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Dependents Leave Policy/Procedure



Approved by	The Executive		
Date Approved	September 2018	Status	Approved
Policy Owner	HR Manager	Impact assessed	Yes
Version	1.1	Date of next review	November 2023

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Date
1	Creation of Dependents Leave Policy	September 2018
1.1	Converted policy into new standard template, policy owner updated from Director of HR to HR Manager and minor grammatical corrections made.	August 2022

DEPENDENTS LEAVE

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The University aims to support all employees in achieving a healthy work/life balance, recognising that many employees will have family responsibilities that will require them to be absent from work from time to time. As such the University has built on its statutory obligations and developed a number of flexible family friendly policies which are available to all staff irrespective of their gender or sexual orientation. Employees can access these policies [here](#).
- 1.2 For further advice and information on this policy or any of the University's other family friendly policies, please contact the HR department.

2. Purpose & Scope

- 2.1 This policy sets out the rights of employees to take unpaid time off to make arrangements for dependents in the event of an unforeseen or emergency situation. It outlines the process employees and managers should follow. This policy ensures a consistent and fair approach in line with legislative requirements and commitment to best practice.
- 2.2 The University also has a [Special Leave Policy/Procedure](#) which can be used for other instances where staff need to take time off.

3. Eligibility

- 3.1 All employees have a statutory entitlement to a short amount of unpaid time off, to make arrangements to deal with specific circumstances involving a dependent.
- 3.2 This could be an employee's spouse or partner, child, parent, or anyone living in the employee's household as a member of the family.

- 3.3 In cases of illness, injury or where care arrangements break down, a dependant may also be someone who reasonably relies on an employee for assistance, including where an employee is the primary carer or is the only person who can help in an emergency.

4. Entitlement

- 4.1 There is no set limit on the amount of time which employees can take off, but in most cases, the amount of leave will be one day or two days at the most. The leave should be sufficient to deal with the immediate problem and to arrange alternative longer-term care if necessary.
- 4.2 As a guide, time off for Dependents Leave could be to deal with the following (this is not an exhaustive list):
- 4.2.1 To assist with the sudden illness of a dependent where they need to attend their GP or hospital, or to provide immediate care for the dependent before longer term arrangements are put in place.
 - 4.2.2 To make alternative arrangements when normal childcare arrangements have unexpectedly broken down or to deal with an unexpected incident involving a child, where they have taken ill or have been injured.
- 4.3 The provision for time off under this policy is not intended to be a long-term arrangement. For example, if a child is taken ill, time off will be granted to deal with the immediate situation but would not be entitled to time off for the duration of the child's illness.
- 4.4 With their managers agreement, it may be possible for an employee to use some paid annual leave provision to deal with situations on a more planned, foreseen or long-term basis, when Dependents Leave is not deemed to be appropriate.
- 4.5 Managers should contact the HR Department if they are unsure as to whether leave should be granted in specific circumstances not listed above.

5. Notification

- 5.1 Time off under this policy will only be granted for an unforeseen/emergency situation, therefore there are no formal requirements for requesting the time off. However, employees should notify their manager as soon as possible that time off is required, and confirm the reason why the time off is needed.
- 5.2 On their return to work employees should ensure a [Time off for Dependents Notification Form](#) is completed and signed by their manager for each period taken. On approval the manager will send the completed form to the HR Department and the Payroll Department for their records.

Appendix 1: Time Off for Dependents Leave FAQs

1. How does this affect my contract of employment?

The contract of employment continues throughout the period of leave unless either party expressly ends it. The period of leave therefore counts towards the period of continuous service for the purposes of entitlement to statutory employment rights.

All terms and conditions of employment remain in force during an employee's period of time off except for those terms relating to pay where time off is given as unpaid leave.

Employees are entitled to continue to receive all non-cash benefits applicable to them during authorised periods of time off for emergencies granted under this policy, such as childcare vouchers.

2. What happens to my annual leave?

Annual leave will continue to be accrued at your normal contractual rate.

3. How will leave/pay affect my pension?

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

During any period of unpaid leave, your membership will cease to continue for that period unless the employee has the right to return to work, in which case an employee can choose to make up pension contributions to cover the unpaid period. If an employee does this within 30 days of returning to work (or within 30 days of leaving, if they do not return to work) the costs of making up contributions will be split 1/3rd payable by the employee, and 2/3rds payable by the University. An employee may still elect to make up the pension after the 30-day period has expired, but the costs will fall fully to the employee. The cost of paying back is based on the last rate of pay received just prior to the period of unpaid leave (excluding any increase in pay due to working a keep in touch day). An employee can discuss this directly with an LGPS Advisor at 01224 264264 or e-mail at pensions@nespf.org.uk.

Scottish Teachers superannuation Scheme (STSS)

During any period of unpaid Leave, an employee's membership will cease to continue for that period. Under the current rules of the scheme members are not able to buy back the lost pension during any period of unpaid leave.

What other support does the University offer?

The University is committed to helping working parents and carers, and offers a variety of family friendly benefits and flexible arrangements. Policies and procedures within the suite of [family friendly](#) include: maternity leave, paternity/supporting partner leave, adoption/surrogacy leave, shared parental leave, parental leave, fertility treatment leave and foster care leave. In addition the University offers:

Childcare facilities

The Treehouse Early Care Centre is a purpose build facility based on the University Campus. It provides high quality care and education for children aged 3 months to 5 years during Monday to Friday, 7.30am – 6pm. Further information and contact details can be found at [Supporting Working Parents](#).

Employees may be eligible to salary sacrifice part of their salary for the full cost of their childcare place, saving between 30% and 42% depending on the tax rate.

Employees are advised to submit applications to their preferred nursery provider(s) as early as possible as places are normally reserved very quickly.

Kings Camps is a holiday childcare provider (OFSTED-registered) which operate from RGU:SPORT on the University campus during the Easter, Summer and October holidays. University Employees can book in advance to spread the cost and currently receive a discount.

Employees will also find information here on childcare support including [the Governments Tax Free Childcare scheme](#).

Flexible Working

The University's flexible working scheme can help achieve a better work-life balance, and enable employees to develop a work pattern that suits their family commitments. For more information please refer to the University's [Flexible Working Scheme](#).

University Support Helpline

The University recognises that employees may need confidential independent help, information, and guidance. For that reason a 24 hour confidential support [employee helpline](#) is available to employees and their family members to access. Professionals are available to answer queries on a wide range of practical and more sensitive issues and the service offers: life support, legal information, bereavement assistance, medical information, a wellbeing portal and online CBT.



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