

Quick Q&A on Shared Parental Leave

Note, the following largely also applies to adoptive parents, although there are some minor differences in the requirements – see the policy for more details.

How do I qualify for ShPL?

You need:

- At least 26 weeks continuous service at 15th week before EWC;
- Still be in continuous employment in the week before ShPP is due to commence
- Have responsibility for care of the child
- Be entitled to Mat Pay or your partner be entitled to Mat Pay
- Your partner to have been employed/self-employed for 26 of the 66 weeks before Child Birth with average weekly earnings of at least £30 for 13 of those 26 weeks

How do I qualify for ShPP?

In addition to the requirements above you need to have normal weekly earnings of at least £111 in the 8 weeks before the 15th week and the mother must be entitled to maternity pay and have reduced the maternity pay period.

How much shared parental leave and pay am I entitled to?

Up to 50 weeks' leave and 37 weeks' pay can be shared between the parents.

How much do I get paid?

ShPP is paid at the rate of £139.58 a week or 90% of your average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.

What if I am employed on a FTC?

If you meet the qualifying criteria above you will be entitled to shared parental leave and pay, even if your contract ends during your ShPL.

How much notice do I need to give?

At least 8 weeks before the first period of ShPL you need to inform the University of your entitlement and intention to take ShPL (mums also need to indicate on what date they will curtail their maternity leave). You then need to give the University 8 weeks' notice before the commencement of any periods of ShPL.

Can I take shared parental leave even if my partner doesn't meet the continuity of employment test?

Yes, provided that your partner meets the earnings and employment requirements, you can curtail your maternity leave and take shared parental leave instead.

Why would I want to do that – why not just stay on maternity leave?

You might choose to do this so you can take leave in a more flexible way than would be possible if you remained on maternity leave. For example, you may want to take three separate periods of shared parental leave, interspersed with periods back at work.

What happens to any remaining contractual maternity pay if I go on ShPL?

Once you finish your maternity leave and start your shared parental leave any contractual maternity pay will end and you will go onto statutory shared parental pay – so my advice is to use up your 26 weeks CMP which will leave 13 weeks of shared parental pay to share with your partner.

Does my partner need to finish maternity leave before I can start ShPL?

No, you can start ShPL while your partner is still on Maternity Leave as long as your partner has given notice that she is curtailing her maternity leave at some point in the future.

What happens if I take ShPL before I take Paternity Leave?

You will not be able to take Paternity Leave if you have already taken a period of ShPL for the same child, so make sure you take it first

Can I return to work without bringing my ShPL to an end?

Yes – you can agree with your employer to take SPLIT days – potentially you can take one or two of these days every week while on a continuous period of ShPL. Alternatively, you can take discontinuous periods of ShPL.

Shared parental leave sounds very similar to Additional Paternity Leave?

It's similar but there are some important differences:

- you can take shared parental leave at the same time as each other; whereas a father can take additional paternity leave only once the mother has returned to work;
- shared parental leave can be taken in multiple periods; whereas additional paternity leave must be taken in one block;
- shared parental leave can be taken at any time between the birth and the child's first birthday, with up to 50 weeks available to be shared between the parents (the compulsory maternity leave period is reserved for the mother); whereas additional paternity leave cannot be taken until the 20th week after the child's birth, with a maximum of 26 weeks available.

Can I use ShPL to temporarily reduce my hours or days of work per week, e.g. by taking two days per week for 2 months?

No, you need to take ShPL in one week blocks. However you could consider making a flexible working request.

Can my manager decline my request to take ShPL?

Assuming you are eligible and have met the notice requirements than this depends on whether you have requested a continuous block of leave or discontinuous blocks. If you have requested a continuous block your manager must approve it, if you have requested discontinuous blocks your manager can decline the request. If this does occur you can withdraw the request and re-submit up to three separate requests for continuous blocks, which your manager must approve.