

Guidance: Adoption Leave and Pay

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There are a number of Human Resource policies and procedures that can be accessed at www.port.ac.uk/intranet/humanresources/conditionsofemployment/policiesandprocedures/.

In support of these, HR produces a series of guidance on a range of topics – such as this one – to provide employees with simple, accessible, up-to-date information. Should you have any queries or require any further information, please email the HR Service Centre on hrenquiries@port.ac.uk or contact them on 023 9284 3141.

Peter Brook
Director of Human Resources

Guidance: Adoption Leave and Pay

Summary

What is this Guidance about?

This Guidance sets out the procedure employees and their managers should follow in the event of adoption in the UK or from overseas. It provides information about both pay and leave entitlements.

Who is this Guidance for?

This Guidance is for all staff and managers.

How does the University check this Guidance is followed?

Human Resources maintain an overview of the use of adoption leave and pay and reports are presented to the Governors' Human Resources Committee.

Who can you contact if you have any queries about this Guidance?

All enquiries should be directed to the appropriate HR Adviser and details are available via the HR webpages at www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/humanresources/contactus/hrbusinesspartnerhradvisers/.

Section A: Adoption (UK)

1. Introduction

This section provides information about adoption leave and pay for adoption within the UK.

2. Scope

Adoption leave and pay is available to:

- individuals who adopt;
- one member of a couple where a couple adopt jointly (the couple may choose which partner takes adoption leave);
- the partner of an individual who adopts, or the other member of a couple who are adopting jointly, may be entitled to paternity leave and pay;
- dual approved prospective adopters who have a child placed with them under Section 22C of the Children Act 1989 with a view to their adopting that child (this is sometimes referred to as fostering for adoption); and
- the intended parents in a surrogacy arrangement where they are eligible for and intend to apply for Parental Order (or where they have already obtained such an Order) making them the legal parents of the child that they are having with the help of a surrogate mother. These parents are referred to as Parental Order parents in this Guidance.

You must:

- be newly matched with a child for adoption by an approved UK adoption agency;
- have notified the adoption agency that you have agreed that the child should be placed with you and the agreed placement date;
- have notified HR Services of when you want to take your Statutory Adoption Leave, this should be no more than seven days after you have been notified that you have been matched with a child.

3. Adoption Leave Period

Your statutory entitlement to an Adoption Leave Period (ALP) is 52 weeks.

This breaks down as follows:

- 26 weeks ordinary adoption leave (OAL);
- 26 weeks additional adoption leave (AAL).

You may choose to begin your Statutory Adoption Leave (SAL), if applicable, on either of the following:

- the date on which the child is placed with you for adoption; **or**
- from a fixed date which can be up to 14 days before the expected date of placement, but no later than the expected date of placement.

Adoption leave can start on any day of the week.

If the date of placement changes before you begin your SAL please notify HR Services as soon as possible.

4. Adoption pay schemes

The University operates two types of adoption pay scheme:

- Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP): If you have been employed by the University for more than 26 weeks but less than one year you will receive SAP;
- Occupational Adoption Pay (OAP): If you have been employed by the University for one year or more, you will receive Occupational Adoption Pay.

5. Multiple adoptions

If you are adopting more than one child at the same time your entitlement to Statutory and/or Occupational Adoption Pay is exactly the same as if you were adopting one child.

6. Statutory Adoption Pay

If you have been continuously employed for more than 26 weeks, the University will pay Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) to you for a maximum of 39 weeks. You will not be entitled to any SAP beyond week 39. This consists of:

- six weeks at 90% of full pay and 33 weeks at the current rate of SAP; **or**
- 90% of average weekly earnings if less than current rate of SAP. If your average weekly earnings are below the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance Contributions, you will not qualify for SAP. Information regarding financial support should be sought from your local Jobcentre Plus office.

Statutory Adoption Pay is a State benefit, the conditions for which and the amount of which are determined by the Government. Details of current SAP rate can be found at www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave.

7. Occupational Adoption Pay Scheme

To qualify for the University's Occupational Adoption Pay Scheme (OAP) which includes Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP), you need to have been continuously employed for more than one year at your qualifying date. The qualifying date is the 15th week before the expected date of placement.

The main criteria for eligibility for OAP are as follows:

- i) You must have been continuously employed by the University for more than one year at the qualifying date (i.e. by the 15th week before the expected date of placement).
- ii) You must have stopped working as a result of the adoption.
- iii) You must give written notice to the University of your intention to stop work and commence adoption leave no more than seven days after you have been notified that you have been matched with a child.
- iv) You must produce evidence that you have been matched with a child (see paragraph 9 below).

If you intend to return to work after the adoption you will be entitled to receive 39 weeks payment as follows:

- four weeks at full pay*
- two weeks at 90% pay*
- 12 weeks at half pay, plus current rate of Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)**
- 21 weeks Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)**

If you do not intend to return to work after the adoption you will be entitled to receive 39 weeks payment as follows:

- four weeks at full pay*
- two weeks at 90% pay*
- 33 weeks Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)**

If you are unsure whether you will be returning to work following the adoption you can choose to defer the payment of the 12 weeks at half pay by notifying HR in writing at least 28 days before your half pay is due to commence. If you then return to work the deferred payment would be paid to you in one lump sum. Please note: National Insurance/tax contributions are higher on lump sum payments.

*Full pay is based on either your basic pay as at date of commencing adoption leave or on average weekly earnings attracting National Insurance contributions in the eight weeks prior to the 15th week before the expected date of placement.

**Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) is a State benefit, the conditions for which and the amount of which are determined by the Government. Details of the current Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) rate can be found at www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave.

8. Repayment of Occupational Adoption Pay

If you intended to return to work following your adoption leave and then decide not to, you are liable to repay the 12 weeks' pay based on half pay. You would not be required to repay the Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP).

If you return to work on the same basis as you left, then there is a three month period that you will have to work to ensure that you do not have to repay the 12 weeks half pay. However, if you return to work on reduced hours, then the timescale over which repayment is made will be on a *pro rata* basis, for example if you returned on a 0.5 basis, then the repayment would be over six months.

9. Attendance at adoption meetings

Eligible employees are entitled to time off to attend adoption meetings.

The time off to attend adoption appointments must be taken in the period between being notified of a match with a child and the date that the child joins the family.

- Single adopters are entitled to paid time off to attend up to five adoption appointments;
- In the case of joint adoptions (i.e. a couple who have been jointly matched to adopt a child) one of the adopters will be entitled to paid time off to attend up to five adoption appointments. The other adopter may be entitled to unpaid time off to attend up to two adoption appointments.

Where there are joint adopters, the adopter who takes paid time off to attend adoption appointments cannot claim paternity leave and pay. This means that the parent who intends to take adoption leave and pay is likely to take the paid time off and the other parent is likely to take the unpaid time off.

10. Entitlement to time off to attend antenatal appointments for Parental Order parents

The Parental Order parents are entitled to take time off work to accompany the surrogate mother to her antenatal appointments. Both of the Parental Order parents are entitled to unpaid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments (of up to six and half hours each appointment).

Where the Parental Order parent is the biological father of the child, they are only entitled to unpaid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments. They do not have a right to additional time off because they are the father and are only entitled to time off to attend up to two appointments in total.

11. Shared Parental Leave

Adopters and their partners and Parental Order parents may be eligible for Shared Parental Leave and Pay, where the parent that is eligible for adoption leave and/or pay ends this early to opt into the Shared Parental Leave and Pay system. Details of the University's Shared Parental Leave and Pay Guidance is available at www.port.ac.uk/intranet/humanresources/conditionsofemployment/familyfriendlyentitlements/filetodownload,189956,en.pdf.

12. What to do next

Notice requirements

You must notify HR Services, in writing, no more than seven days after you are matched with a child, unless this is not reasonably practical, of the following:

- that you intend to take Statutory Adoption Leave (SAL);
- the date you intend to start your leave;
- the date the child is expected to be placed with you for adoption.

Please complete and return the Adoption Leave Application Form (ADPLVUK) to HR Services, 1st Floor, University House, **together with a copy of the 'Matching Certificate' from the adoption agency as evidence of your entitlement to SAP and leave.**

You will receive acknowledgement of your notification of leave plans within 28 days. This will confirm the date on which you are expected to return to work if the full entitlement to adoption leave is taken.

You may bring forward or postpone your adoption leave start date provided you advise HR Services in writing at least 28 days before the original proposed start date, or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

You will receive acknowledgement of your revised leave plans within 28 days. This will confirm the date on which you are expected to return to work if the full entitlement to adoption leave is taken.

The Adoption Leave Application Form can be found at www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/humanresources/atoz/.

Section B: Adoption (overseas)

1. Introduction

This section provides information about adoption leave and pay for adoption from overseas.

2. Scope

Adoption leave and pay is available to:

- individuals who adopt;
- one member of a couple where a couple adopt jointly (the couple may choose which partner takes adoption leave);
- the partner of an individual who adopts, or the other member of a couple who are adopting jointly, may be entitled to paternity leave and pay;
- dual approved prospective adopters who have a child placed with them under Section 22C of the Children Act 1989 with a view to their adopting that child (this is sometimes referred to as fostering for adoption); and
- the intended parents in a surrogacy arrangement where they are eligible for and intend to apply for Parental Order (or where they have already obtained such an Order) making them the legal parents of the child that they are having with the help of a surrogate mother. These parents are referred to as Parental Order parents in this Guidance.

You must:

- be newly matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency; **and**
- have worked continuously for the University of Portsmouth for 26 weeks leading into the week in which you have received Official Notification to receive Statutory Adoption Pay.

3. Adoption Leave Period

Your statutory entitlement to an Adoption Leave Period (ALP) is 52 weeks.

This breaks down as follows:

- 26 weeks ordinary adoption leave (OAL);
- 26 weeks additional adoption leave (AAL).

Your adoption leave may commence on either of the following:

- on the day on which the child enters the UK; **or**
- on a chosen date no later than 28 days after the child enters the UK.

Your adoption leave can start on any day of the week.

Statutory Adoption Leave cannot start before the child enters the UK.

Statutory Adoption Leave cannot be used to cover the period spent travelling overseas to arrange the adoption or to visit the child. You would be expected to either take annual leave or unpaid leave for this purpose.

4. Adoption pay schemes

The University operates two types of adoption pay scheme.

- Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP): If you have been employed by the University for more than 26 weeks but less than one year you will receive SAP;
- Occupational Adoption Pay (OAP): If you have been employed by the University for one year or more, you will receive Occupational Adoption Pay.

5. Multiple adoptions

If you are adopting more than one child at the same time your entitlement to Statutory and/or Occupational Adoption Pay is exactly the same as if you were adopting one child.

6. Statutory Adoption Pay

If you have been continuously employed for more than 26 weeks, the University will pay Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) to you for a maximum of 39 weeks. You will not be entitled to any SAP beyond week 39. This consists of:

- six weeks at 90% of full pay and 33 weeks at the current rate of SAP; **or**
- 90% of average weekly earnings if less than current rate of SAP. If your average weekly earnings are below the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance Contributions, you will not qualify for SAP. Information regarding financial support should be sought from your local Jobcentre Plus office.

Statutory Adoption Pay is a State benefit, the conditions for which and the amount of which are determined by the Government. Details of current SAP rate can be found at www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave.

7. Occupational Adoption Pay Scheme

To qualify for the University's Occupational Adoption Pay Scheme (OAP) which includes Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP), you need to have been continuously employed for more than one year at your qualifying date. The qualifying date is the 15th week before the child enters the UK.

The main criteria for eligibility of OAP are as follows:

- i) You must have been continuously employed by the University for more than one year at the qualifying date (i.e. the 15th week before the date the child enters the UK).
- ii) You must have stopped working as a result of the adoption.
- iii) You must give written notice to the University of your intention to stop work and commence adoption leave in accordance with the notification requirements in paragraph 8 below.
- iv) You must provide HR evidence that you have been matched with a child (see paragraph 8 below).

If you intend to return to work after the adoption you will be entitled to receive 39 weeks payment as follows:

- four weeks at full pay*
- two weeks at 90% pay*
- 12 weeks at half pay, plus current rate of Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)**
- 21 weeks Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)**

If you do not intend to return to work after the adoption you will be entitled to receive 39 weeks payment as follows:

- four weeks at full pay*
- two weeks at 90% pay*
- 33 weeks Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)**

If you are unsure whether you will be returning to work following the adoption you can choose to defer the payment of the 12 weeks at half pay by notifying HR in writing at least 28 days before your half pay is due to commence. If you then return to work the deferred payment would be paid to you in one lump sum. Please note: National Insurance/tax contributions are higher on lump sum payments.

*Full pay is based on either your basic pay as at date of commencing adoption leave or on average weekly earnings attracting National Insurance contributions in the eight weeks prior to the 15th week before the expected date of placement.

**Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) is a State benefit, the conditions for which and the amount of which are determined by the Government. Details of the current Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) rate can be found at www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave.

8. What to do next

Notice requirements

If you are adopting a child from overseas you are required to give notice in three stages that you intend to take Statutory Adoption Leave (SAL).

a) First notification stage

You should notify the HR Services, by emailing hrenquiries@port.ac.uk of:

- the date you received Official Notification;
- the date on which the child is expected to enter the UK.

If you have been employed at the University for more than 26 weeks you must give HR Services notice within 28 days of receiving the Official Notification.

If you have been employed at the University for less than 26 weeks you must give HR Services notice within 28 days of completing 26 weeks' service.

b) Second notification stage

You must give HR Services at least 28 days' notice of the actual date you want your Statutory Adoption Leave and Statutory Adoption Pay, if applicable, to start. You can give this notice at the first notification stage if you know the date. SAL cannot start before the child enters the UK.

Please complete and return the Adoption Leave Application Form (ADPLVOS) to HR Services, 1st Floor, University House, **together with a copy of the Official Notification.**

You will receive acknowledgement of your notification of leave plans within 28 days. This will confirm the date on which you are expected to return to work if the full entitlement to adoption leave is taken.

You may postpone your adoption leave start date, provided that you advise HR Services in writing at least 28 days before the original proposed start date, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

c) Third notification stage (after the child has entered the UK)

You must notify HR Services of the date your child entered the UK. This must be done within 28 days of your child's date of entry. If you are claiming Statutory Adoption Pay you need to give evidence of the entry date, e.g. a copy of a passport stamp, visa or plane ticket.

The Adoption Leave Application Form can be found at www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/humanresources/atoz/.

Section C: General information

This information applies to both adoptions within the UK and from overseas.

1. Returning to work

You should return to work on the date specified on your completed Adoption Leave Application Form.

You will have the automatic right to return to work after your period of adoption leave. However, if you wish to return to work before the planned return date you must give at least eight weeks' notice of your intended return date. For example, if you were due to return to work after 52 weeks' Statutory Adoption Leave (SAL) on 1 August, but then decided to return to work after 39 weeks of leave on 9 May, you would need to give eight weeks' notice of the new date, i.e. by 14 March.

If you were to return to work earlier than planned **without** giving the eight weeks' notice, the University has the right to postpone your return until after the eight weeks have passed. It also has the right not to pay you during the period of postponement. However, the University cannot postpone your return to a date later than the end of your 52 week SAL period.

You have the right to resume working in the same job if returning to work at the end of ordinary adoption leave. If you intend to return to work after additional adoption leave, your entitlement is to return to either the same job, or if this is not reasonable practicable from the University's perspective, to another suitable job which is on terms and conditions no less favourable than your previous position.

If the child's placement ends during the Adoption Leave Period, you will be able to continue adoption leave for up to eight weeks after the end of the placement.

2. Transfer of adoption leave

If you propose to return to work by giving notification of an early return in accordance with the rules set out above, you may be eligible to transfer up to 26 weeks adoption leave (and outstanding Statutory Adoption Pay) to your spouse, civil partner or partner, to be taken as additional paternity leave (and additional statutory paternity pay) once you have returned to work. This can be taken by a male or female spouse, civil partner or partner.

Additional paternity leave can be taken only on eight weeks written notice. The minimum period of additional paternity leave is two consecutive weeks and the maximum period is 26 weeks. It must be taken as one continuous period in multiples of complete weeks.

For UK adoptions the earliest that additional paternity leave may commence is 20 weeks after the adopted child's placement and it must end no later than 12 months after the date of placement.

For overseas adoptions the earliest that additional paternity leave may commence is 20 weeks after the date on which the adopted child enters the UK and it must end 12 months after the date of entry.

If you do wish to transfer part of the adoption leave entitlement in this way, you will be required to submit a written and signed declaration form to HR Services. The University may also make additional enquiries of your spouse or partner's employer to verify its employee's entitlement to additional paternity leave and pay.

For further information please refer to the Paternity Guidance at www.port.ac.uk/intranet/humanresources/conditionsofemployment/familyfriendlyentitlements/.

3. Should you not wish to return to work after adoption leave

If you decide not to return to work after the planned return date, you must provide notice of this to HR Services. This will be the usual notice of resignation as required by your contract of employment. As long as you specify the date when you wish to terminate your contract (e.g. the date you were due back at work after SAL), your leave continues.

If you were to terminate your contract before the end of your Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) period, you will continue to receive SAP, provided that you have not started work for another employer.

You will not be required to pay back any Statutory Adoption Pay you have received.

4. Return to work where parental leave is taken immediately after Statutory Adoption Leave

If you qualify for parental leave you may take some of this leave immediately following the end of your Statutory Adoption Leave (SAL). You would be entitled to return to the same job as before if the parental leave meets both of the following conditions:

- it is for four weeks or less;
- it is not preceded by any Additional Adoption Leave (AAL).

If the parental leave period is longer than four weeks and/or is preceded by a period of Additional Adoption Leave, you will be treated as though you were returning to work after Additional Adoption Leave.

Further information relating to parental leave can be found at www.port.ac.uk/intranet/humanresources/conditionsofemployment/familyfriendlyentitlements/.

5. Flexible working request

You may request to return from adoption leave on a flexible working basis. This gives the right for you to request a change in your working pattern, or number of hours you work in order to accommodate family commitments. It is important to note that this is the right to request a change, and not the automatic right to expect the University to grant your request. If you wish to discuss any change to your working arrangements you should contact your line manager at the earliest opportunity and not later than eight weeks before you return to work.

In order to be eligible, you must have worked at the University of Portsmouth for at least 26 weeks continuously at the date of your request.

Please see details of this and the other family friendly entitlements available from www.port.ac.uk/intranet/humanresources/conditionsofemployment/familyfriendlyentitlements/.

6. Contact during adoption leave

Reasonable contact between you and the University is encouraged to facilitate communication. Either you or your manager is entitled to initiate this during the Adoption Leave Period. For example, to discuss your return to work or potential work-related issues that may concern you and any such contact will not bring the Adoption Leave Period to an end.

7. Keeping in Touch days (KIT days)

During your period of adoption leave you may, with the agreement of your line manager, carry out up to ten days work without bringing your adoption leave to an end. In accordance with legislation, any work carried out on any day shall constitute a full day's work. Work means any work done under the contract of your employment and may include training, attending meetings and committees or any activity undertaken for the purpose of keeping in touch with the workplace.

You will receive either a day's pay or a day's leave for each day that you work. It is your line manager's responsibility to notify the Human Resources Department whether you wish to either take the Keeping in Touch day as leave or to receive payment so the necessary arrangements can be made. Your line manager should send this information to hrenquiries@port.ac.uk.

8. Terms and conditions during adoption leave

During your Adoption Leave Period (paid and unpaid) your contract of employment continues to be in force. All the terms and conditions of your contract continue with the exception of your salary. Continuity of service is maintained and any standard incremental progression which takes place during your Adoption Leave Period (paid or unpaid) will be implemented. If you work term time or variable hours please contact hrenquiries@port.ac.uk for further advice.

9. Annual leave

During your period of adoption leave you will continue to accrue your annual leave in accordance with your contract of employment. If you wish to use annual leave prior to returning to work it must be in agreement with your line manager.

10. First Aid allowance

If you receive a first aid allowance, this will also be paid to you with your adoption payments. If your first aid certificate expires during your adoption leave and you wish to continue your qualification then you should be booked on a First Aid refresher course at a reasonable date prior to your taking adoption leave.

11. Childcare vouchers

If you already have made a salary sacrifice arrangement for childcare vouchers the University will continue to provide these benefits in the same way as if you were at work, including any time you may be in receipt of adoption pay or nil pay. If you continue to receive childcare vouchers, your Statutory Adoption Pay may be reduced so it may be in your interest to terminate your salary sacrifice arrangement to ensure your adoption pay is not affected.

You should contact Edenred to obtain full information to enable you to make this decision. The Edenred UK Helpdesk is available on 0800 247 1244, quote University of Portsmouth unique Scheme ID – UNIV0261 or visit their website at www.childcarevouchers.co.uk. Further information on childcare vouchers can be found at www.port.ac.uk/childcare.

12. Pension

Please refer to the following pension guidance appropriate to your individual pension scheme while you are on adoption leave. If you are unsure which pension scheme applies to you please send an enquiry to hrenquiries@port.ac.uk.

a) Teachers' Pensions (TP)

Whilst you are on adoption leave, during the time that you are receiving pay of any kind pension contributions will continue to be deducted and your pensionable service will accrue in the usual way. During any period when you do not receive any pay, your pensionable service will cease at the time your pay stops and Teachers' Pensions will consider you to be a 'leaver' at that point. This will result in a gap in your pensionable service for the same period as your unpaid days. It may be possible to top up your pension by buying additional pension. Further details of how to do this can be found by visiting the Teachers' Pensions website at www.teacherspensions.co.uk.

b) Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

During the time that you are receiving any actual pay pension contributions will continue to be deducted. You may elect to pay your own contributions so that any period of unpaid Adoption Leave Period will count in full towards your pension. The cost of paying back is based on your last rate of pay immediately before the unpaid pay period starts.

If you have less than 26 weeks continuous service with the University and, therefore, are ineligible to receive adoption pay, your LGPS benefits will continue to build up as if you were working normally on full pay. However, any period of unpaid adoption leave beyond the 26 weeks ordinary adoption leave will not count for pension purposes unless you have the right to return to work, in which case you can choose to pay your own contributions. Contributions will be based on the rate of pay you would have received had you been at work.

If you want to make any pension payments you must notify Human Resources in writing within 30 days of returning to work (or leaving employment). This will also result in the appropriate level of employer's contribution being paid into the Local Government Pension Scheme. If you do not elect to pay your contributions, then this period will be treated as a break in pensionable service.

c) NHS Pension Scheme (NHS)

Pensionable service will continue to count in the usual way, as if you were working normally, whether you are receiving pay or not. During periods of paid adoption leave, pension contributions will continue to be deducted from the pay actually received, even if this is reduced. During periods of unpaid adoption leave, pension contributions will be calculated on the rate being paid immediately before pay stopped, and will automatically be deducted on your return to work.

13. Contact

If you have any queries regarding this Guidance or any other questions, please email the HR Service Centre on hrenquiries@port.ac.uk or contact them on 023 9284 3141.

Section D: Frequently asked questions

Do I need to inform HR and my line manager of my intention to take Statutory Adoption Leave?

Yes, you must notify both your line manager and HR Services. HR Services will acknowledge whether you are eligible to Statutory Adoption Leave (SAL) and Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP).

Do I qualify for SAL or SAP if:

- **I arrange a private adoption?**
- **I become a special guardian?**
- **I adopt a stepchild?**

No, none of the above qualifies for either SAL or SAP.

What if I do not qualify for SAL?

Contact HR Services by emailing hrenquiries@port.ac.uk as it may be possible to take unpaid leave, annual leave or parental leave.

Can I change my mind about the date I wish to start my SAL to begin?

Yes, as long as you have spoken first with your line manager and HR Services it is possible to give the University 28 days' notice of the change to your starting date.

How will I know when I am due to return to work after SAL?

HR Services will acknowledge receipt of your completed application form requesting SAL within 28 days and this acknowledgement will include the date when you will be expected to return to work.

Is my continuous employment, length of service affected by taking SAL?

No, SAL does not break continuity of employment. The entire SAL period counts towards an employee's period of continuous employment for the purposes of entitlement to other statutory employment rights, e.g. the right to a redundancy payment.

If I originally indicated that I would be returning to work after SAL and then decide not to return will I need to repay any monies?

If you decide not to return to work you will not be required to pay back any SAP. You will be required to repay any occupational adoption pay you have received.

I am thinking of changing my hours so they fit in with my child care arrangements – can I do this?

You can make an application to do this under the 'Right to Request Flexible Working' Scheme. Please refer to the family friendly link on the HR website at www.port.ac.uk/intranet/humanresources/conditionsofemployment/familyfriendlyentitlements/.

Your line manager has to consider this request but if it is not possible for them to accommodate your request they do not have to agree to it.

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