



TUS

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:
Lár Tíre, An tIarlthar Láir
Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest

Parental Leave Policy

2026-2029

HUMAN RESOURCES

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1. Introduction

TUS Parental Leave Policy is intended to provide staff of the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) with details on the entitlements in relation to Parental Leave.

This policy is governed by various circular letters issued by the relevant Departments and current Parental Leave legislation.

2. Purpose

This policy is intended to provide staff of the University with details on the eligibility criteria and entitlements to parental leave, the periods of notification for parental leave, the patterns of parental leave that will be considered by the University, and staff rights whilst on parental leave.

3. Scope

Parental Leave is available to a TUS staff member who is either a parent or in a position of loco parentis of a child, to take approved unpaid leave of absence, to care for the child.

Staff must have completed one year's continuous service with the University before the commencement of parental leave. Where the child is approaching their 16th birthday, and the staff member has more than three months, but less than one year's continuous service, there is a provision for pro-rata parental leave.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Line Managers/Supervisors

- Authorise leave requests in a timely manner.
- Ensure a discussion takes place with staff member in preparation for the leave.
- Ensure fair and consistent application of leave policies
- Promote an environment of equality, diversity and inclusion which support work life initiatives.

4.2. Staff

- Read and understand this policy and make themselves aware of their obligations.
- Apply for leave within defined timelines.

- Provide reasonable notice to the line manager/supervisor to take leave for a plan to be put in place to avoid/minimise any disruption to service.

5. Entitlements

- 5.1. Parental leave is unpaid leave for 26 weeks (130 days), per qualifying child (since 1st September 2020). Part-time staff are entitled to a pro-rata entitlement.
- 5.2. Parental leave must be used for the care of the eligible child concerned.
- 5.3. The age limit in respect of the child for whom staff may take parental leave in the University, is up to their 16th birthday. In the case of adoption, if the child is under 13 years at the time of the adoption, the leave must be taken before the child reaches their 16th birthday. However, if the child is aged between 13 and 15 years at the time of the adoption, the leave must be taken within two years of the adoption order.
- 5.4. Where a parent has an entitlement to parental leave in respect of more than one child, the leave period cannot exceed 26 weeks in any 12-month period, unless by agreement with the University. In the event of a multiple birth, this restriction does not apply.
- 5.5. Parental leave is non-transferable between the parents, except where both parents work for the University, and is subject to the University's agreement. In these circumstances, the first 14 weeks may be transferred.

6. Application Procedure & Guidelines

- 6.1. The staff member must communicate to their line manager/supervisor their intention to take parental leave. The staff member and the line manager/supervisor should consider the intended start date, the duration and pattern of the leave, and alternative arrangements for the carrying out of the duties of the staff member's role.
- 6.2. If the line manager/supervisor is concerned that the parental leave of the staff member during the period in question would have an adverse effect on the overall work of their department/function, the commencement of the parental leave can be postponed for a period not exceeding 6 months. In such cases, staff will be consulted, and the University will supply a "statement in summary" of the reason for postponement. Generally, the University may postpone the leave only once in respect of any particular child. If, however, the reason for the postponement is seasonal variations in volume of work, the leave may be postponed twice in respect of the same child.

- 6.3. Once arrangements are agreed between the staff member and the line manager/supervisor, the staff member should give notice to Human Resources via the Employee Request facility on the Employee Self Service System (ESS), and confirmation will be received in writing. This should be submitted at least 6 weeks prior to the expected commencement of the period of parental leave. A copy of the child's birth certificate / adoption order must be provided.
- 6.4. Where parental leave is approved and confirmed in writing to the staff member by Human Resources, requests to adjust the period and/or pattern may be accommodated in exceptional circumstances only.
- 6.5. Parental leave may be backfilled on a specified purpose basis. Such contracts will cease when the parental leave period ends.
- 6.6. To ensure preservation of social insurance records, staff should contact the Department of Social Protection (DSP) to ensure that appropriate credits are made during a period of parental leave.

7. Pattern of Parental Leave

- 7.1. There is a statutory entitlement to parental leave of 26 weeks per child. The leave may be taken in one continuous period, or over a number of periods of a minimum of six weeks. Subject to the University's agreement, a combination of lesser periods of leave, not to exceed the overall period of 26 weeks, may be taken.
- 7.2. A staff member who is returning to work from parental leave may request a change in their working hours or pattern of work for a set period of time. Any such request must be considered by the University; however, there is no obligation to grant same. A staff member must submit notification not later than 6 weeks, before the proposed commencement of the set period, to their line manager/supervisor who will respond not later than four weeks, from receipt of the request.

8. Protection of Employment Rights

During a period of parental leave, employment rights, except the right to remuneration and superannuation benefits, are unaffected.

The staff member is entitled to return to a position under conditions which are not less favourable than those before the parental leave commenced.

8.1. Annual Leave

In the case of professional, management and support staff, annual leave will continue to be accrued while on parental leave. Where closure days fall during the parental leave period, these days (half day or full day as appropriate), will be added to the end, of the parental leave period.

In the case of academic staff, leave in lieu of statutory annual leave occurring while on parental leave will be comprehended through days at Easter, Summer and Christmas, when there are no Lectures/Teaching/Assessments as per the University's Academic Calendar (i.e., outside of term time).

8.2. Public Holidays

Where public holidays fall during the parental leave period, these will not be recorded as parental leave.

8.3. Sick Leave

If a staff member becomes ill while on parental leave and, as a result, is unable to care for the child, the parental leave can be suspended for the period of the sick leave and recommenced afterwards. This can be facilitated, where requested by the staff member and once medical certification is provided.

8.4. Superannuation

Periods of unpaid parental leave are non-reckonable for superannuation purposes. With effect from 9 February 2018, arrangements on "Pension Accrual for Parental Leave" as set out by the Remuneration, Industrial Relations and Pensions Division will apply. Further information is available from Human Resources Pensions section.

9. Compliance/Monitoring Review

This Policy will be updated as required to reflect changes in applicable laws or in relevant circular letters.

The policy will be reviewed every 4 years to reflect national policy and guidelines, and national / international benchmarks of best practice.

10. Queries

For enquiries on this policy please contact the relevant HR Office:

TUS Midlands: hr.midlands@tus.ie TUS Midwest: hr.midwest@tus.ie

