, followed by 4 weeks’ SPL) will need to be agreed with your line manager and may be refused.

H. Rights during SPL
You are entitled to 20 shared parental leave in touch (SPLIT) days; these are similar in purpose, and in addition, to the 10 keeping in touch (KIT) days your partner will be entitled to during their maternity/adoption leave.

All terms and conditions of employment, excluding pay remain in force during SPL.

**Note:** the above is a brief summary of provisions. Please ensure you refer to the full SPL policy before making an application or speak to your local HR team.